Questions on the Old and New Testaments (part 1 of 2)

Ambrosiaster (4th century)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

Questions on the Old and New Testaments (part 1)

QUESTIONS ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS BY AMBROSIASTER INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY JOHN LITTERAL REVISED in 2026 QUESTIONS ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS BY AMBROSIASTER INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY JOHN LITTERAL REVISED in 2026 CONTENTS INTRODUCTION 1 QUESTIONS ON OT & NT 6 POLEMIC 360 MISCELLANEOUS 402 INDEX OF QUESTIONS 473 INTRODUCTION Ambrosiaster was an anonymous fourth century Christian writer who is credited with writing commentaries on all of St. Paul's epistles and a compilation of treatises known as the Questions on the Old and New Testaments. The name Ambrosiaster is not the actual name of the writer, but the name means "Star of Ambrose," and this name was given after the Ambrosian authorship of the commentaries on Paul's epistles had been ruled out, which will be discussed further below. Scholars are still unsure of the author's identity, but they are certain that the same author is responsible for both the commentaries on the epistles and the Questions.

These Questions (Quaestio) means 'an enquiry' or investigation into passages of Scripture which are difficult to understand.1 The Questions on the Old and New Testaments is a compilation of essays of various sizes as well as discourses and sermons. Some of the questions thoroughly examine and explain important doctrinal matters such as the meaning of God, the sin of Adam and Eve, baptism of the Savior, etc. Some questions are treatises against opponents to Christianity and heretics such as Pagans, Arians, Novatian, etc. There are some questions that are running commentaries on the Psalms and Gospels, while others are on Old Testament heroes such as Melchizedek, Abraham, Job, and Tobit.2 The Questions by Ambrosiaster are found in two different manuscript traditions. Both manuscript traditions are displayed in this translation and placed in sections or categories, such as, 1st Category and 2nd Category. The manuscript tradition of the 1st Category is a compilation of 127 "Questions" and the MS tradition of the 2nd Category is a compilation of 150. "Of these questions, eighty-nine are common to both collections, and almost two thirds of these eighty-nine have undergone some rewriting."3 The English translation for this book is based upon the text from the collection of Migne (PL 35 2214-2416).

There are a lot of explanations to specific passages of Scripture in the Questions by Ambrosiaster, which means that they are useful for exegetical purposes. The way that the questions are organized in the manuscripts and the printed edition that this translation is based upon would make it difficult, to say the least, to use it for looking up specific passages to see what Ambrosiaster had to say about them, because the order of the questions in the manuscripts do not follow a consistent pattern nor order that the Scripture passages would be in the Bible. For this reason, I have chosen to provide the questions that concern specific passages of Scripture to follow the order found in the Bible, such as by book, chapter, and verse. For those questions that are polemic in nature, they are placed in a section separate called "Polemic," and other questions that are not polemic nor exegetical are placed in a section called "Miscellaneous."

For many years, the Questions on the Old and New Testaments were thought to have been written by Augustine of Hippo and were placed among his works. Scholars have long determined since then that it was not written by Augustine, and was in fact the same author of the Bible commentaries of Paul's epistles that is mentioned above. There are many examples that demonstrate how scholarly rejection of the Augustinian authorship of the Questions is more than justified, starting with the choice of topics, the method of teaching, the difference of style, which are quite in opposition to the genius and the faith of Augustine. Augustine's teachings on original sin is an indicator that he was not the author of the Questions, because the author claims without constraint, in Question 13, that the children who died with their parents in the fire of Sodom were "exempt from the punishments of hell, because they have been victims of a crime they did not commit." Therefore, the author of these questions has appeared here to deny 'original sin.' Also, the same author claims, in questions 21 and 45, that 'woman' was not created in the image of God, while St. Augustine teaches the contrary in his book on the Literal Meaning of Genesis, Book 3, chapter 22. Another example, in question 41, the author endeavors to prove that these words of Genesis: "The Spirit of God was carried on the waters," should not be understood of the Holy Spirit, as Augustine, however, explains it in several places.4

As mentioned above, scholars are of the opinion, for good reason, that the authorship of the Questions on the Old and New Testaments is the same for the Bible commentaries on the epistles of Paul.5 Alexander Souter, who devoted nearly 130 pages to this point, demonstrated by comparing these two works and found the greatest similarities between the community of illustrations and allusions, comparison of Scripture quotations, comparison of style and language, identity of thought such as favorite texts of Scripture and interpretations of Scripture.6 Scholars think, moreover, that these two works must have been composed at about the same time; the commentaries, under the pontificate of Pope Damasus, who died towards the end of the year 384, as attested by the author of these writings in chapter 3, verse 15 of the second epistle to Timothy, and Question 44 (Against the Jews).7 As mentioned above, scholars are uncertain of the identity of the author of the commentaries and the Questions, but I will leave the readers with a quote from Alexander Souter on this point…

"Erasmus, in the year 1527, was the first to suspect the accuracy of this ascription; and thereafter speculation became rife as to the real author. At the dawning of modern scholarship, as it is still more clearly at the present time, Ambrosian authorship was seen to be an impossibility. Some guessed that the work was a cento made from S. Jerome and S. Chrysostom by some unknown person; others believed it to be by Julian of Aeclanum or some other Pelagian; others by Remigius, others by Tyconius, the author of the 'Rules,' others by S. Hilary of Poitiers, others by Hilary of Pavia, others by Hilary of Syracuse; very many have attributed the work to Hilarius, a deacon of Rome. The statement of S. Augustine, who undoubtedly meant S. Hilary of Poitiers as the author of the quotation he makes, is responsible for the last four views. S. Hilary of Poitiers is unhesitatingly to be rejected owing to known differences of style. Most of the other names are idle conjectures, carelessly thrown out before the days of exact method in the study of literature and history. Langen himself put forward a view that Faustinus, a Roman presbyter, is the author. His proof, built up chiefly from a comparison of the language of both works with that of the De Tririitate and other writings of Faustinuss, is so far from being convincing that it certainly shows Faustinian authorship to be impossible. This conjecture has had the fate of the others. Dr Marold and Dom Morin, for example, explicitly reject it.

The recent view, that Isaac, a converted Jew, who was concerned in the disturbances at the election of Pope Damasus and afterwards relapsed to Judaism, wrote the commentaries and the Quaestiones V. et N. Testamenti, is due to Dom Germain Morin, O.S.B., of the Abbaye, Maredsous, who by his successful researches and independent criticism has shown himself a worthy follower of his Benedictine predecessors. Dr. Zahn and Mr. A. E. Burn, both called for a fuller treatment of the subject. This I have endeavored to supply, as the special study I had devoted to the language of the commentary seemed to invite me to the task. I can heartily support Dom Morin's second suggestion, that Hilary, the Layman, was the author."8

1 Alexander Souter, A Study of Ambrosiaster, Volume 7, Issue 4 of Texts and studies: Contributions to Biblical and patristic literature, Publisher Kraus Reprint, 1967, Original from the University of Virginia. (pg. 8) 2 See Alexander Souter, A Study of Ambrosiaster, Volume 7, Issue 4 of Texts and studies: Contributions to Biblical and patristic literature, Publisher Kraus Reprint, 1967, Original from the University of Virginia. (pgs. 8-9) 3 Ambrosiaster's Method of Interpretation in the Questions on the Old and New Testament. Marie-Pierre Bussieres. Interpreting the Bible and Aristotle in Late Antiquity: The Alexandrian Commentary Tradition between Rome and Baghdad, Dr John W Watt, Dr Josef Lössl Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., Jul 28, 2013; (pg. 54) 4 See Patrologiae cursus completes, the Benedictine editors; Volume 35, Jacques-Paul Migne, Apud Garnier Fratres, 1902. (pgs. 2208-09) 5 English translation of the Epistles of Paul by Ambrosiaster: Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians; Commentaries on Galatians--Philemon (Ancient Christian Texts) translated and edited by Gerald L. Bray. IVP.

6 Alexander Souter, A Study of Ambrosiaster, Volume 7, Issue 4 of Texts and studies: Contributions to Biblical and patristic literature, Publisher Kraus Reprint, 1967, Original from the University of Virginia. (pgs. 23-152) 7 See Patrologiae cursus completes, the Benedictine editors; Volume 35, Jacques-Paul Migne, Apud Garnier Fratres, 1902. (pgs. 2208-09) 8 See Alexander Souter, A Study of Ambrosiaster, Volume 7, Issue 4 of Texts and studies: Contributions to Biblical and patristic literature, Publisher Kraus Reprint, 1967, Original from the University of Virginia. (pgs. 4-5) QUESTIONS ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS GENESIS 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 106. ON GENESIS. — In the beginning God made heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1). If He made heaven in the beginning, and the earth, and if heaven is the firmament, as is evident in what follows, then this is not literally true, because light was made first, and therefore the firmament: for it could not signify some other heaven, since it is describing the making of the world as perfected by the working of God. For this reason, because people were misled by various opinions about the cause of the world, Moses, inspired by God, showed what the true ordering of the world was. To some it seemed that it had no beginning; to others that it did have a beginning, but was fashioned by certain Angels; to others again that it was likewise made, but by a certain Saklas, who is also the god of opposing power; but a few, following the path of truth concerning its origin, asserted that God was its maker. Therefore, because of those who were drawn away by false opinions of diversity, Moses was compelled to show what its true cause was, lest the children of Israel, freed from the power of the Egyptians, should still not be released from their false understanding. For they, more than the rest, pursued the study of error: for in ancient times they above others devoted themselves to vain philosophy. Indeed Moses, because he was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, is said to have been taught in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (Acts 7:22).

What then is the meaning of his words, In the beginning God made heaven and earth? If it signifies the firmament, according to what we showed above, let us see what he says. We think that Moses, so as to remove all error about the lower creation and about the materials of the world's construction, indicated that in the beginning the very substances from which the world is constituted were made; for if he had kept silence about this, they might perhaps be thought to be eternal substances, considered to be yoked to God. So that the one who receives testimony about this matter cannot doubt that the world was made, since he confesses that the substances which served for the expenditure of the world were subjected in the beginning. Therefore, In the beginning God made heaven and earth, that is, the upper and the lower substance. The upper is that from which heaven consists; the lower, however, is a certain thick dreg-like concretion which advanced into the dry land that is called earth, and into darkness. Therefore He says in the prophet Isaiah, I am God, who made light and created darkness (Isa. 45:6–7). When these were created, He made at the same time the substance, that is, water, darkness, and earth before times: for times are under the firmament. For the firmament, as some think, is the ice of the waters. And it is therefore called firmament, because the waters, being solidified by divine power, are made firm, which, from covering or concealing, is called heaven.

And therefore, because water is the greater element, it is mentioned first, since a part of it advanced into the vault of the world. The earth, however, is the pavement: which indeed David, by the Holy Spirit, confesses to have been created. For he says, And the waters that are above the heavens, let them praise the name of the Lord. For He Himself spoke, and they were made; He Himself commanded, and they were created (Ps. 148:4–5). After these elements, before the joining together of the world, God made light, so that His works should go forth in the light, which light, by a fixed arrangement, completed the course of the day. Night came to be according to the measure of the day, which likewise, when the measure of its span was fulfilled, was illumined by the coming of the morning light: and therefore the first day was completed when the second began; for the night is reckoned to the day, so that together they are called one day: for because darkness is subject to light, it lacks authority and cannot make up a number. For thirty days are called one moon, even though nights are included with them. Therefore the service of light, by which it uses up the space assigned to it, is called day. But the substance of darkness, before it is illumined, is called night. And that space which is between the setting and the rising is night.

For it is not darkness that makes the night, just as it is not light that makes the day, because darkness remains in its own nature. The coming of light makes day, and its departure makes night. Not without reason, therefore, is the night subject to the day. So, when light was made, and the course of twelve hours completed, and likewise the space of the night of twelve hours also passed, there was an equinox on the first day: and from then the day began to grow longer than the night, namely throughout three months, which are the spring season. From that increase the day then diminishes through three other months, which are the summer season. And again there is an equinox, so that from then the night grows longer than the day through another three months, which are the autumn season. And again the night, from the greatness by which it surpasses the day, begins to diminish until the end of the fourth season, which is winter. And the equinox returns to the first season, when God created the world, which day is understood to be the eleventh day before the Kalends of April, when the first day of Passover is, that is, the first day of the first month. For in the Law it is commanded that on the tenth day of the first month in the evening they should prepare themselves to celebrate Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, that is, from the eleventh.

For already the evening of the tenth day shines into the eleventh, so that from the eleventh day before the Kalends of April the beginning of the first month should be. For at the beginning the moon was made on the fourteenth, because all things were made full. Add three days from the evening of the tenth, and these are the three days before the luminaries that were made, so that the world was made on the eleventh day before the Kalends of April; for the number of the moon from the eleventh comes to the fourteenth, to which the first month of Passover in its entirety is assigned, so that on the solemn day of Passover it should be neither beyond the eleventh day before the Kalends of April, nor beyond the fourteenth moon, because the world was made on the eleventh, and on the fourteenth the moon was made brighter with greater light. Between the beginning, therefore, and the

brightness with which the world was illumined, our Savior both suffered and rose again; for He suffered on the fourteenth moon, and rose on the first day, which is therefore called the Lord's Day, because the Lord Himself made it, who made the multiplied months, and the seasons, and the years. And so that it might never be celebrated in exactly the same way, the course of the moon in its wanings and waxings brings this about. But the earth was invisible and unformed. It is clear that the earth, after it was made, was invisible and unformed:

for it was covered by waters, and therefore was invisible; and it was unformed because, being fluid, it was not suitable for cultivation. And darkness was upon the abyss. He says that darkness was upon the abyss, that is, upon the boundless water on every side. And the spirit of God was borne above the water (Gen. 1:2). This water he signifies as the extremity, above which the spirit of God, because it was borne above it, shows that the darkness was upon the infinite depth. As for the spirit of God above the waters, since where the spirit of God was, there was no obscurity, it illuminated the water as far as it could. But it could not illuminate the abyss, that is, the immense depth: that is, it illuminated the higher waters, and beneath there was darkness, and over the abyss. He therefore calls this the spirit of God not because he wishes this to be understood as the Holy Spirit, but because he wishes it to be understood spiritually over the material creation, and by calling him the spirit of God who was moving above the waters, he signifies that he is wholly of God, so as to overturn the perverse assertion used by some, who say there is something that is not of God. For it is neither orderly nor reasonable that the Holy Spirit should be said to have been over the waters, since he is over all creation.

For whatever is of God is above all powers and principalities and likewise above all spiritual powers. Nor should anyone's mind be disturbed because he is called the spirit of God, when it is established that all things are God's. For God, among other things when he was about to make the flood, says: My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh (Gen. 6:3); and in Ezekiel, among other things: Therefore says the Lord to these bones, I will spread skin over you, and I will give my spirit in you, and you shall live (Ezek. 37:5). Do these things belong to the office of the Holy Spirit, and not to the soul? Therefore this spirit of God is indeed, like the rest, but is the governor of material substances; for his appointed order is to preside over these. When light was made, and the course of day set in order, and the second day completed, he made the firmament, that is, heaven, so that the light in the earth of the firmament might govern the day, so that it might be as a lamp in a house. This firmament, I say, was made from the aforesaid substance of water. For now the world is being joined together in form, so that from the confusion of things, with substances distinguished, individual parts might be fitted which would contribute to the members of the world. For the substances which we said were first made are expended upon the world.

And therefore it is called "world" (mundus), because the things that were mixed together, once separated from one another and brought into form, made it called "world," to whose structure they contributed. Therefore the firmament, that is, heaven, was made in the

midst of the waters, so that it might divide between the water that was above the firmament and the water that was below the firmament; so that by God's power the firmament might stand in the midst of the waters, having water beneath itself, and within itself, and above and around itself; so that it might be concave on the outside and fortified within, lest the waters, whether inner or outer, should penetrate its concavity, so that it might be as a house fortified and strengthened, that those dwelling in it might be secure. On the third day he commanded the water that was under heaven, that is, within the capacity of the firmament, to be gathered into one place, so that the dry land, which is the earth, might appear, and therefore it came to pass. For the breadth of the earth having been drawn out, there was made as it were a basin, in which all the water that was within the firmament might be sunk down, and the dry land appeared. When the water receded, it was necessary that the earth, made visible, should appear, which before had been invisible. Then the dry land was called earth, and the gatherings of the waters seas.

And he commanded the earth to bring forth grass for food, and fruit-bearing trees for seed upon the earth. Then on the fourth day God commanded luminaries to be made in the firmament of heaven, that they might shine upon the earth: the greater luminary at the beginning of the day, and the lesser luminary at the beginning of the night, and the stars. These relate to the conception and birth and nourishment of those things which are begotten in the world, and to the signs of seasons needed for fixed intervals, and also to the adornment of the whole world. For just as it belongs to the adornment of a house if its ceiling has panels marked with gold, so also the stars, shining with diverse light, provide adornment to the world. Therefore to the light which was first made, the brightness of the sun is added, so that these are joined and inseparable. And to the night, which was dark, a luminary is given; and because the moon was at the fourteenth day when it was made, therefore he says, The lesser luminary at the beginning of the night: for when it was made, it shone the whole night. From the part, therefore, it is said "at the beginning of the night," because it does not always shine in the evening. But the greater luminary, which we call the sun, remains at the beginning of the day, because it was compacted together with the prior light. For three days the world existed without these luminaries;

for as yet there were not those for whose benefit their functions would serve. But when the earth brought forth grass for food and fruit-bearing trees, there was need of things that would nourish or preserve what had been brought forth. Because all generation of these is completed through their intervention, it was not fitting that these should be made first, lest, by the effect of those things produced from the earth, they should be thought to have arisen; but he made those first, so that therefore these might be without doubt understood to have been made without them. Then on the fifth day he commanded the waters to bring forth creeping things of living souls, and winged creatures flying over the earth beneath the firmament of heaven, and it was so. And among other things, And God saw, he says, that they were good, and he said, Increase and multiply (Gen. 1:21–22). He added, And God saw that they were good, because some say they are evil, so that at least in this way they may feel shame. For when they please God and their maker, surely they ought to displease

no one. For fools are accustomed to say, Therefore, they say, he saw, and they pleased him, because previously he did not know. O dull ones, how could He not know? Whatever He willed came forth. Can anyone will what he does not know? And can He who is able to act be said not to know what He is doing?

And what is more, He did not make them Himself, but commanded that they be made; and is He who commands not possessed of the power to make? But because all things are possible for Him, when He commanded that what could not do so should begin to be able, it was in order that it might contribute to His praise. There is therefore a double power, that He should command what is insensible to bring forth what is sensible. On the sixth day He commanded the earth to bring forth living soul, quadrupeds, and beasts of the earth; and so it was done, and they were brought forth. And God saw that they were good, and very good, because all are necessary. On the day mentioned above, therefore, God said: Let us make man in our image and likeness, and, He said, let him have power over all things that have been made upon the earth (Gen. 1:26). First indeed God made the substances out of which He would frame the world; when it was compacted, adorned with all its embellishments, and furnished with what was necessary, He then made man, who would enjoy it and all that is in it. For whereas He had commanded that everything on earth should be brought forth from water and earth, yet when He made man, He is described as having taken clay of the earth in His hands, so that He might teach how greatly man differs from the things He had already made.

He wishes it to pertain to the honor of man that he is described as being made by the hands of God, and made in the image and likeness of God, that is, of the Father and the Son. What it is to be in the image and likeness of God, although we have said elsewhere, yet this place and its occasion require that we say it again. The words are from the Father to the Son, saying, Let us make man in our image and likeness: although in the work the person of both is understood, of Him who speaks and of Him who hears. This then is the image of God in man, that one man was made as it were a lord, from whom the rest would arise, having the dominion of God as His vicar; for every king bears the image of God. Therefore woman was not made in the image of God. Therefore it says, And God made man; in the image of God He made him. Therefore it is that the Apostle says, A man indeed ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God; but the woman covers it for this reason, because she is not the glory or image of God (1 Cor. 11:7). The likeness of God in man is this, that just as from the Father is the Son, so from man is woman. In this plainly there is a difference, because she was made, whereas He was born.

Yet to some it seems that God made all things at once. For, they say, if He made by His word, why is it not said that He made everything at once? For it is the custom among men to believe that things are made in stages. For the power of God it seems more fitting if it is said that He made all things in one day. However, we see great providence in this work and order. For He could certainly have made all things together; but diverse reason forbade it, and with all these matters set apart, faith must be given to divine Scripture,

which says, and often says, For in six days, it says, the Lord your God made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them (Exod. 20:11). First then, they ought to have been made in such a way that they might feel and know that they had been made: for when they did not all see themselves at once, but one today, another tomorrow, they recognized that they are contained in a beginning, and in no way could they suspect eternity, since they recognize each other in parts. For if all things had existed at once, there would be no sense of weakness for them, but they would think that they had not begun. For those things which suddenly exist all together by the word of God do not feel themselves being made, unless they see something before themselves and something after themselves.

And lest that which was made first might think itself unmade, by seeing greater things made after itself, it believes of itself what it has seen in the other that is nobler. Finally, the light which is called day has before itself heaven and earth, that is, water and dry land. But when water itself and dry land and the confused darkness had been made, they could not claim eternity for themselves, because none of these dared to claim for itself fixedness and identity. Again, the sun and moon, though they are most bright, have many things before them. Therefore it was brought about that the greater things are later, and the earlier lesser things, when they see each other, none of these claims eternity for itself. Furthermore, the work completed in six days contains within itself the whole age of the world, so that the works of six days have the figure of six thousand years: because what in each age was going to happen is contained in order in the works of the six days; for instance, because in the earlier ages there was not going to be such great knowledge of God upon the earth, the earlier days appear without splendor; and that cattle were made before man, because our forefathers, uncultivated and rural, were going to live in the manner of cattle;

but that man should be made on the sixth day, this event was brought about because in the sixth millennium of years the coming of Christ made man so that he should not be subject to death. And that man should be the image of God, because by God's gift he would be conformed in image to the Son of God, as the apostle John says, We know, he says, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him (1 Jn. 3:2). And the Vessel of election: being conformed, he says, to the image of the Son of God (Rom. 8:29). Moreover, the tree of life which was set in paradise was the image of God's future grace, which is the body of the Lord; whoever eats it will live forever. For the tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies that the Law was given through Moses, which, when it made sin known that previously lay hidden, gave the knowledge of good and evil. For it showed what was good and what was evil. And as to the fact that on the seventh day He rested from His works, this signifies that, once the sixth millennium of years is completed, in the seventh millennium He will rest, with the world ceasing from all secular work. We have said these few things out of many, so that we might open a path for understanding according to what we have shown above.

(Genesis 1:1) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 2. WHY DID GOD CREATE THE WORLD? — He made it because He is a craftsman; or else it must be denied that He is, if He did not. But His very works show that He exists. He therefore made what previously did not exist, because without doubt it is better to be than not to be. If it is said, "Was there some empty place where He could make it, or what was there before He made it? The Vessel of Election resolves this briefly. For when speaking of God he says, "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28); that is, all things are in God, because He is everywhere, and before all things He alone is eternal, invisible to every creature. And lest we seem to have passed over the mystery, or rather to have been ignorant why the world was made, we say that the apostasy of the Devil drew many angels, that is, spiritual powers, with him into transgression, when he willed by wicked presumption to defend a kingdom for himself. This the prophet Isaiah signifies, saying, "How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who used to rise in the morning? (Isa. 14:12); that is, you who appeared brighter than the rest. For he was a sort of prince of many, among whom he was more splendid, and with whose company he descended into wicked conflict.

Seeing beneath himself many spiritual powers, since in the paradise of God he was more excellent in the knowledge of the heavenly mystery, swollen with pride itself, he wished to be called god. In this, moreover, we see in the present life that some have imitated his example: men who, puffed up by the contemplation of the troops of soldiers gathered around them, and with their attendants supplying fuel for conspiracy in this matter, have tried to claim dominion for themselves. From this it came about that God, in order to destroy his presumption not by power but by reason, created matter which would be a confusion of things, from which He would make the world. For the things that were together in confusion, once distinguished, yielded this adornment which we see. When the substances were separated from one another, and a structure made, it is called "world"; because each thing, set apart from another, appeared in the world: so that man, placed here, created from what is above and what is below, that is, from heavenly and earthly elements, might show by the dominion of the one God, not only by voice but also by the image in which one man was made by the one God, from whom the rest would arise, that all things are from one. For One made one, so that He might teach that all are from one, and that therefore God is one;

so that the higher creature might learn in man, to its own confusion, truth, he who was formed from the earth. From this the Devil became man's enemy. For he foresaw that man was made to be his accuser; and so by his subtlety he worked to bring man into the same transgression into which he himself fell, so that he might make his accuser a sharer in his own condemnation. For in the transgression he promised man divinity, from which he himself, when he aimed to it, was cast down. And since every nature is free from guilt, it takes its names from what happens from it. First come things, afterwards their designation; and so "Satan" and "Devil" are names formed from his deeds, so that they signify not his nature but his will. Therefore, so that the purpose of God, which He decreed in the case of created man, should stand firm, and so that the deed of the Devil, by which he deceived man, might increase the weight of his own guilt, Christ agreed to come down from the holy

seats even to earth: so that He might free man from the sentence of transgression, and might show the future perdition of the Devil, lest anyone imitate his deed. For this reason the apostle John said, "For this the Son of God came, that He might destroy the works of the Devil" (1 Jn. 3:8). If he were evil by nature, then to promise him punishment would be madness or injustice.

For who reproves one whom he sees do nothing except what his nature allows? Can fire be blamed because it burns, or water because it cools, when it does this not by will but by nature? Therefore if the Devil was evil by nature, he would have no will. Nor could he discern; instead, in one and the same way he would rush upon all, like a blind creature. But in fact he acts with a kind of judgment: he spares those who do his will, conceals toward certain beginners, sets obstacles and hindrances before those who seek to flee to God's help, lays snares for the servants of God, and is more hostile to those who are more zealous in His service. From this it is clear that his will lies in crime. Therefore the apostle Peter says, "Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the Devil, like a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). He does not seek the Gentiles, he does not seek the Jews, he does not seek those of evil life and conduct; he seeks the servants of God and the followers of Christ, whom he knows to be his enemies, because they condemn his deed and his presumption. Indeed, once the Law was given, envy burned more fiercely against those who were under the Law, knowing that the teachings of the Law proclaim one God and good conduct for men. Therefore, if he is thought to do this by nature, he cannot be held guilty:

because he does what belongs to his nature and what he can do, and does not do what he cannot do, because it does not belong to his nature. Therefore he is neither to be praised nor condemned. He is not to be praised, because what he does harms; but he is not to be condemned, because he does these things not by will but by the force of nature. For we know that some have suddenly gone mad, and with clubs, iron, stones, and bites have injured many, even killed some; yet when they were captured by skill and brought before judges, they were not held guilty, because they had done these things not by will, but driven by some unknown force, not knowing what they did. For how can he be made guilty who does not know what he has done? So also if the Devil does not know good, why is he judged condemnable for not doing what he does not know? Rather, if it could be so, he would deserve praise because he does what he does not know. We, however, are rightly made guilty, because we do not do what we know we ought to do, or because we do what we know we ought not to do. But since we see throughout all of Scripture that the Devil is presented as guilty, and therefore we read that Hell has been prepared for him, that he is to be condemned by the law, we know this:

because when he knew and was able to do good, he did evil. For God, who is just, would not condemn him for not doing the good which he did not know; but because he did the evil which he did know. Therefore I think it is clear that no nature ought to be called evil,

because every evil, as has been made evident, arises from the will, which through the senses befalls nature.

(Genesis 1:1) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 28. WHAT CAN WE SAY TO THOSE WHO CLAIM THAT THIS WORLD EXISTS NATURALLY FROM ALL ETERNITY, AND THAT IT HAS NEITHER BEGINNING NOR END? — That the world has existed from eternity and is subject to no authority is unlikely and impossible. We see it made up of bodies in such great diversity; yet nothing divine and eternal can be anything but simple, in which no diversity is seen, but only unity. For the world does not even preserve the regular cycles of the seasons, so that it is not only changeable in time or composed of contrary substances, but even in those very cycles of time; whereas what is eternal shuns all diversity and cannot be grasped by touch or sight, being incorporeal. This world, however, is subject to suffering, since water resists fire, and fire, if it grows stronger, overcomes water; and the earth, being by nature dry and cold, suffers burning, as a corporeal thing. Therefore it is inappropriate to call the world eternal, since we see it subject to suffering and failing through age as the ages go by, and we believe that it will come to an end. What is to be thought of the person who believes the world is eternal? Certainly man began in the world: without man, for whom did the yearly fruitfulness of the world profit? Or did it generate without any providence? And how did what is eternal generate corruptible and mortal things, when from what is eternal only what is eternal ought to arise? And that which is visible, felt, and touched, by what boldness is it called eternal? And that which is dispensed in the cycles of time, so that even time itself sometimes does not perform its proper functions, how is it called eternal? For eternity is neither corrupted nor changed.

1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 3. WHAT NEED WAS THERE FOR MOSES TO EXPLAIN LATER, AND NOT EARLIER, THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD AND THE ORDER OF CREATION? — It was not fitting that it should be described before, because for this reason so great an error did not yet exist among humans. But when error had already grown in the human race, so that even the sons of Israel in Egypt heard from the philosophers of the Egyptians a teaching contrary to this account, those same Egyptians from whom Moses had also learned all Egyptian knowledge, that a certain Apis had fashioned this world through evil angels, and that this one too seems to be the prince of the world, that is, Satan, this view Marcion followed and rushed into death. For the Manichaeans also say that man was made by this same Satan, not this world, being more foolish than the others. For since it is agreed that the world was made for the sake of man, they say that the world was made by God, though from foreign substance; but that man was created by the adversary, as though in another's house another master were set. It was therefore necessary that Moses, in order to expose and remove this error, should make it clear that God is the author of the world and of man who was made. Having received authority through the signs and wonders that he performed, he taught that what he transmitted with attesting signs was without doubt true.

For who would not believe him whose deeds produced such great signs? Therefore it is that those who think contrary to this teaching are known to err, because they strive to support their assertion with bare words. Therefore, in order to teach that nothing is coeternal with God, he sets forth the very order of created things, so that while he mentions that the lesser things were made first, and afterwards the greater, none of these may be thought uncreated: for those that are later in time are greater in power; so that if the former think they have superiority by reason of time, they are refuted by the very weakness by which they are subjected to the latter; or if the latter, presuming on their power, claim primacy for themselves, they are humbled by their posteriority, so that none of these may appear not to have been subject from the beginning. First indeed heaven and earth were made; then light, which serves for day; after that the firmament, which was called heaven, and the gatherings of the waters, which he called seas, so that the earth might appear in which it could be possible to live. By "earth," which he says was made after heaven, he does not wish us to understand earth alone, but he signified matter, that is, all the lower things which brought forth the whole appearance of the world. "Heaven," however, he maintains to be not this bodily one, but that higher one which is spiritual, made in the beginning;

so that when he says that heaven was first made, then earth, he meant that in heaven all things invisible, and on earth all things visible, were created by God. For he includes the highest and the lowest of the whole of nature, so that whatever lies between is without doubt also believed to have been made. The luminaries moreover, which he appointed for the governance of the world, he declares were made on the fourth day, so that the greater they are in power, the later they are in time. But man he established on the sixth day, so that he might introduce an inhabitant into a house already prepared. And man is far more exalted, who indeed is declared to have been made on the sixth day; whom I therefore called more exalted because his inner nature is invisible and capable of understanding. Yet in strength the sun is greater, and in light the moon is more excellent than the earth. Therefore it is that some are displeased by the statement, "And he saw the light, that it was good": for since all things were said by them to have been made by evil, they could not be believed to be good. Moses, in order to prove that the things which were made are good, shows that what he made was pleasing to God himself, so that whoever was displeased by them might be shown guilty. For how could he be ignorant of the light, who said, "Let there be light," and there was light?

Or who makes what he does not know? The light that was made pleased him who made it. What craftsman does not rejoice in his work? Therefore it is said, "God saw the light, that it was good" (Gen. 1:3–4). And there is no lack of those who say that it is evil. What, if it had been left without testimony? Therefore, after the structure of the world had been described, the line of the race was carried through from the origin of the first man by Seth, who was given in place of Abel, and in due order it comes down to Abraham, the father of the Jews: so that it might be shown that Abraham believed in this God, who is the maker of the world, and that he himself gave the Law, in which the Christ who was to come was promised, who would free the human race from the dominion of the Devil. From these things our faith

is proved reasonable. For the described genealogy bears witness to this, because from the beginning there has been a race of Christians. For from Seth, the son of Adam, one comes to Enoch, from Enoch to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham one descends to David, from David to Mary, from Mary Christ is born of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all those in former times, as many as had faith in the one God whom the Savior proclaimed, are rightly to be called Christians. For from the beginning the coming Savior was promised.

Therefore John in the Apocalypse says, "The Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). Therefore there have always been Christians. For all those, whom I mentioned above, from the first man created in the world, through whom the line reaches to the Savior, had faith in this God, of whom Christ spoke when he said: "Now this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn. 17:3). It may be said by way of objection: If even those earlier people were Christians, what new knowledge came through Christ? The coming of Christ brought this advance in understanding: that the preaching of the one God revealed the mystery, showed what belongs to each person (of the Trinity), and, to the fulfilling of the righteousness of the Law, added what had been reserved.

1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Gen. 1:2)

QUESTION 41. AND IS THE SPIRIT WHO WAS MOVING OVER THE WATERS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE HOLY SPIRIT, BECAUSE IT IS SAID, "THE SPIRIT OF GOD WAS MOVING OVER THE WATERS" (Gen. 1:2)?" — If it seems that he erred in this opinion, what he said must not be accepted. Therefore, by some the Holy Spirit is thought to be meant, because it is read that he is the Spirit of God. But this is a weak and empty assertion: for not only does the order not allow it, and reason refuse it, but the very words themselves are shown to be feeble for establishing this claim. For in the Law we frequently find by these words another meaning indicated. Among other things the Lord God says, "My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh. And further on: "But I will wipe out," he says, "everything from man to beast" (Gen. 6:3, 7). Because he was going to bring a flood upon the earth, can the Holy Spirit possibly be understood here? Did he not speak of souls? For not only are our souls called spirits, but also those of cattle. For it is written therefore: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth … all in whose nostrils was the spirit of life" (Gen. 7:22). And in the prophet Ezekiel it is said therefore, when God, promising the restoration of men, says, "Therefore says the Lord God to these bones:

I will stretch skin over you, and I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live" (Ezek. 37:5). Did he speak of the Holy Spirit and not of the soul? All heavenly beings are indeed spirits, but they differ from one another; and God is spirit (Jn. 4:24; 2 Cor. 3:17), but in a far different way. Therefore, every spirit is of God; yet it is not God, unless it is the spirit which is from him himself. Its distinguishing mark is that it is called holy. For men too are called sons of God, and Christ is called the Son of God; but there is a distance between them, because he is the true Son, they adopted sons. Likewise there is a distinction between "spirit of God" and "Spirit of God. For the Holy Spirit is from God and consubstantial with

him; whereas the other spirits are said to be of God, but they are creatures. Nor is it in accordance with order that the Holy Spirit should be understood as moving over the waters, since reason teaches that over the waters there is a spiritual creature, and that above it there is another superior creature; for one creature differs from another in glory (1 Cor. 15:41): for whatever approaches near to the throne of God has ministries that are more glorious. Therefore the angel Raphael says among other things: "I am," he says, "one of the seven holy angels who stand and go in before the glory of the Lord" (Tob. 12:15).

(Gen. 1:2)

QUESTION 2. AND IS THE SPIRIT WHO WAS MOVING OVER THE WATERS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE HOLY SPIRIT, BECAUSE IT IS SAID, "THE SPIRIT OF GOD WAS MOVING OVER THE WATERS" (Gen. 1:2)?" — If therefore by some he is thought to be the Holy Spirit because he is read as being the Spirit of God, this is a weak and empty assertion. For not only does order not admit this, and reason reject it, but the very words are found to be feeble for supporting this assertion. By these words something else is often signified in the Law. The Lord God says, "My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh. And further on: "But I will wipe out," he says, "everything from man to beast. (Gen. 6:3, 7) He says this, of course, because he was going to bring the flood upon the earth. Never here can the Holy Spirit be understood. He spoke of souls. For not only are our souls called spirits, but also those of cattle. For therefore it is written: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth … all in whose nostrils was the spirit of life. (Gen. 7:22) And in the prophet Ezekiel it is said therefore, when God, promising the restoration of men, says, "Therefore says the Lord to these bones: I will stretch skin over you, and I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live.

(Ezek. 37:5) Surely the Holy Spirit ought not to be understood merely because it was said by the Lord, "I will put my spirit within you"; since God clearly spoke of the soul. For this is common to every spirit with the Holy Spirit, that in the same way every spirit is called a spirit of God. Understanding is necessary here to distinguish things that share one name. For God is called spirit, and the soul of man is called spirit, and the wind likewise, and the air, and the soul of cattle, and angels, and all that have received to live by their own substance. But by understanding you already distinguish how God is said to be spirit in one way, and the creature in another: just as you understand in one way that Christ is called the Son of God, and in another that men are called sons of God. Whenever Scripture wishes to indicate the spirit that is properly from God, it adds the words "Holy Spirit," so that by this it may not be understood as a creature, but, because it is from God, it may be believed to be nothing other than God himself.

But when Moses was describing the material creation, that is, the confusion of things, which is certainly without rational sense, upon the earth and the deep and the darkness he spoke of the Spirit of God as being moved, so that from that spirit and from the place in which he was moving the higher creature, which we call spiritual, might be known. For even from the fact that he said that he was moving, he indicated that he was a creature, since every

creature of God is moving along by the power of him from whom it received to exist. For what order would there be that the Holy Spirit be moving over the waters, when it is certain that he is above all creation? For if Christ is at the right hand of God above all the heavens (Col. 3:1), there also is the Holy Spirit. Things of one and the same dignity and nature must be together: although God is not denied to be everywhere, this is the power of the Trinity, yet the due honor is also preserved, that he is said to be above all creation, so that this is proper to him. Therefore we also say, "Our Father, who are in heaven" (Matt. 6:9); and, "who dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16).

1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 107. ON THE ORDER OF DAY AND NIGHT. — As far as the structure of the world is concerned, we read of darkness before we read of light. For those things which contributed to the making of the world, and which appear to have been made together, are considered to have been without light; that is, water, earth, darkness, from which the world was compacted, as is contained in Wisdom, which is called Solomon's, "out of formless matter" (Wis. 11:18), that is, dark matter. For both darkness and water are testified by the sacred books to have been made by the very voice of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah: "I," he says, "am God, who made the light and created the darkness" (Isa. 45:6–7). Likewise, through David, the Holy Spirit shows both that the waters were made and that the earth was established upon the waters (Ps. 135:6). This agrees both with the authority of the Gospel and the tradition of the Apostles, in which all things are read as having been made; and so that nothing might be excepted, he says, "whether things in heaven or things on earth" (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16). Therefore, in this part which pertains to earthly things, we read of darkness before light. This, however, is only in respect to the order of the reading, not in respect to dignity; for of course light is much better than darkness. Yet in the ordering of the world light receives the name by which it is called day, and darkness is called night;

but specifically for this reason, that when the darkness is illumined and the light passes, that span of time until the light returns is called night; and that span of time during which the darkness is illumined is called day. When night is named, then, the coming day is expected; and when day is named, the coming night is expected. But when these functions cease, with the passing away of the world, they will be called only darkness and light. For it cannot be called night when there are perpetual shades, nor day when the light has ceased to set. Where eternity is, these names cease, because they began with the world. Indeed, before light was made, which was called day, it is not read that there was night, but darkness; which, after they were illumined and the light passed, were called evening and night. Therefore, as far as appears, night is lesser to day. For just because darkness is mentioned before light, it should not therefore seem to be preferred; since heaven existed before the sun, and yet the sun is greater in brightness; and the earth before man, and cattle and the other animals, and yet they are subject to man. Night therefore must not be set before day merely because darkness is read first; since it is clear that in dignity light precedes dark-

ness, and in time day precedes night. For as was shown above, when there was darkness, light was made. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night;

and there was evening and morning, one day" (Gen. 1:5). For if there had been no day, there would not even be night; there was, in fact, darkness, which, when it was illumined and the day had passed, its course completed, became evening. And when after evening it grew light, the first day came to be, the night having passed, so that night might follow day. This is both fitting and rationally praiseworthy: that a lower nature in all things be subject to a higher. How then is night said to be before day, when you read its name after day? For it would not have been called night, nor evening, unless, once light was made, it had run its course as day; when that ended, evening came to be, which is night. The day indeed became evening, so that you may know that night is a part of day. For the day is completed only when night too has passed. Therefore we say, "The year has three hundred and sixty-five days," not, of course, without nights. For when we say "days," we are there including nights as well. Under the authority of "day" we signify night; for if night were the leading term, under the name of night day too would be counted. Who among men says, "After five nights I will see you," and not, "after five days"? Nor do we remember ever to have read anywhere that night was named before day. For "Moses," he says, "was on the mountain forty days and forty nights" (Exod. 24:18).

And in the Psalm: "The sun," he says, "shall not burn you by day, nor the moon by night" (Ps. 120:6). And to give an example from the very beginnings: "Let there be," he says, "luminaries in the firmament of heaven, and let them give light upon the earth: the greater luminary for the beginning of the day, and the lesser luminary for the beginning of the night" (Gen. 1:14). But the moon cannot be set before the sun, just as night cannot be set before day; rather, as the moon is under the sun, so night is under day. And in the Gospel we have both days and nights indicated under the authority and numbering of days. For the Lord says, among other things, "There are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man in his kingdom. And he added, "And it came to pass after eight days" (Luke 9:27, etc.). Are not nights included in this number? And in another place: "These things," he says, "were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. On the next day he saw Jesus coming. Did he say, "On the next night"? Again it follows: "On the following day he wished to depart into Galilee" (John 1:28–29, 43). And in what follows: "And on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee" (Jn. 2:1). See how everywhere day is shown to have authority, having night as its subordinate.

For if all were contained under the name of night, night would precede day. Therefore, because the Romans have the rule, the Spaniards and Gauls and Africans and the rest who are subject to them are called Romans under their name; so also night, because it is subject to day, is contained under its name. But some are deceived on this point, because the Jews are ordered to enter the sabbath in the evening, and they do not consider why such a command was given. For indeed they necessarily have to buy food for themselves the day before, and prepare it for the sabbath, and go to wash. Can they do these things by night,

so as to enter the sabbath at sunrise? The Lord certainly rose again in the evening, and this is reckoned to the day. For the resurrection is celebrated on a day, which is called the Lord's Day. Therefore you read, "This is the day which the Lord has made" (Ps. 117:24); yet not "the Lord's night," because day holds the primacy For whether on the past day or on the future, night is always placed beneath; because it is lower both in order and in nature, as the Apostle says: You are children of the day and of the light, not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thess. 5:5). And if we judge by the consuls, we shall see that he is named first who is chosen first. Indeed it is customary to say, With him who will be consul?

If therefore night were also before day, it would be named first. For the reckoning so truly begins from the day, that, for example, if we say, Tomorrow is the sixth day before the calends, it is of course from morning until another morning is reached, so that a day and a night having passed, the count is complete. For the moon too, of course, was made on the morning of the fourteenth day; for it had to be made to shine for the whole night, and on the next morning the fifteenth began. Why then is there any doubt, that the beginnings are to be taken from the day? On account of the disputes of certain persons about a matter that is obvious, we have been forced to speak at greater length, although the reading itself explains itself, in which day is signified before night with clear reasoning. All these things mentioned above we have said according to the origin of the world. But if we wish to speak more deeply, lifting up our understanding with spiritual strength, we discover it to be unfitting to assert that darkness was created before light. For if the nature of light is heavenly and that of darkness earthly, it is surely senseless to think that light was made after darkness; because Moses says that light was made in that part in which the world now is, not that it was then created;

for all spiritual things were created before carnal things, so that the light which was in the heights might come to be in the lower regions, like a lamp in a house. But in what way are darknesses said to be before light, when they are always seen after light? Indeed, heavenly and spiritual things are believed by nature to be light, earthly and carnal things to be darkness; so that the nature of darkness seems to subsist by the power of light, because all that is lowest belongs to what is highest. For if we question, we discover darkness even in the sun itself. For when you are close to it, it appears so very bright that it cannot be looked at; but at a certain distance, still very bright, yet such that it can be seen; but if far away, less bright: the farther, the less bright. From this there appears a certain defect which proclaims darkness, and therefore it comes about that darkness seems to take its rise from light. Therefore he who made light created darkness also in this way, just as in making water he at the same time created earth: so that, as earth is the solid support of water, so darkness is the defect of light. But God alone is he who does not suffer defect, who, although he is everywhere, or rather has all things within himself, is so exceedingly bright that he is seen by no one, unless he is willing to moderate himself.

Indeed, although the Savior was in the body and was not shut in, yet he was not seen, unless he willed it. For when he was transfigured on the mountain and appeared in great glory

(Matt. 17:1–2), that which, as it were, lay hidden in the body he revealed when he willed. How then was he hidden, who was not enclosed? For if, with his body, he entered to the disciples through closed doors (Jn. 20:19), how does his divinity not penetrate all things? that is, it cannot be shut in, because it does not suffer defect. Since therefore God is absent from nowhere, yet he is said to be there where he appears and wills to be seen. And since all things are in God, because he surpasses all things, as the Apostle says, For in him we live and move and are (Acts 17:28); he himself, nonetheless, is in nothing except in what he wills. By a certain mystery he is in all things, and by a certain providence he appears where he wills.

(Genesis 1:26) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 24. WHY, SINCE MAN AND WOMAN ARE ONE FLESH, IS MAN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND NOT WOMAN? — Man and woman are indeed of one substance, both in soul and in flesh; but man holds a higher rank, because woman is from man, as the Apostle says: "The head of the woman is the man" (Eph. 5:25; 1 Cor. 11:3). For it was the cause that made man greater, not the substance. In one body, too, there are greater and lesser members, not by nature, but by arrangement. (Genesis 1:26) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 45. HOW MAN WAS MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, AND WHETHER THIS WAS FOR DOMINION, AND WHETHER WOMAN TOO? — "Let us make," he says, "man in our image and likeness" (Gen. 1:26). Some think this should be understood in light of another passage of Scripture, namely that in which we read that God said, "Come, let us go down and confuse their languages" (Gen. 11:7). For, as far as outward appearance goes, it seems similar: it is one voice speaking in the plural; but it differs in meaning, because the reasons are not the same. There, he speaks of creating man, whom God wills to be created in his image and likeness. But when he says, "Come, let us go down and confuse their languages," this refers to the fact that men should not understand one another; therefore God can be seen as speaking to the angels, like a commander to his army. He speaks in common, because he was going to act through them, as their Creator; and therefore he says, "Let us confuse their languages. For when he says, "Let us make man in our image and likeness," it cannot be said that he spoke to the angels, because one cannot say that there is one single image of God and of the angels, as of an emperor and his companions. For where there is one single image, the dignity and nature cannot be different. Accordingly he added, "And God made man; in the image of God he made him" (Gen. 1:27):

so that it is God who said, and God who made; not another or a different god, but the same God. For when one speaks to one, he did not signify a different nature, but a person. For although God is one, there are nonetheless three persons: and therefore there is one God, because whether in the Son or in the Holy Spirit, there is the one substance of God; for what proceeds from that substance cannot fail to be what he himself is. Therefore the person of God the Father is the one who says, "Let us make"; and the person of the Son is the one who makes man in the image of God; whether in the image of the Father or of himself, it makes no difference, because the image of both is one. Moreover, the Son made through

the Holy Spirit. For just as the Father is said to make through the Son, so also the Son through the Holy Spirit, since he himself says, "I cast out demons by the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28). Therefore one image belongs to the three; because whether Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, there is one God. And consequently man was made one in the image of the one God. Man is the image of God in this respect, that just as there is one God in heaven, from whom all spiritual beings have their existence, so there should be one man on earth, from whom the rest would have their carnal origin.

Yet some think that man was made in the image of God with respect to God's dominion; and because it says, "And let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, and all the earth," whereas not only the man but also the woman is seen to have these things subject to her, though it is certain that she does not have the image of God. This indeed fails in reason on two counts: for in that case it would be asserted that God did not say to the Son, "Let us make man in our image and likeness," but to the heavenly dominions which the Apostle mentions, if man has the image of God in dominion; and it would be given to the woman, so that she too would be the image of God, which is absurd. For how can it be said of the woman that she is the image of God, when it is certain that she is subject to the rule of the man and has no authority? She can neither teach, nor act as a witness, nor pronounce a legal decision, nor judge; how much less can she exercise command?

1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT & NT (Genesis 1:27) QUESTION 21. WHAT IT MEANS THAT GOD MADE MAN IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD, AND WHETHER WOMAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD? — This is what it means that man was made in the image of God: because the One made one, so that just as all things are from the one God, so also the whole human race is from one man. But the likeness is this: that just as the Son is from the Father, so also the woman is from the man, so that the authority of a single principle may be preserved. Yet the Son was born from God the Father inexpressibly and incomprehensibly; whereas the woman, bodily, as we read (Gen. 2:21–22), was made from the man, so that through her birth might arise. But the Son of God was born for this reason, that through him creation might come into being. In this, therefore, there is a difference. For God was born of God, but a woman from a man: because there, there is simplicity, and it was not possible for the simple to be born except from the simple—spirit from spirit, God from God. Therefore the man is the image of God. For therefore it is written: God made man; in the image of God he made him. Therefore the Apostle also says: "A man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman," he says, "should cover her head" (1 Cor. 11:7, 6). Why? Because she is not the image of God. Therefore again the Apostle says: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man" (1 Tim. 2:12).

(Genesis 1:27) QUESTION 1. WHAT IT IS TO HAVE MADE MAN IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD; AND WHETHER WOMAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD. — Man was made in the image of God in the sense that the one and only God made one man, etc. (Genesis 1:31, 7:2) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 9. IF ALL THE CREATURES THAT GOD MADE WERE GOOD AND VERY GOOD, WHY DID HE SAY TO NOAH, "BRING WITH YOU INTO THE ARK OF PURE AND UNCLEAN ANIMALS, SINCE NO ONE CAN CALL GOOD WHAT IS UNCLEAN?" (GEN. 1:31; 7:2) — It is because words have many different senses that they give rise to questions. For if they are referred to the specific issue being discussed, there will be no question, since things themselves unfold in due order. Sometimes we call "common" what is undivided; sometimes what is unclean. For "common" is used in two ways. Therefore the Apostle Peter says, "Nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth" (Acts 10:14). And the Apostle Paul says, "Everything that does not proceed from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23); and elsewhere, "The law is not of faith" (Gal. 3:12), and yet it is not sin. You see, then, that one and the same word does not always signify the same thing. So also when something is called "unclean," we must consider for what reason it is so called: sometimes it is called unclean in comparison with something better; sometimes it is referred to dishonorable deeds, so that it is understood as evil. No substance, therefore, is evil; for those things which are called unclean by reason of their substance are unclean only in comparison with things of surpassing beauty. For a dog is called unclean compared with a sheep; lead is unclean compared with gold; a raven compared with a peacock. And though they are all members of one body, some are called honorable and others dishonorable, even though they are known not to be evil. Therefore all things are good in their own nature, because they are useful.

(Genesis 2:7) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 23. CAN SOULS, THEN, BE TRANSLATED JUST LIKE BODIES? — I think it is dishonorable to say that souls are generated together with bodies, so that a soul is born from a soul, a thing that does not belong even to the soul itself. Or if indeed each of the heavenly powers was made individually, and from them the rest came to be, then it might seem believable that from the one soul of Adam the other souls are born. But this is not fitting, because this was possible for God alone, that the simple should generate, and was not granted to others. This is so mysterious in the case of the Savior that it is considered unbelievable not only by pagans or Jews alone, but even by those who call themselves Christians. For the Photinians and Arians reject this faith and do not believe that God has generated. For if at the time when the body is sown the soul also is generated from a soul, we read that a rib was taken from Adam, yet we do not read that a soul was born from a soul. But if the rib had a soul with it, then it was not born, but removed as a part. Yet this too is not written. The prophet Zechariah says among other things: "Who formed the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1). Nor does Isaiah disagree with this, for he says: "Therefore says the Lord God who made you and formed you in the womb" (Isa. 44:2).

If therefore it is formed in the womb, then it is given to an already shaped body. For when it fills all the members of the body, it is said to be fashioned in the body. Just as water, although without form, when poured into a vessel appears to be shaped, so the soul, though by nature incorporeal and simple, is as it were formed in the body, giving life to each of the

members. Moses has handed this down more clearly, saying: "If someone strikes a woman who is pregnant in the womb, and she miscarries: if what is in her is fully formed, let him give soul for soul; but if it is unformed, let him be fined" (Exod. 21:22), so that he might prove that the soul is not present before the form. Therefore, if it is given to a body already formed, it is not born at the conception of the body, derived with the seed. For if the soul exists with the seed and comes from another soul, many souls perish every day, since the seed by a certain outflow does not come to birth. But if we look more closely, we shall see what we ought to follow. Let us consider the making of Adam. In Adam an example was given, so that from him it might be understood that a soul was received by an already formed body. For God could have mixed the soul with the clay of the earth and so have formed the body.

But he proceeded with reason, because the house had first to be put together and then the inhabitant brought in. The soul, certainly, since it is spirit, cannot dwell in dryness; therefore it is carried in the blood. Consequently, when the features of the body have not yet been put together, where will the soul be? Does it wander outside until it is put in, although reason teaches that it is given in such a way as to animate the body, not to wander idly? But from whom is it given, let those who think otherwise tell us: from the male, or from the female? If from the female, it is not fitting, because the example is otherwise. For they propose that with the rib taken from the man, a soul was also given; and we have shown by many arguments that this is invalid. From this it might perhaps seem to be given from the female, especially on account of the Savior, whom we know to have been born of a woman from the Holy Spirit, without the union of flesh. But if they suppose this, they give more to women; for they transfer the authority of the man to the woman. Since they claim that the origin of both body and soul is from the man, they turn around and say that what is more important, namely the soul, is from the woman, and what is less, namely the body, is from the male;

although it is clear that the order of the example given by God cannot be altered.

(Genesis 2:7) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 123. DID ADAM HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT? — I have found that some of our brethren have not fully examined the Scriptures, but in simplicity of mind affirm that when Adam was made, he received the Holy Spirit, which he lost when he sinned, just as it is now given to believers. Led by this reasoning, by which many are accustomed to assert that through faith man is restored so that, being brought back to his former state, he receives all that Adam had obtained in the beginning; and because he is said to be made a perfect man, they say that if he did not have the Holy Spirit, he was imperfect. But I say that not only man, but also all things which God made, which cannot be said to have received the Holy Spirit, are perfect. For all kinds of animals are perfect in their own nature, so that they may accomplish that for which they are made: so also man is perfect in his own kind, so that he is able to discern evil from good, crooked from straight. For he is an intelligible creature, perfect for that for which he was made. He is capable of speaking, planning, and

acting, so that what he cannot accomplish by strength, he fulfills by understanding. And how have they dared to say that man ought to be born perfect and to know everything, when they see that he knows nothing beyond what he learns here? For what he does not learn here, he does not know.

Finally, since he does not learn here what he is like, he does not know: therefore, since he does not know what he is like, how does he know all things, when knowing oneself is less than knowing other things? But because he learns about other things, and does not learn about himself, he knows about others, but does not know about himself, neither what he is like, nor whether he exists before the body or after the body. For if he had been made so perfect that he needed nothing, he would not have been man, but God; nor would he, being deceived, have transgressed. But to have the Holy Spirit is beyond the nature and perfection of man, so that he may be able to do the things that are of God. Was it not beyond its perfection that the donkey spoke to Balaam (Num. 22:28)? For it received so that it might do what was not of its own nature, but of ours. Therefore, since man is superior to the other animals, must those be said to be imperfect? Or because the holy angels are not what God is, are they imperfect? Or because the luminaries and stars are inferior to the heavenly angels, or because the clouds with their veil obscure the sun and the moon, are they less perfect? And because the members need one another (for the feet cannot do what the hands can), shall they be called imperfect? Far from it.

For all things are firm and perfect in their own places and ranks, so that they fulfill that for which they are made. Therefore all things are perfect, because their Creator is also perfect; but in comparison with him they are imperfect. For God is perfect in all things, as the fountain and origin of all. Now the things that have been made are indeed perfect, but with regard to that for which they were made, so that in another respect they are not perfect; because one needs another: so that in that respect in which it does not need, it is perfect, not in that in which it needs: and therefore all things are both perfect and imperfect. Hands need feet; for unless the feet walk, the hands will be idle. Again, the feet need hands; for they cannot shoe themselves nor care for themselves. Therefore, although the body is perfect with its members, it nevertheless cannot fly, nor bear as much as a mule can. And although these (animals) are perfect, they still do not know how to govern themselves, nor can they apply medicine to themselves. Where it is said, Do not be like horse and mule, which have no understanding (Ps. 32:9). And water and fire, though they oppose one another, are perfect in their own kind; for they fulfill that for which they were made. Fire cooks and consumes; it purifies and heats: water, however, washes, cools, irrigates, and refreshes the thirsty.

Therefore, since all things are perfect in their own kind, yet without man they can do nothing, nor can man, although he is more perfect, do anything without them. Therefore the Apostle calls us imperfect and perfect. For in comparison with unbelievers we are perfect, because we know God: but because we know less than we ought of the things that are promised, since in this life we cannot comprehend as much as that which is believed, we are imperfect. Therefore, since they think that Adam's perfection is restored to believers, let us

see whether this restoration has anything beyond the divine gift which Adam had obtained. For when Adam was made, he was placed in paradise that he might work there and keep it: that is, that he might cultivate the land and keep the commandments of God, by which he might know that he had received dominion over all things in such a way that he himself should nevertheless live under the law of the Creator, lest his dominion should exalt him, and, puffed up with pride, he should become forgetful of his Maker. He was therefore placed there so that his life might be sustained by food: but through Christ this has been granted, that those who rise again do not need food or drink; because what is mortal in man is transformed into life. Adam was made to dwell on earth; but faith has consented to grant that our dwelling be in heaven.

Scripture itself bears witness, for it says, The first man Adam was made a living soul, but the second man a quickening spirit. The first man was of the earth, earthly; the second man was from heaven, heavenly. As is the earthly, such also are the earthly; and as is the heavenly, such also are the heavenly (1 Cor. 15:45–48). What is clearer than that Adam did not have the Holy Spirit? For he was made a living soul; but through Christ (we are made) a quickening spirit, so that man may in some way be similar to the Creator whom he believes. For since the mystery of faith, which is given for salvation, is threefold, he becomes threefold, in body, soul, and Holy Spirit, through whom we are called sons of God: a title which Adam is by no means proved to have received; for he was made earthly. But the sons of God, born not carnally but spiritually, are said to be heavenly. Behold, the gift of God has clearly granted much more grace to man in the time of the Savior than Adam had received; for he has not only been restored, but also improved: restored in that he has been washed from sins; improved in all other respects. For both justice and reason demanded that God's mercy in granting benefits should be more abundant at the time when He willed the mystery of His divinity to become known to His creature:

so that, coming to know what had been unknown for ages and generations, that the mystery of the one God subsists in the Trinity, those cleansed from sins, as though by a kind of dedication to this novelty itself, might furthermore be justified, and, adopted by God, receive the Holy Spirit, by whom they appear to bear the mark of adoption. For adoption from God ought to bear the sign of God the Father, so that they are rightly called sons of God. This gift too was promised through the Prophets, to be given at the time when the mystery of God was to be revealed in the triumph of conquered death, so that the creature might know that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God. Therefore the Evangelist says: "The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn. 7:39). For this is glorification: when, by His power, He is recognized as being what He testified about Himself; because this glorification bestowed that gift which had been promised through the prophet Joel. For God says: "In the last days I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, etc. (Joel 2:28). And the Apostle says among other things: "But when the kindness and love for man of God our Savior appeared;

not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:4–7). The Apostle confirmed what had been promised through the prophet Joel, because after Jesus was glorified God fulfilled this: that He should pour out the Holy Spirit upon those who believe in Christ. And this is to become an heir of eternal life: to receive the Holy Spirit; so that, because the Spirit is eternal, the one who receives Him should have eternal life: for He is the pledge of immortality. Whoever receives Him and abides in His love, when this life is passed, goes on to heaven to Him whose Spirit he possesses. For it would be strange that one who departs therefore having the Holy Spirit should be held in the lower regions. The Spirit of Christ is in man as a mark of Christ's victory by which He conquered death, so that whoever has His Spirit cannot be held in Hades. And therefore in the ancient saints the Holy Spirit was not present in the same way as He is now in the faithful; for when they departed from this world, they were in the underworld:

and it cannot be said that the Holy Spirit, because of Adam's sin, which through the transmission of the race made all his offspring subject to the underworld, was held under the same sentence that was given to Adam. Therefore, that the Holy Spirit was with the Prophets and righteous men is not doubtful: with the Prophets, on account of the dispensation; with the righteous, on account of holiness, as is read of holy Simeon, because, it says, "the Holy Spirit was upon him" (Luke 2:25); not as a mark of adoption in him, but by reason of his merits. For sons of God who believe only began to exist when the Son of God was revealed, death conquered, to the whole creation. But if it is said that the Holy Spirit was in Adam or in others in the same manner as He is now in the faithful, what new gifts did God bestow when He dedicated in us the kingdom of His Son? And how can the time of the Savior's coming be called happy and blessed above others if He bestowed the same things that had already been bestowed? And where is that saying in which the Savior says to His disciples: "Many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see what you see, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard" (Matt. 13:17)? By what reasoning, then, can it be said that the blessedness of this time has brought no greater gift than was granted to the ancients?

This indeed turns to the dishonor of the Savior, as though He had nothing new to give to those who received Him at the rise of His kingdom; although the wealthy are accustomed to labor so that on the festive day of their birthday they may offer rare gifts to their invited guests. How great, then, is the injustice, that God, being said to have invited people to a new and unheard-of festival day, worthy of all praise, should be thought to have had no unprecedented gifts to bestow? And where is that statement of the Evangelist John, who says: "He came unto His own, and His own did not receive Him; but as many as received Him, He gave them power to become sons of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn. 1:11–13)? How, then, is it not something unheard-of that God bestowed upon believers in

Christ, when He gave them the power to become sons of God, that is, brothers of His own Son, not by the will of the flesh or of man, but of God, so that they might be born spiritually? Or if it is proved that this grace had previously been granted, then it must be said that the coming of Christ brought nothing new. Adam's making, surely, was carnal and earthly, not spiritual.

For he was not born of God without flesh and blood, but made by God from earth: and therefore he could not receive the Holy Spirit, since he was not spiritual, and it had not been granted to him to call God "Father" in prayer. Those who receive the Holy Spirit are given the power that, by reason of having the Holy Spirit, they may call that One the Father of Christians in prayer. Because this had not previously been granted, the ancients cannot be said to have had the Holy Spirit. Those therefore who think that Adam or others had the Holy Spirit do not understand what kind of gift they have from God; nor can they give fitting thanks to Him, since, though receiving more than the others, they say that they have obtained nothing beyond what the others received.

(Genesis 2:7) 2ND CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 3. WHEN ADAM WAS MADE BY GOD AND GIVEN LIFE, HE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT; FOR IT IS WRITTEN, "GOD BREATHED INTO HIS FACE THE SPIRIT OF LIFE" (Gen. 2:7). — It was not fitting that he should receive the Holy Spirit then; for this was reserved by God for the future, so that in the last days, when the mystery of the one God was revealed, it would be given to believers. From the beginning the Trinity was indeed preached, but the understanding of it was, as it were, under a veil. For the person of God the Father was first preached and revealed without delay and without figure, because all things are from him. But the persons of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit were not kept silent, yet they were not revealed. Accordingly, there arises a question from the faithless concerning the Lord, and concerning the Holy Spirit. For certain madmen say that the Holy Spirit is himself the Father, just as Sabellius says that the Father is the same as the Son. But no one doubts about the person of God the Father. When therefore the revealing of the Trinity takes place, then at last the Holy Spirit is given to believers, so that his person may be revealed, and those who receive him may have the sign that they are children of God, in that they have within themselves the Spirit of God, who is of course from God. For this is the indication of perfection:

when it is known that there is both Father and Son and Holy Spirit. This perfection grants this gift. For when the Son of God comes, opening and revealing these things, he must give something more, and it is fitting that he bestow this perfection on believers; for neither in the Son alone, nor in the Father alone is there perfection or salvation, but in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Therefore John the Evangelist says that from his fullness we have all received, grace for grace; "for the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:16–17). It is clear that when the Savior comes, the fullness of truth is brought about. For the things that were hidden, and that which was promised, when it is revealed and made clear, the fullness of truth

comes to be; then, when believers receive the Holy Spirit, they become children of God. For the "breathing" which is said to have been done by God into Adam is the imparting of the soul; for "spirit" is frequently used in place of "soul," as the Gospel says among other things: "And," it says, "his spirit returned to her" (Luke 8:55). And in the Psalm: "A contrite spirit and a humbled heart God will not despise" (Ps. 50:19). Yet frequently some manuscripts do not read "God breathed," but "God blew into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Not because it says "breath of life" did it thereby signify the Holy Spirit. For it says the same of animals: "In which was the breath of life" (Gen. 7:22). It is called "breath of life" because it animates bodies unto life.

(Gen. 2:15-17) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 4. WHY DID GOD IMPOSE UPON ADAM THAT HE HAD PLACED IN THE WORLD A COMMANDMENT, A LAW, AFTER HAVING GIVEN HIM DOMINION OVER ALL CREATURES? — Although Adam was placed in the world and received a command or law, while he himself held dominion over the rest, yet, though Adam was set as lord in the world, because he did not receive this from himself but from God, he had to receive the meaning of this reality from the law; so that he who appears to be lord might, through the law, be subject to the One who had given him this power; so that the authority of the Creator, through the law, might inspire reverence in him, lest so great a dominion exalt him and cause him to become forgetful of God, his Maker. (Genesis 3)

QUESTION 127. THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE. — I consider it beyond doubt that this world was fashioned for the sake of man: which, although composed of diverse substances, is yet one body fitted with many members, so that from these, through their mutual workings, those things might arise which were to be necessary for man. For a dwelling was made for man together with necessities, in such a way that each of these, according to its kind, should be produced upon the earth; that is, that once made, they should possess an inherent power of propagation in each several kind of the things that were created upon the earth. For origins were established, whose seed should advance to the procreation of multiplying kinds upon the earth. Where Scripture bears witness: And God blessed them, saying, Increase and multiply upon the earth (Gen. 1:22, 28). In like manner also the human race was blessed: which meaning we behold in the Law. For we see it written: The people grew and was multiplied in Egypt (Acts 7:17). With the same blessing, therefore, with which the things created for man's use were blessed, man himself was blessed, that likewise from male and female the stock of the human race should increase and be multiplied upon the earth;

and that just as seeds were to be improved by cultivation, so also the human race, by applying care, should endeavor that, once they had attained the knowledge of the Creator, they would restrain their way of life so as to win His favor, that all things together might advance to the praise and glory of the Creator. And since these words signify nothing else, the facts themselves bear witness. For all things that have been made have, by God's will, been mul-

tiplied and improved upon the earth. Nor indeed could it happen otherwise than as God's will and blessing have decreed for the seeds. How then can it be said that what increases by God's blessing and with His favor is done evil or is not permitted? The tradition of this matter has remained in the Synagogue and is now celebrated in the Church, namely that God's creature be joined under God's blessing. Not at all by presumption, since the pattern has been given by the very Author. But if it is thought that it ought to cease, then it must cease when those things also cease which likewise were blessed that they might multiply: for if the generation of men ceases, to what purpose do those things come into being which were blessed upon the earth? For the world cannot act in part and in part cease. Either it all works, or it all rests in idleness. Is a body useful whose some members are vigorous, others are numb?

Why then is that which has been blessed by the Lord asserted by some to be a filthy and contaminated work, unless because a kind of violence is done to the hands of God Himself? For they would not condemn this deed unless they thought ill of God, the Author of this work. Because they fear to detract openly from God, nevertheless they accuse Him through the work He has devised. For when the work displeases, the author is criticized. If men of this sort would read, or rather receive, the Scriptures, they would remember Balaam saying: How shall I curse him whom God has blessed? (Num. 23:8). For it is in vain that he is accused who is praised by the judge; rather, he himself is his own accuser who declares guilty him whom the laws defend. Who then are you who think that that which you read has been blessed by God should be condemned, unless either you deny that this is God, or accuse the Scripture of falsehood? There are those who, as if receiving new things, think that the old must be rejected. But the new precepts, proclaimed to the peoples through Christ, do not differ from these. For He Himself, when invited, did not disdain to go to a wedding; and not only did He honor it with His presence, but also supplied what was lacking for joy (Jn. 2:1–11). For it is written that wine makes glad the heart of man (Ps. 104:15 and Sirach 40:20).

And to show that He did this in accordance with the will of God His Father, when the Jews asked whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife, He answered among other things, saying: For from the beginning God made them male and female, and said: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. Therefore now they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate (Matt. 19:4–6). Therefore it is that He went willingly when invited to the wedding, lest He should seem to weaken the work of God and of His Father. Rather, showing that the teaching of the old and new Law agrees, He not only did not forbid marriage, but consented to be present at it, bearing witness that God is its Author; and by a saving precept He showed that what has been joined by God ought neither to be forbidden nor separated. And because birth is beneficial, when He was already leaving the world He entrusted His mother to John His disciple (Jn. 19:26–27). Wherefore we also, in all things observing the commands of the old and new Law, are taught to honor our parents (Deut.

5:16 and Matt. 15:4): and it is laid down in the Law that unless we do so, we shall suffer a curse.

What then is this presumption, or from what law does it arise, to close off the entrance to marriage, when both the new and the old Law in all respects seem to favor these things? But it is that which we read, that whatever is beyond is from evil (Matt. 5:37). Where the Apostle says that men of this sort have their conscience seared, who forbid to marry and teach abstinence from foods which God created to be received (1 Tim. 4:2–3). For they are shown to do this in hypocrisy, for the sake of hostility, so that they may charge the Law delivered by God. Others, therefore, by striving to resist saving precepts, stretch out opposing hands, that they may praise the orders of crooked doctrine: and therefore they are said to have their conscience seared. For with a corrupt mind, knowing one thing, they profess another. So also the Jews, who, not ignorant that the works done by the Savior were works of the Holy Spirit, out of envy said that He casts out demons by Beelzebub (Matt. 12:24), in order to turn the people away from faith in Him. Such also is the cunning of the above-mentioned people, for in order to pretend that they are lovers of holiness and chastity, they say that marriage must be condemned, so that by this they may win commendation and turn the people away from the truth.

And that they may pretend that they study abstinence, they teach that one must refrain from certain foods, so that by this they may show themselves as strangers to the world hastening to the heavenly kingdoms; and by this, after ensnaring the minds of people, they then teach that what is unlawful is permitted, and condemn what is lawful as though it were forbidden. These are the tricks of Satan, that he may invert causes and, as if insinuating something new, shut out the truth, in which there is nothing new, because all is eternal. Who does not see that this way of thinking has been manufactured by adversaries? For who would dare to reject what God has established, and what has never harmed anyone except the enemy of truth? He, in order to cover his own uncleanness, proclaims a holiness which he does not love, so that while he presents himself as if of good will on its account, he may persuade people to unlawful things as if they were lawful. For he recommends himself in order that he may deceive more easily, and by this, when the unwary are taken captive, he suggests things through which he makes them greater sinners: for so that he may apply some supposed remedy to his own cause, he strongly urges people to sin, seeking great comfort from this, in that he shows he has many partners in his crime, reckoning the punishment light, as though it were less grievous if he sees many with him in Gehenna.

Blind men, while they are overcome by vices, defend themselves either by weakness or by ignorance, instead of taking vengeance on those things by which a deceiving desire leads them astray. Or what hindering darkness is there, that what is true is not seen? For letters are often thought to signify something else, when either they are not pronounced correctly, or are improperly divided. But when it is read, “God made,” and, “He blessed what He had made,” who can from this argument? who can doubt? who can think that what has been blessed is accursed, unless he is animated by another spirit? If this were said to be the voice

of a man, perhaps some deceit might be believed: it is said that God is speaking, and do you doubt? God has blessed, and you reject it? But perhaps, under the name of God, Moses introduced an error? Let the signs and wonders done through Moses in Egypt satisfy you; let the marvels done in the Red Sea for the deliverance of the children of Israel persuade you. Hear the magicians confessing, "This is the finger of God" (Exod. 8:19). Agree with the Apostle when he says, "I would not have you ignorant, brothers, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.

For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:1–4). And from where did the Apostle say this? Scripture is at hand, in which we read our Lord Christ saying to the Jews, "If you believed Moses, you would perhaps believe also in me, for Moses wrote about me" (Jn. 5:46). Who will deny faith to this harmony? Who will dare to say that what is one is at variance? Who is of such a wicked mind as to strive to make undivided love appear as hate? Behold, you have both the testimony of words and examples of virtues, which may subject your mind to the truth, so that you may not think anything else true than what the books of the Catholic Church contain. Since therefore it has been proved that the same God was in the Old Testament who is now ours, and that he is true, as shown by many evidences of his power, his authority must be preferred to such a degree that even what seems harsh and perhaps absurd to us must be accepted and allowed, and thought of otherwise than we imagine, if it is praised by the judgment of God; because we must believe God more than ourselves. For our weakness and lack of skill usually judge as useful what is harmful, and reckon false things as true: which it is wicked even to suspect concerning God. For he is not a nature that can be deceived:

how much less, then, should there be doubt concerning marriages, when God says, "What God has joined together, let no man separate"? (Matt. 19:6) For this is a matter clear and simple. Surely every person rejoices when he has been found worthy of God's favor, and believes himself made better when he learns the mystery of his Creator, which he certainly would not have attained if he had not been born. Why then does he lament what he rejoices in, and condemn that which he boasts of having learned? For if he rejoices because he has learned, but would not have learned unless he had been born, without doubt it is good to be born, because the fruit of birth is the knowledge of the truth. But if it is evil to be born, then knowledge will not be good. For to what purpose will knowledge profit, if birth is condemned? For if it is not useful to be born and it ought not to be, it is useless that one who is to be condemned should learn. But since no one is so dull as to deny that the knowledge of God benefits people, and that it is good and useful, for through it birth itself is made better, so that, when birth is improved, it may merit more than what had been granted to Adam, for believers will reign in heaven, not on earth, in the paradise of God the Father, not in that in which Adam had been commanded bodily to work.

For if the feast of the dedication was celebrated at Jerusalem, that is, the festival of the dedication of the temple of God was kept, how much more should the birthday of the human person be celebrated, who is more truly the temple of God; for whose sake also the temple was built by hands, that thanks might be given to God. For our body is a better temple: because it is the work of God, whereas that other was built by human labor; and this is under the hope of eternity, that for destruction. Therefore whoever knows that he was born by God's appointment, in order that he may give him thanks, having understood his mystery, ought to rejoice on his birthday, seeing that his birth has made progress. Truly, however, those ought not to have been born who, abandoning their Creator, assign his glory to others: for their birth leads on to punishment; but it is not birth that suffers guilt, but the will. But who are you who forbid marriage? Perhaps you are Marcion, because you think the body was not made by God, but by the Devil; while you insist that the soul fell by some error, so that it came to the regions of darkness in which the world now is. How then could he be freed from here, if he were prevented from being generated? For once born you came to know your condition, and with deliberate effort you acted so as to return to your native home, restored to your rightful lot.

Indeed, you say you give thanks to Christ, through whom you rejoice that you have attained this understanding. Now consider: if you had not been born, this knowledge would cease, and liberation would not follow. Therefore, if you rejoice that the soul is freed, favor birth; for if you oppose birth, you are an enemy of souls. Or if you are a Manichaean, who reject marriage as though it were something contrary, I ask you: if bodies were not generated at all, how would the soul, which you claim to have been poured into the region of darkness and to be clinging to material things, be rescued from here? For in your books you have written that it is freed by being born, so that souls received from the moon and departing from bodies are handed over to the sun, whom you assert to be the god of your souls. For you are glad to be called Manichaeans. By this very name you demand your liberation: which you certainly would not know of, if you had not been born. Therefore it is very clear that you condemn marriage hypocritically. For while professing holiness, you secretly strive after impurity, something that has been made known not only privately, but also through imperial edicts. Now listen, Catholic, and learn from the Gospel that man's birth is beneficial.

When Simeon, a righteous man, wished to depart from this world, thinking that the knowledge of the Creator without understanding His mystery was sufficient for him, he was not allowed to die unless he advanced further in his perception of God, so that he might have the full reward of his faith. Accordingly, receiving the newborn Savior in his arms, he blessed God and said: "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart, according to your word, in peace; for my eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2:29–30). It has been clearly shown that man's birth is a blessing from God, since to a righteous man thinking of death the answer was given that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ: for he advanced so far in life that he became worthy, even in the present, to see the One whom he hoped would be his deliverer after death. He, then, who was preserved in life and not allowed to die until he had seen the fruit of his hope, so that he might be assured that he would pass from life

to life, how can it be said that birth was of no benefit to him? If it were an evil that we are born, paradise would not be promised, nor eternal life, nor the kingdom of heaven, but punishment and the destruction of hell; so that someone who knew himself to be born for perdition would fear to beget another, and he who knew himself to be unlawfully born would not desire to beget.

But perhaps it will be said: The kingdom of heaven is indeed promised, but to the faithful and those who do good. Correct. You see, then, that men do not become guilty because they are born, but because they have lived badly. Nor is the kingdom of heaven promised to those who are not born, so that it might be charged against birth in the case of those to whom it will not be given; rather, it is promised to those who are born and act well, so that birth may neither benefit one who acts badly nor be able to harm one who acts well. For by the faithful and those who act well, birth is improved; but by the faithless and those who act badly, it is made worse. For birth is like a tree that is grafted: if it is grafted with a good shoot, it will become better and be called good; but if it is grafted with a bad shoot, it will become worse and be called not good but evil. So also, if good teaching is joined to birth, it will produce good fruits; but if bad teaching is joined to it, it will produce bad fruits. Therefore, just as a tree is necessary in order that something may be grafted onto it, so birth is necessary in order that there may be something that can make progress. But an objection is raised on the other side: If birth is useful, why are we reborn? We would not be reborn unless birth were useful.

To be reborn is to be renewed, and those who are renewed are restored. Therefore rebirth does not accuse birth, but reshapes it; and what is reshaped is thereby shown to have been well established from the beginning. Therefore, in being reborn we are changed in our nature, through the purification of the body, so that we may be restored to Adam's original condition. It is by the soul's sin that the body has been stained; when it is repaired and improved through faith, the disposition is washed clean: so that just as it had been defiled through contempt of God, so through obedience it may be cleansed, in order to escape the sentence passed on Adam and be able to rise again. If, then, sin began from the soul, why is the nature of the body blamed, since in Adam's sin the cause was not bodily desire, but the soul, enticed by hope of divinity, transgressed God's command so as to subject his body to sin, and men might be born under sin? Yet this in no way harms a man, if he obeys the law of God, except that he dies; and for this very thing God's goodwill has promised a reward, so that, since in devotion to the Creator they are found faithful, yet through Adam's transgression they have been subjected to corruption and death, for this reason they may receive from God the Judge more than was granted to Adam:

that in the future they may be both glorious and possess eternal life, and be called adopted sons of God; so that it is a gain that they have been born. From this point I will now return to the remaining part of the passage. When man was placed in paradise, he received this command: "From every tree that is in paradise for food, you shall eat. But from the tree by which good and evil are distinguished, you shall not eat from it. (Gen. 2:16-17) All

the trees he mentions are fruits for the nourishment of creatures. Indeed, they are called "trees" by one name, but various fruits are understood. Yet all are trees, and there is one kind of eating, though the things eaten are different. For when God had created many fruit-bearing trees for man to eat, as I said, he forbade eating from one tree; so that those who had received everything in their power might have some reverence for the Creator, in that one tree was reserved, whose use they did not have permission for, so that they would remember the condition of the law. But how was the kind of sin understood from the sentence? For this sentence applies suitably to a murderer, a criminal, an adulterer, and a disgraced man. Achar also, the son of Charmi, when he had sinned, was condemned to be destroyed along with all his household (Joshua 7:1). How then can this sentence be understood as indicating the kind of sin?

It can be recognized that it was a great offense, but not understood what kind of offense it was. For we know that others have been condemned by this sentence, though they are known to have sinned in different ways. Both the Amorites and the Sodomites are known to have perished with all their own. Therefore it happens that people guilty of one sin are struck by different sentences, and sinners of different crimes are punished by one and the same kind. Therefore from the sentence given to Adam and Eve the type of their sin cannot be understood. For although their sin was one, yet each, man and woman, received the sentence according to their own person; and likewise the serpent, so that they would not only fail to remain as they had been made, but that labor would also be added to them as punishment. For when all cattle and living creatures had been made subject to man, as we read (Gen. 1:26), the serpent, contrary to this order, raised itself up and by deceit and fraud brought man, once deceived, into subjection to itself. For without doubt whoever captures someone makes that person beneath himself. Therefore, so that the serpent's cunning would not have its effect, God's sentence calls it back and brings it down further than it had been made, lest it should be above man, so that by its craftiness it would not only grieve that it had gained nothing, but also that it had become worse.

For although it is read to have been more wise than the other beasts, after it deceived man it was made more cursed than all the beasts of the earth. After the sentence given upon the man, the sentence upon the woman, the sentence upon the serpent, it follows that the woman also, whom he had joined to himself for the despising of God's law, should receive her sentence. He says to her: "Multiplying I will multiply your hardships and your groaning: in sorrow you shall bear children, and to your husband shall be your turning, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16). No one confirms what he reproves. If children were therefore granted because she had seized intercourse, then the violation has consulted more. But since he said, "In sorrow you shall bear children," if you think that generation took its beginning from there, where then is what was said, "Increase and multiply"? Understand therefore that this was added only as punishment, so that what had previously been granted with joy should be subjected to sorrow as penalty; and in order that a worse and multiplied punishment should always press upon the woman, the turning to the man is added, so that from this her pain might be renewed again. If the Lord was condemning intercourse, why

did he add among the things imposed, "And to your husband shall be your turning"? No one establishes as a punishment what he condemns;

for punishment is of course contrary to condemnation, and never arises from the same thing, but from what is opposed to it. If they were in one and the same, no one would fear condemnation. Then someone would award this as a favor, from that very thing in which he saw the law transgressed. This would be to confirm, not to punish, the sin, if for this reason the woman's turning to the man, and, from that which she practices and not from that which is true, turning, given simply before, were believed to have been imposed upon her as punishment together with a final servitude, because through the woman granted to him the man had been made subject. And without doubt she seemed superior, whose advice he used, thinking that what she urged would benefit him, so that the work of God might appear destroyed by the serpent's cunning. This is restored by the sentence established by God, so that the woman returns, humbled, to the subjection of her condition under the man, as it had been ordained; and that is added to her which is added as punishment, when she hears, "Multiplying I will multiply your sorrows and your groaning: in sorrow you shall bear children, and to your husband shall be your turning, and he shall rule over you. Had it been decreed otherwise than that the woman should be subject to the rule of the man? From this, therefore, it is clear that the woman has been called back to what she was, with an addition.

Therefore he says, "Multiplying I will multiply your sorrows and your groaning. What he multiplies, he increases in what already exists, not in what does not exist, it seems he is working. By this sentence, therefore, that had gone before, "Increase and multiply" (Gen. 1:22, 28), the work of creating does not begin, but the ruin of the creature to which it had been granted. To the woman, sorrow is added in bearing children, difficulty is imposed, but no new form of procreation is constructed. For if generation is rightly thought to arise from this, it can rather be understood that generation came from the serpent's creativity than from the Lord's; and it is truly, as he said, "Brood of vipers" (Matt. 3:7). But if anyone thinks himself therefore born, let him consider what he deserves, that on account of sin his pain in childbirth might be increased, so that she who was going to have only a little pain, would have it increased because of the sin in having children: for they are born with groaning and sorrow, and those born are not regarded without grief. Now for the third time such a sentence is pronounced upon the man: "Because you have listened," he says, "to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat, cursed is the earth in your works, and in sorrows you shall eat of it all the days of your life: thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you" (Gen. 3:17–18).

And here too Adam is called back to that for which he had been made, but with a loss. For previously he had been placed to till the earth simply, so that the result of his labor might follow him; but when he despised God's command, believing that by the serpent's counsel things would be better provided for him than God had made them, he is recalled to his former appointment with the disadvantage of toil; so that the earth would by no means

respond to him according to his labor, being cursed not for itself, but for his works, so that it might be shown that God's purpose cannot be overthrown, nor can anyone provide better than God. For no one can love another's work more than he who made it himself, as the Apostle says, because, he says, no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ also does the Church (Eph. 5:29). Let us now see whether the following things in the Law agree with its beginnings. When Abraham had pleased God, among the other things that pertain to the reward of his faith, although he was old, he was judged worthy to beget one son (Gen. 18:10). How then can it be blamed as though it were a reward granted, that God should fulfill the will of one who had done God's own will? That will would not have been fulfilled unless it were harmless;

nor would God fulfill what He saw was asked badly or ignorantly, especially by one who was pleasing to Him; for even a man should not do that. And Anna, though she was barren and loved God, asked to have a son and received one (1 Sam. 1); and if this had been something contrary, she could have been warned by Him whom she loved not to ask for a harmful thing. And Samuel, most holy, who was born from her, begot sons, yet did not lessen the merits of his righteousness. From his earliest years he was always advancing, so that in old age he might be praised by a fuller testimony of God. And Zacharias the priest, a just man, in his old age begot a son by God's command; and before that son was born, he merited to prophesy (Luke 1:5). On what grounds, then, is that accused which is clearly shown not to be harmful? And who will deny that what harms no one ought to be called good? And to say something here about the Apostles, which pertains to strengthening the case: certainly Saint John was the guardian of chastity; but his fellow disciple, that is, Saint Peter, is known to have had a wife; and to receive the primacy among the Apostles, the begetting of children was no obstacle to him. How then can that be thought worthy of condemnation which does not hinder merit?

Therefore the Apostle shows that one who has a wife, if he keeps the commandments in other respects, can and ought to be made a priest. For if it were unlawful, he certainly could not say that a sinner ought to be made a priest. And what is clearer? It is the voice of the same Apostle who says: "Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:25). For when the Corinthians were harassed by heretics who, in hypocrisy, taught that marriages must be condemned, they consulted the Apostle by letter whether it was permitted to marry or to dismiss a wife. Then the Apostle commanded that a wife ought not to depart from her husband; and when he had the occasion to say, if he had known that it should be taught so, that it is not permitted to marry, he showed that he could not teach what had not been handed down to him. But which of the disciples would teach what was not handed down by the Master? Or who would not listen to him preaching: "I want younger women to marry, to bear children" (1 Tim. 5:14)? But perhaps it may be said: If it is permitted and good to marry, why is it not permitted for priests to have wives? that is, that once ordained, they may no longer have marital relations? Who does not know that each state has its own law? For there are things which absolutely and generally are not permitted to all;

there are also things which are permitted to some and not permitted to others; and there are things which are sometimes permitted and sometimes not permitted. Fornication is never permitted to anyone; trade, however, is sometimes permitted and sometimes not permitted. For before a man enters church office, he is permitted to trade; once he has become a cleric, it is no longer permitted. And for a Christian to have relations with his wife is sometimes permitted and sometimes not permitted. Because on days of solemn procession it is sometimes not permitted to have relations; since even lawful things must be abstained from, that what is asked may be more easily obtained. Therefore the Apostle says it is necessary to abstain for a time by mutual consent, that one may devote oneself to prayer (1 Cor. 7:5). For according to the Law, on a fast day it is not permitted to strike or to quarrel, afterwards it is permitted; because greater reverence is owed to the things of God. Is everything that is permitted before others permitted also before the emperor? How much more in the things of God? And therefore His bishop must be purer than others: for he seems to bear His person, being His vicar; so that what is permitted to others is not permitted to him, because he must of necessity daily act in the place of Christ, either to pray for the people, or to offer, or to baptize. And not only is intercourse forbidden to this man, but also to his minister:

because he ought to be cleaner, since the things he ministers are holy. For just as, in comparison with a lamp, darkness is not only dim but also filthy, whereas in comparison with the stars a lamp is gloom, and in comparison with the sun the stars are murky, and in comparison with the brightness of God the sun is night; so also the things that are lawful and pure for us, in comparison with God's dignity are as though unlawful and impure; for though they are good, they do not befit the person of God. Is not the tunic of a man of moderate station, though clean, yet filthy and unsuitable for an emperor? Likewise a Saxon cloak for a senator? And therefore the bishops of God must be purer than others, because they bear the person of Christ, and the ministers of God must be cleaner. For no one serves the emperor without carefulness; therefore they serve clothed in bright and clean garments. But because God by nature is most radiant, it is necessary that His ministers be clean by nature rather than by garments; to whom be praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(Genesis 3:1) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 31. WHETHER, WITH THE WOMAN, A SERPENT SPOKE ACCORDING TO ITS NATURE, OR WHETHER THE SERPENT, ACTUALLY MEANING THE DEVIL, DECEIVED HER? — As far as the historical account is concerned, the serpent is called such by nature, being said to be wiser than all the other beasts that the Lord God had made upon the earth. Indeed, God even pronounced a sentence upon the serpent. For what wonder is it if the Devil was wiser than the beasts, of whom the Apostle says among other things, "Do you not know the depths of Satan? (2 Cor. 2:11). Moreover, it was so truly a serpent by nature that it was told, "Upon your breast and belly you shall crawl, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life" (Gen. 3:14). These things are far removed from the condition of Satan, because he is neither bodily nor mortal. And if the sentence is considered in itself, it will be seen that the sentence given has not harmed the serpent: rather, it was commanded

to remain in that state in which it was made. For since it was made a servant of Satan for the overthrow of man, to whom God had subjected all things, God, in that very subjection in which He had subjected all things to man, repressed the pride of the serpent, by which it had begun to be the agent of arrogance. For man seemed to have been placed beneath the serpent, through whom, after receiving counsel, he despised the law given to him.

And since serpents are wise, the Lord confirms this in the Gospel, saying, "Be wise as serpents" (Matt. 10:16). Therefore, since it is clear that a true serpent spoke with Eve, what remains is to discern whether it could have been so wise and cunning as to deceive her by trickery. For if it was more wise than the other beasts, it was not, however, more wise than human beings, since no animal is rational except man. Therefore it is impossible that the serpent itself devised such subtlety: although it is called wise, it is not so beyond its nature. For it does not deliberate or devise or take counsel. Therefore, that it was the Devil who through the serpent bypassed the woman is beyond doubt. By associating himself with the serpent, he acted through it as through an instrument, so that the woman would not recognize the hidden deceit of the Devil, knowing that the serpent was wise. And therefore, though the sentence was given in a bodily form, it fell spiritually upon Satan, because a sentence holds the guilty party. For the sentence was not given by man, who might perhaps destroy an innocent person through error or ill will, but by God, who certainly cannot be deceived, so that His sentence binds only him who is guilty. Since Satan is invisible, yet worked his deceit bodily, the sentence appears to have been given bodily, so that it might spiritually bind him whose deed brought about the pronouncement of the sentence.

For Satan, having been cast out from the most sacred dwellings of heaven, thrashes upon the earth, always groaning in utmost shamelessness. But it may perhaps be asked, In what language do you think the serpent spoke to the woman? Surely with the serpent's own mouth. For even today there are people who understand the barking of dogs, the howling of wolves, the trumpeting of elephants, and the crowing of roosters; why then could not the still unrefined woman know and understand the hissing of serpents, since we know many people who can distinguish the voices of birds? And it is also certain that the Devil uses the tongue of that body into which he has entered; otherwise he could not have deceived the woman. And therefore, he spoke through the serpent with the serpent's mouth.

(Genesis 3:7-9) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 19. WAS ADAM'S BODY, WHEN IT WAS CREATED, IMMORTAL OR SUBJECT TO DEATH? — God made man in such a way that, as long as he did not sin, he would flourish in immortality: so that he himself would be the author for himself either of life or of death; that by guarding himself from sin, he would, by his own effort, rejoice that he was immortal; but by becoming careless, he would blame himself, because he had begun to be mortal. For as long as he continued in the law of his Creator, he was worthy to eat from the tree of life, so that he could not die. For his body was not of such a kind that it would seem impossible for it to be dissolved; rather, the taste of the tree of life restrained the body's corruption. Indeed, even after the sin, it could have remained everlasting, if only it had been permitted him to eat from the tree of life. For how

could he have had an immortal body if it was sustained by food? For the immortal does not need food or drink. Food supplied strength, while the tree of life, in the manner of a medicine, prevented all corruption. Therefore it was for man as though it were an secure wall.

(Genesis 4:1-18) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 5. WHY WAS ABEL'S SACRIFICE ACCEPTED, AND CAIN'S REJECTED? — This can be gathered from the words of the very passage itself, since the story is not wrapped in literary pretense. For Scripture's own language shows Abel to be wise and devout in what he did, but Cain careless and thoughtless, and therefore less devout. Abel, then, chose the better parts from the peaceful flock to offer to the Lord his creator, so that from the things God had created he might offer Him the worthiest, thereby proving both his own submission and God's merit, and showing his personal reverence and God as author of all. Cain, crudely, was unable to present this. Fixing his whole mind in the soil, he could not lift the eyes of his heart to heaven to see what would be worthy of the Creator; he offered whatever gifts to God, of whatever sort they were. The same cause is found in the Jews with their crooked minds. They were often criticized when they carelessly offered their own gifts to God's altar, gifts that did not even seem worthy of men, while the Lord said, "You offer to me the blind and the lame; I will not receive these from your hands. Offer them to your governor or your leader, if he will accept them" (Mal. 1:8). It is agreed among all that the greatest gifts ought to be offered to a person of high rank.

Therefore Cain's gifts were rejected, as the Lord said to him, "Why are you downcast, and why has your face fallen? If you offer rightly, but do not divide rightly, have you not sinned? Be calm. Its turning is toward you, and you shall rule over it" (Gen. 4:6–7). You see, then, that division suffers sin, since, without considering what was worthy of God, he kept the better part for his own use. Therefore he is not criticized because he offered, but because he offered unworthy things. Nor is he condemned on that account, but because, when warned, he refused to correct what he had done. For, "Its turning," He says, "is toward you, and you shall rule over it": that is, since I do not accept it, the gift you have offered is turned back to your own control, so that from then on you might know what you should do. From this envy flared up so that he killed his brother, so that the unrighteous man killed the one who had first shown righteousness, and a bad example might be given to mankind. Therefore, blinded by the rivalry of jealousy, he not only failed to give thanks that he had not been made guilty, and had learned how to correct this, but even added something worse by which he would deserve condemnation.

Such is the case of careless and murderous Cain, like that of the wicked servant who, though his master had forgiven him, went out ungrateful and throttled his fellow servant, so that he might be condemned without excuse both for the past crime forgiven him and for his cruelty against his fellow servant (Matt. 18:27). And yet Cain was not at that moment condemned, but, shamed and guilty, was sent forth under terror upon the earth, so that, if he repented, he might be forgiven. Fearing that someone might kill him for this deed, he said to the Lord,

"My case is too great for me to be left; if you cast me out today from your face, I shall hide myself from the face of the earth, and I shall be groaning and trembling upon the earth. And whoever finds me will kill me. (Gen. 4:14) Terrified, then, by the words of the just Judge, Cain fears being despised by the Lord, so much so that he thinks he must flee even from the sight of men; knowing that whoever lives under God's wrath may also be killed by man. But what does the Lord answer him? "Not so," He says—that is, I did not spare you, though you do not deserve to live, so that you might be killed by someone; but so that you might groan and tremble, as one who first gave an evil example upon the earth, when the fruit from the ground does not answer to your labors.

Therefore He says, "Whoever kills Cain will pay sevenfold vengeance. (Gen. 4:15) This sentence shows that Cain is rightly to be condemned. For when he saw that a law was given with such a threat, so that no one should imitate his deed, he began to fear more, knowing what evil he had committed. So God promises sevenfold vengeance if anyone should aspire to this crime, so that, seeing that Cain had been made guilty by this act, and while the revelation of the law was not yet clear, he might know that he would be punished sevenfold if he did not avoid it; so that the knowledge of the law would add six plagues beyond what Cain had deserved, and with Cain's plague the vengeance would be counted as seven. By this same number those are to be rewarded who leave all things and follow the Lord, and in the future will have eternal life. This is the sign the Lord set upon Cain, lest anyone who found him should kill him (Gen. 4:13–15). In the case of a murder, a law has been set that if anyone commits homicide, since every murder is homicide, he shall be seven times more guilty than Cain was, so that, terrified by such severity, others may restrain themselves from this crime.

(Genesis 4:23) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 6. DID LAMECH KILL CAIN, AS SOME THINK? — Those who think this are mistaken, believing that when Lamech spoke of Cain he meant, "I killed a man who hurt me, a young man who covered me with wounds. (Gen. 4:24) By then Lamech had already been born in the fifth generation from Cain, that is, from Methuselah, Cain's great grandson. Lamech mentions this to show that anyone who sins under a revealed law must be bound more strictly. And therefore, if after Cain his imitator was avenged seven times, how much more must vengeance be taken on the one whom neither Cain's deed and correction, nor the sentence afterward passed on him, was able to terrify, so as to turn his will away from so wicked and cruel a crime? Therefore, after Cain, Lamech committed this murder, and undoubtedly, in line with what was said above, he paid sevenfold vengeance. And he shows what would happen after Lamech to whoever followed his example, when he says, "But on Lamech seventy seven times" (Gen. 4:23–24). Since a wicked deed not followed by repentance is struck with seventy seven blows of punishment, therefore also the Savior commanded that one who sins seventy seven times, if he turns back, is yet to be forgiven (Matt. 18:22). But so that no one may think another committed murder after Cain and before

Lamech, because Lamech said, "Cain is avenged" (Gen. 4:24, according to the LXX), as though it had already happened:

how could Lamech say of himself that vengeance had already been taken on him, when the murder he confessed to committing was still recent? For it is certain that every act carries its sentence with it. When there is no other expectation than that, once the deed is complete, its due recompense is known, the future is considered as already done. Indeed it was said to Adam and Eve, "On the day you eat of it, you shall die by death" (Gen. 2:17); and certainly they did not die immediately, but after a long interval of time. Yet because they had already lost the hope of immortality, their future death was called present, since it began to be held in view as certain. Therefore, since Lamech admits that he killed a young man, and since it is clear that Cain could not have lived until that time, or if he did, which seems impossible, he would have been older, Lamech did not kill him.

(Genesis 6:3) 2ND CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 5. WHY DOES GOD SAY, "MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT REMAIN IN THESE MEN, BECAUSE THEY ARE FLESH; THEIR YEARS SHALL BE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY," ETC. (Gen. 6:3)? — Since in those days there were giants upon the earth, lethal and proud, arrogant by the greatness of their stature, following the desires of the flesh, born apostates; then, when this displeased God, He promised that He would destroy the human race by a flood and set a time, so that if anyone, upon hearing of God's wrath and anger in this matter, should wish to correct himself, he would have a span of time to reform. In fact, the ark seems for this reason to have been built over a hundred years. But it is said that twenty years elapsed before the beginning of the ark. Yet the narrative, by what it adds after mentioning the number of Noah's years, seems to obscure this. For this decree is understood to have been issued before Noah was five hundred years old. For what does it say? "My Spirit shall not remain in these men"; and therefore it adds, "Because wickedness has increased upon the earth, I will blot out man from the face of the earth, down to cattle"; which certainly was fulfilled when the flood took place. For even after the flood we remember that men lived many years: and it is recorded that Aaron, the brother of Moses, lived one hundred and twenty-three years (Num. 33:38–39).

But Moses himself, so that he could not pass beyond one hundred and twenty years, brought it about that he did not glorify God at the waters of contradiction. For he was to enter into the land of promise, had not sin stood in the way (Deut. 34:7 and 32:48–52). For it seems to some that this statement was made with reference to the time of Moses, since we find that Jehoiada the priest lived one hundred and thirty years (2 Chron. 24:15).

(Genesis 11:14-21). 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 108. ON THE HEBREW LANGUAGE, WHERE IT TOOK ITS NAME. — Everything that is from God is rational, and for each thing its origin gives the reason why it exists, so that it may not seem to be named or to subsist without sense, but may show a designation which is understood to be the head, as it were, of its own name. Therefore

the reason of a man is the cause by which he stands. Now he stands from four elements, namely earth, air, water, and fire, with God alone as author; the fifth is the soul, as it were a charioteer, to drive the material and shaped body, and as its commander. And from the ground [humus] we have taken our beginning, and from its name we are called. For we are called "men" [homines] because of the ground [humus], from which our father has his external origin. Therefore cause and reason bring it about that from the name of one person the others subsisting under the same name are called by it, signifying him in themselves. Accordingly, let us see whether it fits, as some think, that the Hebrews are so called from Heber. For as far as the name is concerned, the origin of this name seems to descend from him; for Heber is earlier than Abraham. But if this were true, those who are of the tribe of Heber ought, after him, to be called by the same name; for from Heber Abraham was born in the seventh generation (Gen. 11:16, 26).

If therefore, after Abraham, or Abraham himself, was called a Hebrew, then without doubt the Hebrews are named from Heber; but if it is not read that they were called Hebrews in the time of Abraham, but after Abraham, then clearly they are not said to be from Heber, but from Abraham: since the sons of Abraham are known to have been first called by this name. For in Genesis Joseph and his brothers are called Hebrews (Gen. 43:32). For knowing that Abraham was he who had come down from Syria into Canaan (Gen. 12:4), and had been multiplied, being filled with all resources for the sake of faith, called king and prophet and father of many nations (Gen. 17:4), who with his three hundred and eighteen home-born servants struck down five kings (Gen. 14:14–15); since these things were not done and spoken in a corner, so as to be hidden, they called those who were of his seed Hebrews. It belonged therefore to the rank and merit of Abraham that he should become the head of those who draw their lineage from him. For by God's judgment he was placed as prince and origin in the land of Canaan, so that those born from him should have another profession and way of life than he had before he went down into the land of Canaan; for he, being renewed, should establish a new people in devotion to God. Therefore it is that the apostle Paul confesses himself to be "a Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5);

for this seemed to be a title of dignity. It was a testimony and nobility of lineage that they should be surnamed from his name, who had pleased God in many ways and who was their source. Let this be rejected if it does not agree with reason; let it be despised if it is unlike; let it be torn up if it is foreign to the merits of Abraham; and let us be refuted as his flatterers. What hostility is this against Abraham, what rivalry, by which his enemies belittle him? And who are these, if not those who are called his sons? In what respect does Abraham displease them, that this glory should be thought unfamiliar to him? And what is there in Heber to please them, that he should be said to have this primacy? If his way of life could be investigated, it would perhaps be found that he worshipped idols, like Thare and Nachor and the father of Nachor, who clearly were not far from him, as Joshua testifies, who says they worshipped idols (Josh. 24:2). Or at least let those who are on the other side show by what reasoning this must be claimed for Heber, lest perhaps we suppress his merit; but there is none, because the Scriptures are common to us all, and it is in the open what is

owed to each. For if they think this ought to be defended from the name alone, it is weak and unlikely.

It would then rightly be vindicated for his name if there were some proofs of causes which confirmed this: for some people of the same name could claim as theirs what does not belong to them. And therefore this is true, because it is established not only by the name, but also by clear reasoning. For since by God's gracious choice it was brought about that in Abraham the human race should be made alive, and that he should become a saving pattern for men, it is not doubtful to anyone that in him was restored that which had been lost through the fault of human frailty. For he was set as a certain image, that after his likeness the human race might return to God, so that both the worship of God and the word which had previously been given for the use of men might be restored to humankind: because as in the beginning in Adam there was the image of God, so that God might be known on earth, so after the ruins of the human race and the forgetfulness of the true God, in Abraham it was refashioned, so that from him faith in God might begin, and again sprout forth into fruit. Where it is not unreasonable that from his name the people that began from him should obtain their designation.

But lest perhaps they suffer doubt because of the name Heber, since the name Heber sounds closer to "Hebrews," because they are called Hebrews, not Abraheans, let them notice again that they are called Hebrews, not Heberaeans: for he was called Heber, not Hebre. If therefore they think this point must be attacked from here, they suffer what they do, and neither of us will have the victory on this side, except the one who, by giving a reason in order, shows that what he asserts is true. For he who is equal in one matter must be said to have lost if he is found unequal in another. For the letter was changed because of the sound, so that they should say "Hebraei" instead of "Hebrei," because it sounds better. For also from Juda they are not called "Judai" but "Judaei. For wherever it seemed awkward, the letter was changed, so that the word might have a harmonious sound. For instead of medio die, we say meridie, and there are many such cases. Therefore it is fitting, as has been shown, that from the name of Abraham both the language and the people should be named. This, then, is the language which we say was first given to Adam and the others, which, because of the presumption shown in building the tower, we believe was scattered into many and confused, so that no longer this one language, but many derived from it, came to exist through the alteration of certain expressions:

so that they would have one appearance, and yet it would not be lost, but would be completely mixed in with the other languages. For this was done then, so that people would not understand one another and dare greater things (Gen. 11:8). Therefore, it is understood that as many languages then existed as there were people who, being scattered, each in the places where they lived, established a language of their own. But if this is not thought to be the very language which is written to have been then the one language, it will remain to be said that it was gathered bit by bit from the other languages and fitted together into the form of a single language which Abraham used; so that, because he was the father of

many nations, he would have a speech composed from many languages, and would be wholly renewed in every respect. But since those whom the Book of Genesis mentions as of one voice and speech (Gen. 11:31), are read to have migrated from the East, and then again to have been scattered by God over the face of the whole earth, that language certainly did not remain there, so that the language first given should remain. Indeed, it does not have any land among humankind, as the other languages do, nor any nation, except the Jews; because it was given to the first man in Paradise. And after the languages were confused, this language, which is now called Hebrew, was nowhere to be found.

If, then, it has nowhere a place or a nation; and Abraham was by race a Syrian; where came this language to Abraham or to the rest of his offspring, unless because it is either that first language, or at least put together from many? For we see that some languages have certain words similar to it. But this does not so well accord with reason as the other view, if it is said to be itself the first: reason shows that this was not done without purpose. Abraham ought to have had the very language which the first man had, so that Moses, when he came to describe the creation and man made by God, would use that speech with which God spoke and named the man Adam, and Adam's wife was called Eve: so that this speech would be in the book of Moses, which had also been in those whom he describes, so that he might truly show in all things the re-establishment of the first cause and the divine favor in Abraham.

(Genesis 11) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 117. ON ABRAHAM. — The faith of this patriarch was so exceptional and wondrous that all other righteous people confess him, by God's judgment, as the father of belief; nor is anyone worthy of and dear to God unless he is called his son. The right of his honor and value is faith, which he does not hesitate to give even to incredible things, and among other privileges he was also found worthy to see the Savior in hope of the future Incarnation, as the Lord said and proved to the Jews: Your father Abraham rejoiced that he might see my day; and he saw it and was glad (Jn. 8:56). For since he became father by the value of faith, it was fitting that he should foresee the hope of his future children, which, through the gracious and provident God, would overflow from a human and devout father upon his obedient sons as an inheritance. Let us now see what this faith believed, so that it reached such honor and glory by divine judgment. We have praised the faith, but we have not yet said what it believed. For the Lord, leading him out, showed him the stars of heaven and said: If you can, number them. So shall your seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:5–6).

It would not be a great thing to have believed God, except that what he believed the world judges not to be believed and as foolish, because this is not within the hope of things according to nature. Therefore Abraham, being one out of the world because he believed this, was separated from worldly people and justified. Therefore, believing this is made great by the unbelieving wisdom of the world, and to have believed against its hope is of the highest value. For the despair of worldly men is the value and hope of Christians. For the cause of evil becomes the reward of good: faith is stronger and fuller when it commits itself more

to things that are incredible. A man already dried up and from an aged wife believed he would have seed so abundant that it could not be numbered; looking not so much at what was shown, but at him who showed it, not thinking that he could lie. And therefore it was counted to him for righteousness. For it is dull to believe a thing absurd and known to be impossible, unless there is a person who persuades us to believe it. Therefore Abraham is admirable for his faith and for the discernment of his heart, since he both believes that which is incredible and commits himself to him to whom not to believe is both foolish and dangerous.

This shows our faith to be reasonable, that it believes this not of any other than of God, that he is able to do what he promises. This, then, is the bulwark of faith, this its triumph. Seeing this, some wise men of the world, because the nature of things cannot do this, say it is foolish to believe. Ignorant that, according to the Apostle, what is foolish of God is wiser than men (1 Cor. 1:25). For they would rightly judge us foolish if we believed of the nature of things what is proved not to be possible. But we, on the contrary, believe that God will be able to do what nature cannot, if he has promised it. What folly can be found in this matter? If, however, the work which is believed possible is unworthy of God, then faith is rightly compared to dullness; but if it is worthy, precisely because it is impossible to the creature, why is the faith not to be praised which attributes so much to the Creator as the creature is denied power to do? Great and admirable, then, is Abraham, who did not doubt to believe God against the world's judgment, because he can do what he promises. A Chaldean by birth, he appears as a master of belief: though skilled in astrology, he still placed God above human counsel, judging it fitting that such things be believed of God as cannot be investigated in respect to how they may come to pass.

For he strengthened his own weakness by the power of God, since God determined, to proclaim the unique greatness of his majesty, to perform things that are impossible and unheard of to the world; and by doing this he would show himself Lord of the creature, and the creature would subject itself to him whose work would seem impossible to all others; by whose unbelief the most faithful Abraham is raised higher. For his faith is the punishment of unbelievers; the deceit of unbelievers is his glory. For he is the father of the faithful and the judge of the unfaithful. By his example, the good are granted eternal life, and the wicked will receive eternal punishments. In that time, when the world was still small in knowledge and not yet enlightened by signs and wonders that might draw it to faith, he did not deny faith to God against his own understanding. Therefore holy Abraham was given as a most faithful example to the human race. In him all nations were prefigured as coming to salvation through faith; and that the overflowing increase of his faith might be known, he is tested and ordered to sacrifice his son to God, a thing that had never before been done, and he is neither disturbed by the novelty of the deed nor does he dispute whether a murder ought to be committed at God's command, he who had threatened that murder must not be committed.

Therefore, fearless and secure about the will of God, he does not hesitate to think that what God commands is provident: and this son, whom two old people received through a promise, the reward of faith, the witness of virtues, and in whom all hope of the promised future seed was held. That he might fulfill this with complete devotion, he did not tell his mother, lest she bring some obstacle to his obedience, knowing that mothers are the more inclined in love toward the affection they bear for their children; therefore he concealed it from her, not doubting that what God commands must be fulfilled, so that by this example we might be taught to carry out God's commands with all carefulness. For if the most faithful Abraham is found obedient in a matter so grave and harsh, how much more should we, to whom things are commanded that can be accepted? O faith dedicated to God, and hope firm in the Lord, which is so dear and sweet that it is preferred to the affections of parents and children, as Scripture says: Taste and see, that the Lord is sweet (Ps. 33:9)! But our patriarch, most faithful Abraham, because he was a prophet, knew what was to follow. Therefore, in accordance with what the Lord had just said, he then acted, so that he preferred God in love over his son, dear as he was, with the Lord saying, "If anyone loves father or mother, or children more than me, he is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37).

Therefore the Patriarch, in order to be found worthy of the Lord above all others, did not refuse even to kill his son.

(Genesis 13:5-18) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 44. HOW COULD IT BE SHOWN FROM THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHETS, ALREADY RECEIVED AMONG THE GENTILES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, THAT THE PROMISE WHICH GOD MADE TO ABRAHAM HAS BEEN FULFILLED THROUGH THE COMING OF CHRIST? — It is written in the prophet Isaiah: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. 56:7). But perhaps the Jews will say: The house of God, that is, the synagogue, is open to all. Nor do we object; yet in such a way that, as always, the circumcised join themselves to the Law. For their Law is that by which they were commanded, after the manner of Abraham, to be circumcised. Therefore, nothing new can seem to be signified by this example of the prophet; since anyone coming from any nation has never been forbidden from the beginning of Judaism to join himself to the Law. Nothing new spoken by the prophet can be thought, indeed it would be unessential, if the Gentiles have always been admitted to serve the God of Abraham and are never found to have been forbidden. And this is true, because those who submit themselves to the Law are never found not to have been received. If, therefore, these things are so, it seems needless that the prophet admonished about what, once handed down, has always been observed. And could anyone so dull be found as to say that the prophet spoke something unnecessary and empty?

I do not know for whom it would be safe even to hear this and not oppose it. For since the Jewish people, on account of the sins which they committed against God, seeking help from idols, were often rebuked by the prophets but refused to enter upon the path of repentance so as to return to God, God, in reproach of them, indicated that He would open His house

to all nations to pray, so that, the Jews being cast off, He would show that He would place others in their place. For if the nations have always been admitted to the Law, as was said above, how could the prophet say that this would happen in the future, unless he meant something different from what had been previously commanded? He could not speak of a thing which was done daily as though it were going to come. Therefore it is clear that this tends to the ruin of the Jews, to whom the prophet shows that, with them removed, others were to be called and were to receive the house of God's grace, which had been promised to the Jews. What that promise is, the prophet Isaiah teaches, saying: "There shall come out of Zion one who shall deliver and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; and this shall be my covenant with them" (Isa. 59:20–21). Therefore this covenant is the removal of sins. This is the New Covenant, which was promised through Jeremiah, who says:

"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will accomplish for the house of Israel and the house of Judah a new covenant, not according to the covenant which I arranged for their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant, and I neglected them, says the Lord" (Jer. 31:31–32). This is their transgression, when they made the image of a calf; then they corrupted His covenant. Therefore also the tablets on which the Law had been given were shattered under the mountain (Exod. 32:4, 19), because they deserved to receive more severe precepts. But because God is mild and merciful, He promised through the prophets that He would change the Law, so as to give another Covenant, which would differ from that which He had given before: that not only what was burdensome might be changed, but also those things which were given in figure, that is, the sabbath and circumcision; so that, since they had long been oppressed, being relieved in all things, they might give grateful thanks to God as petitioners. And because, persisting in their fathers' transgression, they refused to turn their minds away from idols, He testifies that the nations, together with the remnant who kept the faith, will enjoy the Covenant which He had said would come: so that the faithless Jews might be tortured in a twofold way.

For they were burdened for a time by the precepts, and in the future they will pay fitting penalties, because they were found faithful neither in the Old nor in the New Covenant. So He said that He would give a New Covenant, so that the Old, which had been given to the Fathers, would cease. And therefore, whoever serves God in this Covenant does not observe the sabbath, nor new moons, nor circumcision, nor distinctions of foods; but has only the fear of God in faith: because he will not be justified by the Law, but by faith, as the prophet Habakkuk says: "For the righteous shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4); so that he no longer uses many precepts to gain favor with God, but few. Isaiah again, speaking with the same meaning, says: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant of them shall be saved. For the Lord shall accomplish and cut short His word in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short word upon the whole earth" (Isa. 10:22–23). For the remnant who will persevere in the faith of the promise, while the others do not believe, He shows the shortened word of the Law: this is the New Covenant which He promised. It would not otherwise be called a Covenant, unless in a similar way this too

were confirmed by the witness of blood, just as the Old Covenant, so that both might have one and the same name:

but in the Old, many precepts, in the New, however, few, as He promised. So that, since He had said that Abraham would be the father of many nations (Gen. 17:4–5), in the same way the sons might be justified as the father had been justified: so that, once those things ceased which began after the faith of Abraham, those who receive the faith by which that same Abraham was justified might be sons of Abraham, as was said by the Lord. And this is neither strange nor unheard of, that men should be justified without care for the sabbath and circumcision and the rest of the commandments of this sort. For Enoch did not please God by this, that he might be translated; nor was Noah found righteous in the flood by observing this alone; nor was Abraham himself justified after he was circumcised: "Abraham," it says, "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (Heb. 11:5, 7, 8; Rom. 4:3). Then he was circumcised, so that there might be in him a sign that, though he was old, he believed that he would have a son. Therefore it is not circumcision that commends Abraham, but faith. And so, for those who believe, faith is sufficient for justification, that they may be sons of Abraham in faith, not in circumcision, because they have no need of circumcision. For what Abraham believed is not what is believed in their case.

But the Jews were therefore ordered to be circumcised, so that they might have the sign of Abraham's faith, not of their own faith, but so that they might be known as his sons according to the flesh. Yet if they believe, they will be his sons also in justification. For what advantage is it to be called the son of a powerful man if one is powerless, except that it is even more harmful? For it is a disgrace to be the son of a noble and glorious man without honor. Indeed, bodily circumcision is so far from being a merit that God says through the prophet Jeremiah that He will take vengeance on all the circumcised in foreskin, if they are not circumcised in heart (Jer. 4:4). Yet He is not angry with those who are circumcised in heart but uncircumcised in flesh, because no one has ever pleased God without the circumcision of the heart. Whoever, therefore, are circumcised in the flesh signify the lineage of Abraham according to the flesh; but those who are circumcised in heart signify the lineage of God according to faith, because, being circumcised from all worldly error, they confess God as their Father. What then does the circumcision of the flesh profit, if, when faith is lacking in the Jew, he cannot attain to the merit of Abraham? Or what harm is there in foreskin, when no one attains to his righteousness except the one who has followed the faith of Abraham?

They therefore glory in the circumcision of the flesh in vain, since they see that it has no merit before God. And since, as has been shown, it is better to have faith than circumcision, the Gentiles are better than the Jews; for the Gentiles have faith, the Jews have circumcision. And whom do you think He recognizes more as sons of Abraham: those who are like him according to the flesh, or those who are like him in faith? But the faith of Abraham bears witness. And therefore he glories not in the flesh but in faith. For this reason he has received as sons those whom he sees to be imitators of his glory. For how can he call those sons from whom he sees a shrinking back from that by which he pleased God and was

justified? He will therefore be able to judge them not as his sons, but as his enemies. For they appear to be envious of him, despising the faith through which he was glorified. Nor is it surprising if the Jews are found untrusting, not at all accepting the New Testament, when we know that they were not faithful even in the Old. They were always rebellious and disrespectful against God, and therefore they received such commandments by which their necks, which were unbending, might be pressed down. For they never wished to hope for good things from God, whose such great benefits and such wondrous powers they had come to know.

Therefore it is that, among other things, the prophet Ezekiel says: "I lifted up my hand to them in the desert, that they should be scattered among the nations and dispersed in the lands, because they did not perform my ordinances and rejected my commandments. And in what follows: "I gave them laws that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live in them" (Ezek. 20:23–25). He shows for what reason such great and so harsh commandments were given to them: because they proved ungrateful for such great benefits, and, justice dictating, they were to be pressed by more severe precepts. Therefore He called them "not good," although they are just: because they did not lead them to justification, but to destruction; and although a punishment rightly inflicted, yet for the one who suffers it, it is not a good. After these things, however, because God is merciful, He promised that He would give the New Testament, in which the shortening of the Law would justify believers, just as Abraham was justified: so that, with new moons and the sabbath and circumcision and the other precepts ceasing, not those that belong to the natural law, that is, murder, adultery, and such things, they might be justified as Abraham was. For, with the faith of Abraham renewed, He willed that all things should cease, so that the time might be such as it was when Abraham believed. But perhaps the Jews say:

"If those things that were given by Moses are said to cease through the shortening of the Law, was circumcision given by Moses so that it should cease? And therefore we have the sign of our father, because we are the sons of Abraham, a sign which, for the sake of the testimony of our lineage, ought not to cease. Circumcision indeed had to be observed in its time, that is, before the New Testament which had been promised was given. But when, by the grace of God, the burdens of the Law were ordered to cease, what need is there of circumcision? Therefore a new Law was given, that is, a spiritual one, so that carnal things might cease, and those who received it might accept its sign: so that just as in the Old Testament they had the sign of Abraham, from whom the Old Testament began, so also in the New they might have the sign of the Savior, who is the institutor of the New Testament. For just as from Abraham they were called Hebrews, so from Christ they are called Christians. Whoever, therefore, are still called Hebrews have not received the New Testament which God promised, bringing to nothing the kindness and mercy of God: for He no longer wished His people to be designated by the name of a man, but agreed to establish them under the name of His Son.

With what courage, then, do the Jews say that we do not use our Law but theirs, when David says, "I will give thanks to you among the nations" (Ps. 17:50), and again, "Rejoice, O nations, with his people"? And to the prophet Jeremiah the Lord says, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you came forth from the womb, I sanctified you; and I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5). Judaism certainly has its own particular signs: for this people is signified either in Jacob, or in Samaria, or in Jerusalem, or in Judea, or in Israel. As for the nations, however, it is clear that He signifies them in a different way than He does the Jews. Therefore Jeremiah is our prophet. For although in all the Prophets God showed that the nations would share in His gift, yet to Jeremiah in particular He says that He has given him to us as a prophet. For he signified that the New Testament would come, which would profit the Gentiles more than the Jews, as now appears clearly. For since the preaching of the New Testament is spread over the whole earth, a faithful Jew is so rarely and with such difficulty found that all the Churches of the New Testament are called "of the nations," as it was said in the prophet Hosea: "I will call that which is not my people, my people; and her that was not beloved, beloved" (Hosea 2:24; Rom. 9:25).

Therefore, the Jews having been rejected, He calls the nations with the same mercy and grace with which He agreed to call Abraham. For Abraham did not come to know the Lord without being called. Therefore, He who agreed to call Abraham likewise agreed to call the nations. Why then do they say, "The Law is ours," when it is clear that the gift of God is for all who are willing? Let this careless violation cease, since the grace of God is common to all. With what shame do they deny that our Christ was promised in the Law, when they see in Him all the signs which the Law foretold as to come? For both according to the promise made to Abraham all nations are justified by believing in Him (Gen. 22:18); and according to the prophet Isaiah He was born of a Virgin (Isa. 7:14) in Bethlehem from the tribe of Judah, as was promised, from the seed of David (Micah 5:2); and in accordance with what Jeremiah prophesied (Jer. 31:31–32), He proclaimed the New Testament which God then promised would come; and after all the signs of power had been shown, He humbled Himself, according to the words of the Prophets; and having suffered all that had been foretold, He rose on the third day, as it is written in the prophet.

And if they inquire about the time of the promise, as it is shown in the prophet Daniel (Dan. 9:24 ff.), they will find it fulfilled in the time when Christ was born and suffered: for from the first year of Darius, king of the Persians, down to the birth and passion of the Lord and the destruction of Jerusalem, which was carried out by Vespasian, chief of the Roman Empire, the seventy weeks were completed, which are four hundred and ninety years, a reckoning made clear through the kingdoms and the successors of the empire. Therefore also it is found calculated by Tertullian in the book which he wrote against the Jews; but, lest this should backfire to his disadvantage, although he calculated correctly, we have passed it over in silence. And who can doubt this number, when now about three hundred years are found in addition to that number? It is therefore shameless, after so many years have been added beyond the time of the coming of the Saviour, to say, "He has not come. Under the Apostles,

or at the time when the Lord was living among men, hatred opposing the truth could still hide itself; so that, although it saw all the signs of the Christ who had been promised in the Savior, it could say that it doubted about the time, to conceal its unbelief.

But afterwards, when many years began to exceed the promised number, what shamelessness it is to deny that He has come, whose coming is known to have been fulfilled both by signs and by times! For when something is full and does not overflow, a combative person may say that it is not full; but overflow closes the mouth of the argumentative. So the Jews, in the time of the Saviour, could say, though deceitfully, that the calculation from the time of Darius to the Lord Christ was not correctly made, so that He might not be acknowledged as the one who had been promised. We are mistaken, they might say, in the years and in the months and in the days of the emperors, and we do not make an exact reckoning. But when the times have extended beyond the prescribed number of years of the promised Christ, no excuse can be put forward to deny that He who has come is the Christ, unless, which God forbid, the one who promised is said to have lied. For when the time of the promise has elapsed, and it is denied that the one who was promised has come, what else is charged against the promiser but falsehood? Yet that He who made the promise is truthful, all the signs teach which were foretold in Christ and are known to have been found in Christ. The Jews, however, while they are ashamed to change themselves, do not consider that there will be a judgment to come.

For nothing is worse than for someone to deny that a thing is true when he understands that it is not a lie.

(Genesis 14:18-24). 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 109. ON MELCHIZEDEK. — We read about Melchizedek in the book of Genesis; about Melchizedek likewise, in a similar manner, in the Epistle to the Hebrews: “Because,” it says, “Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he returned from the slaughter of the kings, and brought out bread and wine, and offered it to him, and blessed him, saying: Blessed are you, Abraham, by the Most High God, who made heaven and earth, who has delivered your enemies into your hands” (Gen. 14:18-20). And in order to indicate who is to be understood under the name of Melchizedek, the Apostle added: “For, without any doubt,” he says, “the lesser is blessed by the better” (Heb. 7:7). He certainly did not refer this to the handing on of ecclesiastical office. For who would question that the rule of the Lord’s ordinance, by which subjects are blessed by the Lord, is better than those who are blessed by it? For the mystery of the Lord operates in those words which contain and recall him. But he wished to show the proper merit and power of his person. Who then is this one, and how great, in comparison with whom Abraham is called “the lesser,” Abraham who is clearly known, in all the faithful, to bear the mark of noble testimony and faith? Therefore this Melchizedek is not to be understood as having blessed Abraham in the same way as human priests do, so as to give a blessing by commission with sincere words;

but as one who, so to speak, possessed a proper blessing which he received, not by words, but by nature, substantially, so that it is his own. The priests, however, whom we call bishops, have a rule ordered and handed down to them in sincere words, and by placing this rule upon people they bless them: yet not those whom they will, but sometimes even those whom they do not will; because the giver of the rule himself knows to whom the most holy blessing ought to be given or poured in. But he who by nature possesses the blessing substantially, whom he calls priest of the Most High God, gives the blessing by his will. For the words of blessing and his nature are in agreement with his will. Nor does he go wrong so as to will it where he ought not, nor refuse where he ought; but to whomever he gives the words, he gives also the effect. Our priests, on the other hand, daily place upon many the name of the Lord and the words of blessing, but in few is there the effect. There are, again, times when those who are better bless themselves. For although one who is holy bows his head to receive a blessing, yet this is because it is not the priest's own possession, but God's invention. For the priest Heli blessed Anna, and the effect followed (1 Sam. 1:17, 20), not by the merit of the priest, but by that of Anna herself, whose pure heart God inspected.

Therefore Melchizedek is said to be better than Abraham, not because of the office of priesthood alone; rather he is also preferred to him by nature, so that he is understood to be beyond men. For it is in no way possible that he who is set before so great a friend of God, and so faithful that, for love and fear of him, he did not hesitate to kill even his most beloved son, should be considered a mere man. By what justice, by what works, could he have merited more than Abraham merited? Nor was there anything further that he could do to enhance the honor of his importance beyond what Abraham did. First, when he did not know God, nor had he seen a sign by which he might be persuaded, when God said to him, "Go out from your land, and from your kindred, and from your father's house" (Gen. 12:1), he did not delay, but immediately obeyed, fulfilling the will not only of the present God, but also of the future Lord. For the Lord says: "Whoever loves house, or parents, or brothers, or relatives more than me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37). What then is Abraham like, and of what kind of merit is he, who fulfilled the commands of the Saviour before they were preached? The Apostle strongly teaches that hospitality must be pursued (Heb. 13:2); Abraham practiced this so diligently and devoutly (Gen. 18:3) that the Apostle seems to have learned from him that this must be preached.

Then, advanced in years, he believed that his offspring would be multiplied in such a way as seems foolish to the wise of this world, like the stars of heaven, so that, before a judgment was passed by the wise of this age, they seem to have been condemned by him. For afterward it was said: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise" (Isa. 29:14; 1 Cor. 1:19). At God's command he was circumcised; which is certainly not done without pain: and he did not take it hard, so as to give his descendants a model of patience. From Sarah his wife, now an old woman, a son is promised to him, and he does not doubt (Gen. 17:17); in order to show to future generations that God's authority must be believed in to such an extent that, even if he commands or promises things that seem irrational, there is no wavering; because his person must be considered more than his words, so that what seems weak or impossible in

the words his person may confirm and make appear possible. For it is God who promises, of whom it must be believed that he can do what seems impossible to human beings. What fault, then, can be judged, when one forms a higher opinion of God than humanity does of itself? Therefore the son given to Abraham by God he does not hesitate to kill at God's command; he does not delay the time;

he is not astonished at God's will, that he should order to be killed the very son whom he had given as a gift of great favor and wonder: he is certain that God's will ought not to be reconsidered by a human being, nor that God's command or deed is without providence. And so that he might fulfill this with every devotion, and swiftly, he does not tell his mother, his wife, not being ignorant that women are more fragile regarding their children and could bring an obstacle to this devotion through the tears of compassion; nor does he reveal it to the boy himself until the hour of his death, so that he might obey the command of God with the full submission of his mind (Gen. 22:3-10); considering this not as murder, but as a holocaust, which was being carried out with a just judge as its author. What greater deeds, then, could Melchizedek perform, by which he might surpass Abraham, whom, as we see, is in no respect found to have been disobedient? For Moses himself, of whom it is read that the Lord spoke to him face to face (Exod. 33:11), when he was sent to the nation and to his brothers, did not want to go (Exod. 4:1). The prophet Jonah broke the command given to him to preach to the Ninevites, and went off to another place where he had not been sent (Jonah 1:1-3).

Job, truly outstanding in all things, nevertheless, moved by the loss of his children, tore his garments and shaved the hair of his head (Job 1:20); Abraham, however, is nowhere read to have been saddened by the death of his most beloved son, the very one he had been ordered to kill with his own hands, nor is he read anywhere to have shuddered when God commanded him. Therefore, through these things it becomes clear that Melchizedek is beyond man, because there was no way he could be better than Abraham except by surpassing him in nature alone. For a nature that is impassible possesses blessedness by its very substance; human birth, however, attains blessedness through deeds. Since it does not have the perfection of divinity, it advances and improves through effort and struggle, becoming better the more it conquers than it is conquered. For if it acted in such a way, which is impossible, that it never sinned, it would become better than God; which is unthinkable, because a nature that can sin as well as not sin, if it always won, would have to be preferred to that nature which does not sin precisely because it is impassible. For it would not seem a great thing not to sin if one could not sin; it is truly magnificent if, being able to sin, one does not sin. This, then, is the difference between the substance of God and that of man: the substance of God is always blessed with the security of its unconquerable eternity;

man's substance, however, becomes blessed through labor. And necessarily one kind of blessedness is that which is impassible, another that of the one who is worn down by tribulations so that he may at some point rejoice. For impassible blessedness lies in this, that it is always blessed; but passible blessedness rejoices, after great perils, to have escaped

death. Therefore it is saddened so that it may be able to rejoice, nor is it perpetually secure because of the passibility of its nature. The impassible, however, is always blessed, because it neither knows sadness nor even suspects that it could be saddened. For even human nature, although it attains blessedness through labor, will not remain unharmed, nor will it lack scars. How could it be otherwise, that nature which, having often engaged in combat and at times been defeated, would not be wounded? But the impassible remains always untouched, unharmed, unbreakable. Therefore Abraham would not be said to be the lesser in comparison with Melchizedek, unless the nature of Melchizedek were superior to that of Abraham. Now what we have said may perhaps seem to belong to human reasoning. But if we look to the Law, far more and greater things will still be said.

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he returned from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, is first interpreted "King of Righteousness," and then "King of Salem," which is "king of peace," without father, without mother, and without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but, made like to the Son of God, he remains a priest forever. And so that he might highlight, in the places where he had signified these things, what he meant, he added this about him: "You see," he says, "how great this man is, to whom Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoils" (Heb. 7:1-4). For in order to show by what power and how great Melchizedek is, he praises Abraham by saying that he is the patriarch, that is, better than all the rest; yet he is least in comparison with Melchizedek. Is it not clear that this one is not merely a man, but better than a man? What does it mean when he says of him that he is king of peace and king of righteousness? Draw nearer and see. From afar, seeing the sun, you think it a lamp; looking at silver, you suppose it to be tin. Can any human being be called king of peace and of righteousness? For peace is proclaimed to men, and likewise righteousness; but this one is called king of peace and righteousness precisely so that righteousness and peace may be known to have their origin from him.

For that which is ruled by him cannot be said to be above him. Men are instructed by righteousness as their teacher and by peace, so as to gain God's favor. This, then, which is the teacher of men, has Melchizedek as its king. How much, then, is Melchizedek better than man, since that which governs men is under him, that is, since he is king of kings? Therefore, when he is called king of righteousness and of peace, he is shown to be their author, so that just as the Lord Jesus is the author of life, so Melchizedek is the author of righteousness and peace; because those who live through Christ are governed, by the dispensation of righteousness and peace, through him. For he pours righteousness and peace into the hearts of God's servants, in order to adorn the discipline of the Lord. We read written in Psalm 84 that "Righteousness and peace have embraced one another, and truth has sprung out of the earth; and to show of what righteousness he was speaking, he said, "Righteousness has looked down from heaven" (Ps. 85:11-12). Scripture points here to the time of the Savior, when the righteousness of God was given to the world through Christ in the revelation of the mystery of the one God that had been previously promised. For it is just that the creature should know the truth of its Creator;

this righteousness, revealed on earth, removed the disharmony that had arisen from the unrighteousness born of an unknown God, and made those who were at odds into people of peace, when it established men long divided into one faith. Therefore righteousness and peace and truth of the One have embraced each other. From the earth has arisen the teacher of righteousness. For the incarnation of Christ has shown what truth about God himself was to be known. Therefore, this is certainly the righteousness of God. Likewise peace also, as the Apostle says: "The God of peace will soon crush Satan" (Rom. 16:20). I do not see how this can be distinguished: since the God of peace is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ himself as well; for he says, "My peace I give to you" (Jn. 14:27); how then can it be said of Melchizedek that he is king of righteousness and peace, and by what reasoning can he be set apart, I do not understand. I think that, as far as the matter at hand is concerned, there is no difference between "king of peace" and "God of peace. Because no one in the world ought to have been called God, so that this name alone might be reserved to the One from whom are all things, he appointed a king who would bear his image, who, except for the name of God, would have all his authority; but since he is earthly, he is king of men, yet not of peace and righteousness.

For he too has righteousness as his leader, which he is not permitted to despise. For God is his righteousness. Righteousness is God's own attribute, and whoever transgresses it becomes guilty before God's judgment. But Melchizedek, as we are given to understand, is not called king in the way humans are; because he has righteousness under him, which rules over kings. For no one can have righteousness under himself unless his nature is such that he cannot sin. Yet he is said to be above it because he discovered the manner of law by which those who can sin are governed. Therefore the king of righteousness is the ruler of the words discovered by himself, by which a person can both live well and happily and also believe. We labor long and much, and still we say too little about Melchizedek, unless we return to Scripture, which itself also for a long time knocks and cries out, so as to awaken those weighed down by heavy sleep to understanding, not of night but of day. It says therefore that Melchizedek is without father, without mother, without genealogy. And lest this should be understood otherwise than is worthy, it added: Having neither beginning of days nor end of life. By this it shows that Melchizedek was neither born nor died. What has human refinement to argue against things so clear?

What cunning craftiness of intellect is so deceptive that it dares to resist what is revealed, so as not to receive meaning from the text, but to impose meaning on the text? Violence is done to the Scriptures of the Lord, so that they even feel these as enemies who appear to bow themselves to their authority. For some say that one ought not to believe about Melchizedek as it is reported in the Scriptures, and by this they twist the Scriptures to their own understanding. It would be better for such people openly not to accept the Scriptures than to act deceitfully against them, so that under the name of peace war is prepared, and under the cloak of friendship the enemy lies hidden. They say therefore that Melchizedek's "without father and mother" does not refer to nobility, but to the lowliness of his family, because he is read to have been without father and mother. They claim this was written

therefore in order to show that he was of foreigners, not of the tribe from which Abraham sprang, because his lineage is not found in the Law. Therefore, they say, it also added, And without genealogy, so that it might be understood that his origin is in no way described in the Law, so that he may be believed to have become a good man by himself from parents of whatever sort. But now Scripture is so abundant that it sets out everything necessary to the case in orderly fashion. First it says, Without father, without mother.

Let us see whether the mothers of others are mentioned in the Law: it is not written who was the wife of Nahor, Abraham's grandmother, the mother of Terah; nor is it written who was the mother of Abraham, not to speak of the rest. Are these to be said to have been without mothers? If it had said, Without father, there might have been some appearance of a distinguishing feature, because in the Law the fathers of all who existed are recorded. It adds, And without genealogy. If he said this in order to show that his lineage is not in the Law, it would have been enough to say "without father," since no one knows his father. Yet further, and much more clearly, he says for the sake of clarity, Having neither beginning of days nor end of life. Say, whoever you are that use violence, how do you interpret this? What is it not to have the beginning of days nor the end of life? It would certainly have been enough to say that his lineage is not written in the Law, and that therefore his origin must be believed to be from foreigners. It can be said that he was translated like Enoch, and therefore did not die. Granted. What is it not to have the beginning of the days of life? Perhaps you will say that his birthday is not written. Whose is written in the Law?

And is this the reasoning, that for anyone whose birthday is not written, it is denied that he has a beginning of days of life? The same could therefore have been said of the others. And even if he had been translated as a man, he still would not have been without an end of life; because whatever is under the prospect of death has an end. Stop, whoever you are who strive for dispute. It is better to be overcome by the truth than to overcome the truth by falsehoods. For that is destruction, not victory; because even if truth might seem to be defeated in man, yet with God it triumphs, because its reason is invincible. Therefore the mind ought to be overcome by the Law, so that it may think what is signified by the Law, not that it should give the Law its meaning by its own judgment, so as to present itself as violently reading the Law. And listen to Zerubbabel, for, he says, above all things truth prevails (3 Esdras 3:12). Already Melchizedek has shown the future mystery of the incarnation and passion of the Lord, when he first delivered to Abraham, as to the father of believers, the Eucharist of the body and blood of the Lord, so that in the father the truth might be prefigured which was to come in the sons.

If he is thought to be a man and a priest in the manner in which Aaron was, or as priests now are, let the place of his dwelling be shown or read; or if there was some temple or synagogue in which he gathered the people and offered their sacrifices, or what people it was that assembled to him. For if he was a priest upon earth, he undoubtedly had a people, and before Abraham, or at least in his time, there was certainly a people who served God. And how then was Abraham made as it were the head of faith, so that from him the people

might have the knowledge of God? For similarly, if Melchizedek existed as one who taught the fear of the one God on earth, Abraham was chosen in vain so that from him the people of God should be named. For there could have been among those who gathered to Melchizedek some who would be called the people of God. And where is that which is read in the canticle of Deuteronomy: For when the Most High divided the nations, as he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the Angels of God. And the portion of the Lord became his people Jacob (Deut. 32:8–9).

Therefore, if there was in the world no people of God except the children of Abraham, on what ground is another people thought to have existed which came forth from the teaching of Melchizedek, when the Prophet denies it? For when he names all the nations that are in the world, and does not say that any people are God's except the children of Abraham, what remains but that, apart from these, it should be denied that the rest had the knowledge of God, because God is known in Judah (Ps. 75:1). But Melchizedek, priest of the most high God, appeared to bless Abraham as a foreshadowing of the future saints: because in time to come a blessing was to be given to the people of God through the chief minister of God, whom we call a priest. Therefore this Melchizedek appeared as the forerunner of the future consecrated Son of God, because he who follows in order goes before in service. Nor, then, are the things we have said about Melchizedek to be wondered at, when Scripture, to the confusion of those who murmur, adds more and says. For after all the things worthy of praise, in order to confuse the spiteful it says: "But made like unto the Son of God, he remains a priest forever. Now consider of whom you are striving to think ill; and if you do not fear him, at least fear Christ, to whom he is reported, by the authority of Scripture, to be similar.

For by degrees he comes, in due order, to his natural merit, so that if any were moved by the preceding statements, by which he is signified as king of righteousness and of peace, and because, having been seen in the flesh, he had neither father nor mother, that is, he appeared as unbegotten, having neither beginning nor end; from the things set forth last he might show the former statements to be believable. For who would dare to say, unless he is mad, that all these things which have been spoken in such exalted terms are unfitting to him who is designated as like unto the Son of God, remaining a priest forever? But one who is like unto the Son of God cannot be so unless he is of the same nature. And what seems incredible, if Melchizedek appeared as a man, when he is understood to be the third person? For if Christ, who is the second person, was frequently seen in the form of a man, why should there be any doubt about the things that have been said? For we read in the Psalm: "You are," he says, "a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek" (Ps. 110:4). None of us doubts that this refers to the person of Christ, because Christ is a priest forever in the same manner as Melchizedek. But Christ is the high priest, Melchizedek the second. For if Melchizedek is a man, how does it fit that Christ should be a priest forever according to his order?

Already both are read as being similar and as belonging to a single dispensation, because they are also of a single nature. But since in every respect the authority of the one God must be preserved, therefore the third person is also subordinated to the paternal name. Christ, however, is the vicar and high priest of the Father, and therefore he is also called a priest. Likewise, the Holy Spirit, as it were a high priest, has been called priest of the most high God, not the supreme one, as our people presume in the offering. For although Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one substance, yet the order of each must be observed. Therefore priests or messengers are so called because they show in themselves him of whom they are the messengers: for they are his image. And therefore Christ and the Holy Spirit, naturally possessing the image of God, are called his priests. In them God is seen, as the Lord says, "He who sees me, sees the Father also" (Jn. 14:9). And if in the deeds of God the Lord has been seen, but the deeds of the Holy Spirit are works, with the Lord signifying, "For I cast out demons by the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28); then in the Holy Spirit God has been seen.

(Genesis 15:16) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 10. GOD HAVING FORETOLD TO ABRAHAM THAT THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WOULD BE FREED FROM THE DOMINION OF THE EGYPTIANS. THE FOURTH GENERATION, WHY DOES THE LAW SAY, "THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SHALL COME FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT INTO THE FIFTH GENERATION?" — As far as the words are concerned, it seems to be a contradiction; but if the sense is examined, it will be found not to differ. For the Law speaks in such a way that those who are diligent and attentive may understand, so that the basis of the truth reveals itself not to the careless but to the earnest. Indeed, God said "fourth generation," (Gen. 15:16) and Moses wrote "fifth generation. (Exod. 13:18) Though Moses recorded both, and it is impossible that he should be mistaken, in whom such great power has worked; therefore the meaning must be investigated, since Scripture never speaks anything uselessly or without forethought. Therefore there are two aspects which each mentions. God indicated four generations that were born in Egypt; Moses, however, adding to these one from which these originated when they entered Egypt, says, "In the fifth generation the sons of Israel went out. For he includes together the generation that entered Egypt and the four that were born there. From Abraham up to the departure of the sons of Israel from Egypt there are eight generations. For they lived two hundred and fifteen years in Canaan from the time the promise was made to Abraham, and two hundred and fifteen in Egypt.

These are the years encompassed by the Apostle to the Galatians when he says, "The Law was given four hundred and thirty years later" (Gal. 3:17). Therefore these four generations were born in Canaan: one in Isaac, another in Jacob, a third in Levi, a fourth in Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari. But when the sons of Israel entered Egypt, Kohath begot Amram: this is the first generation produced in Egypt. Amram then begot Aaron and Moses and Miriam, which is the second generation produced in Egypt. And Aaron begot Eleazar and his brothers, which is the third generation. Then Eleazar begot Phinehas, the fourth generation. These are the four generations brought forth in Egypt. Therefore the Lord says

to Abraham, "Your seed will be a stranger, and they will oppress them with slavery; but I will deliver them, and in the fourth generation they will come out from there. (Gen. 15:13) See whether it is not clear that God signified nothing other than what took place in Egypt. Moses, however, in order also to include that generation which entered Egypt together with Jacob their father, from which these four take their origin, said, "In the fifth generation the sons of Israel went out from the land of Egypt."

(Genesis 17:10) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 12. WHY DID ABRAHAM RECEIVE THE SIGN OF HIS FAITH, THE SACRAMENT OF CIRCUMCISION? — If you are willing to pay attention, you will see that what you think is at odds with reason is not unfitting. For since he believed he would have a son in whom all nations would be blessed, and from whom holiness was to arise, he received the sign in that part by which the begetting of sons both begins and ceases, so that it might be holier. But if to some people this seems a blemish, let them observe that Abraham rejoiced in it, and that his sons were made glorious by this testimony. For Achior, surely one of the princes of the Gentiles, seeing that there was such great power in the God of Abraham that Holofernes, the commander of the Assyrian army, whose might made the whole earth tremble, was beheaded with his own sword by the hand of a woman, circumcised himself of his own accord, thinking that by this very act a dignity had been obtained for him (Judith 14:6). Does not a person boast if he has lost an eye or some limb for the name of Christ? Does he not display that very part before human faces so that he may appear glorious? For to lose something for a time for the sake of faith is to make a gain. So Abraham too, by receiving the sign of his faith, was not disfigured, but made better.

In a spiritual sense this signified that the cloud of the flesh ought to be cut away from the hearts of men through faith in Christ: for carnal error stood in the way, casting darkness over human hearts so that they might not know the Creator. But Abraham, because Christ was promised to come from his seed, the one who would wipe away this darkness, was therefore circumcised, because he believed he would have a son who would cut off this error. Now see whether he did not appropriately receive such a sign in that part.

(Genesis 17:10-11) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 10. WHY WERE CIRCUMCISION AND PRECEPTS GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE, WHICH PREVIOUSLY DID NOT EXIST AND NOW ARE NO LONGER HELD IN AUTHORITY? — Circumcision is a sign of Abraham's faith, so that when this sign was seen in his sons, it might be known that they were his sons, who, believing God, had received this sign (Gen. 17:10–11). But the commandments about Sabbaths and things past were given as testimony, and about things to come which were to have a figure (Exod. 20:9–11). For the future Sabbath, in which He will grant rest in eternity, is foreshadowed by this Sabbath that was made in the completed week. The law of foods, however, was not given at the beginning of the Law, but when, under a leader, they were faithless and did not want to give faith to God's words and promises, they received, because of the hardness of their heart, precepts that were not good, as the prophet Jeremiah says (Ezek. 20:25). This was done so that their neck might be pressed

down, for their own improvement. For the whole creation ought not to have been subjected to proud and stubborn men. Later, however, when the mercy of God came, freedom to eat was restored. Therefore the apostle Peter says: Why do you put a yoke upon the neck of the brothers, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? (Acts 15:10).

(Genesis 17:11-12) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 29. WHY WAS IT COMMANDED THAT CIRCUMCISION TAKE PLACE ON THE EIGHTH DAY? — It was therefore commanded that circumcision be performed on the eighth day from birth because, according to the number and cycle of the seven days, that day is again found to be the first, as it were, after the sabbath, so that it is no longer regarded as the eighth, but as the first. For since the salvation to come through Christ was predestined for the first day (which is therefore called the Lord's Day, because on it the Lord rose again), which is after the sabbath, the figure of this salvation was given in circumcision, so that the future renewal might be recognized in the law of circumcision. And because human beings were to be saved through faith, which was confirmed on the first day of the Lord's resurrection, the figure of this reality was given in circumcision on the first day, which would also be the sign of Abraham's faith. The whole reason, therefore, is complete: because the sign of the past faith, sealed on the first day, was a figure of the future faith established on the first day.

(Genesis 19:25) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 13. IF GOD'S JUDGMENT IS JUST, WHY WERE INFANTS IN SODOM BURNED TOGETHER WITH THEIR PARENTS? — So that the exceedingly wicked crime of the Sodomites might be noticed, their sin reached even to the killing of their own children, so that no trace might remain of their origin. Was it not provided for them that, by not living long, they would not follow the example of their parents? For they are free from hell, having been killed in another's cause. The parents are guilty both for themselves and for these, because, in order that their deeds might be wiped out, all their offspring was erased. For just as children rejoice in the good things of their parents, because they are praised by their parents' due, so also they cannot complain about the death which is inflicted on account of their parents' evils. For just as they are sharers in profit, it is necessary that they also be sharers in loss. Likewise in Egypt, children were struck down for the faults of their parents, but in such a way that it might lead to their modification: so that, since for other reasons they were unwilling to believe in and worship God, who was with Moses, terrified by this plague they might confess with satisfaction, lest they suffer more heavily for this guilt. Therefore this death of the children is the crime of the parents.

For in whatever way the children yielded up their due spirit, they will be future accusers of their parents, because their parents could not overcome their own treachery even by the shedding of their children's blood. So the evils of the parents did not overtake the children in the future, but in the present time. Nor is it any kind of benefit not to be glorious, and yet not to be guilty. For if some people, with prayers and great effort, at the very end of life strive to come to true faith, so that, if not a crown, they might at least deserve pardon, how can those complain at all whose case was such that they had neither any means by which

they might ask to be forgiven, nor any exalted merit, because they did not toil at all? Now compare a momentary torment with a long-lasting punishment. Imagine also that many labor hard, and because they cannot persevere, they not only lose the fruit of their labor, but are also punished. Add moreover that it is difficult for those born of the wicked and raised or living among the most vicious people to discipline their minds to follow God's teaching. Consider then whether it was not better dealt with in the case of the children of the lost.

(Genesis 22:16) 2ND CATEGORY OT & NT QUESTION 3. THE OLD LAW ALLEGES THAT GOD SWORE AN OATH; FOR IT SAYS, "BY MYSELF I HAVE SWORN, SAYS THE LORD" (Gen. 22:16). BUT THE SAVIOR FORBADE SWEARING (Matt. 5:34): HOW THEN DID HE NOT DESTROY THE OLD THINGS? — Before the knowledge of God was on earth, there was no other way to stir people to an unheard-of hope than that a promise should be made to them with an oath, by him whom they did not know as was fitting. But once he began to be known, it was certainly no longer right to swear by him whom it was not permissible to think could lie. Therefore the Lord no longer commanded his servants to swear, but to make themselves such that their words would be trusted. For the necessity of an oath arose either from treachery or from the deceit of the fickle, so that, since people are accustomed to deceive, they might perhaps be restrained by fear of God; or at least it will be enough that the one who is deceived gains offense from this.

(Genesis 27:27) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 11. IF THE WILL OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IS GOOD, WHY DID NOT ISAAC BLESS ESAU AS HE WISHED, BUT JACOB WHOM HE WOULD NOT BLESS? — The righteous man's will is good, as far as his own conscience is concerned; but with respect to foreknowledge, it is free from opposing events. For God alone is the one who judges things to come. Therefore Isaac, righteous as to his present human understanding, considered his elder son more worthy to receive the blessing. But God, who is the knower of hidden things, showed that the younger deserved the blessing, so that in the blessing He might show the benefit to be not from man, but from God; for the dignity of the office, not the merit of the man, is what God's blessing follows. Accordingly, it was said by God in Numbers to Moses and Aaron the priests, You shall place my name upon the children of Israel; I, the Lord, will bless them (Num. 6:27): so that the grace, by the handing-on through the minister who ordains, might be poured out upon men, and the will of the priest could neither harm nor benefit, but only the merit of the one seeking the blessing. We may see from this how great is the dignity of the priestly order. For it is said of the most wicked Caiaphas, the killer of the Savior, among other things, This he did not say of himself; but since he was the high priest of that year, he prophesied (Jn. 11:51). By this it is shown that the spirit of graces follows not the person, whether worthy or unworthy, but the ordination of the tradition: so that even if someone is of good merit, he still cannot bless unless he has been ordained, so that he may exercise the office of ministry. It is God's part to grant the effect of the blessing.

(Genesis 32:30) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 71. JACOB IS CALLED "THE MAN WHO SEES GOD," AND MOSES SAW GOD FACE TO FACE; LIKEWISE ISAIAH SAYS, "I HAVE SEEN THE LORD OF HOSTS WITH MY EYES. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND JOHN THE EVANGELIST SAYS, "NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN GOD" (Gen. 32:28; Exod. 33:11; Isa. 6:5; 1 John 4:12); THIS, AS FAR AS IT APPEARS, IS CONTRADICTORY. — As far as true faith is concerned, absolutely no one has ever seen God, neither the Father nor the Son. For what is called "seeing" refers to understanding; for sight is as in an image. Just as when we do not know emperors personally, we see them in likeness, not in reality; so too God was seen so that it might be understood that the one who appeared was God, by reason, not by substance; because in His own nature God cannot be seen. And to reveal more truly the hidden things of the question set before us, let us strive to explain the Evangelist's meaning. For John wished to disclose something hidden, which he knew apply to saving teaching: therefore he says, "No one has ever seen God, except the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known. Let us observe the Evangelist's meaning: in order to show that it is true that no one has ever seen God, he teaches that the Son has revealed this; and it is utterly impossible for Him to be mistaken, because He is in the bosom of the Father.

But what is the bosom of the Father, if not the affection of the true Father in love, through the unity of nature in the Son? Wherefore no one has seen God except the only Son: this John the Apostle heard the Son of God saying among other things, "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except Him who is from God; He has seen the Father. (Jn. 6:46) Therefore, in order to advance the condemnation of the Jews, who were unwilling to hear or believe that Christ is the Son of God, the Evangelist shows that this is the Christ who had appeared to the Fathers as God; but that the One who is the Father is never seen except by the Son. For when He denies that God the Father has been seen, and yet confesses that God appeared to the Fathers, He wishes to make it clear that He, the Son of God, is the One who has always been seen by the Fathers as God. Therefore, among other things, He says to the Jews about the Father, "You have never at any time heard His voice, nor seen His form" (John 5:37). Behold, it is not contradictory that God is both seen and unseen.

(Genesis 49) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 6. WHAT DOES THE BLESSING OF JACOB, WHICH HE GAVE TO HIS SONS (Gen. 48, 49), CONTAIN? — Jacob not only foretold, on the basis of present causes, the future of each tribe, but also, from future causes, future events whose shadow did not yet exist, and he signified these in the Jewish people. For he showed what the future character of each tribe would be in morals, faith, discipline, excess, immorality, and contempt of faith; so that, although they were from one and the same ancestor, they would not preserve unity. Some advanced for the better, others became worse, others remained as they were: so that they might not claim a privilege for themselves on account of their lineage, since it had been foretold by him that some of those who were certainly of his origin would turn out depraved, indeed that many would perish, in such wise that others were signified as coming in to take their place, who, to their shame and condemnation, would be grafted into the nature from which they had fallen. Therefore he declared that the people in all the tribes would be mixed: by this variety it was to be understood

that the good would be few, and the evil many. And although he gave the scepter to his son Joseph for a time, he nevertheless set Judah over all. Not because all from Judah were going to be worthy, but because the Savior, who is truly King, was according to the flesh to arise from that tribe.

(Genesis 50:24) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 25. WHY DID JOSEPH, AFTER PREDICTING THE FUTURE, REQUEST THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO CARRY HIS ASHES FROM EGYPT WHEN GOD DELIVERED THEM? — It is absolutely certain that Joseph did not give that command to the sons of Israel without purpose. For he who was able to prophesy is not to be thought to have spoken without foresight. Since he was more inclined to devotion toward God the Creator, and knew that he was revered by the Egyptians because of the administration through which he governed Egypt in a time of great famine, after his departure he sought to have this error removed: he was sure of the vanity of the crowd, which honors the dead more like gods than the living, so that the honor due to the Creator would not be given to him. Therefore he showed that he was free from the vain superstition of the Egyptians, when he ordered his bones to be carried elsewhere so that they would not contribute to an injury against God. We find that the Apostles followed the same example. For Paul and Barnabas, when they saw that people wanted to offer sacrifice to them, knowing this was hateful to God, tore their garments, saying, “What are you doing? We too are men, like you,” and so they restrained the crowds (Acts 14:10–17).

EXODUS 1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Exodus 3:2) QUESTION 42. WHY WAS THE ANGEL WHO WAS SENT TO SPEAK TO MOSES APPEARED TO HIM ON THE MOUNTAIN IN THE MIDST OF FIRE AND A BUSH? — God is most high; therefore it was fitting that He should appear on a height, that is, in a place close to heaven. And because fire always strives upward, growing toward heaven, the Lord of heaven ought to appear in it, He who urges what is earthly toward what is above. As for the bush, He caused His appearance there on account of sins. For since He had come down to give the Law because of sins, and thorns signify sins, because, he says, “I looked that it should yield grapes, but it yielded thorns” (Isa. 5:2), and the Law did not come at once to punish, but first to reveal, therefore the fire did not burn the bush; that is, the Law when given did not make sinners guilty for past sins. For sins are not of nature, but arise by accident; so the material of the bush, that is, of thorns, does not have a root armed with thorns. Reason therefore shows why the Lord appeared to Moses in this way.

(Exodus 3:2) QUESTION 7. OT WHY DID THE ANGEL SENT TO SPEAK TO MOSES APPEAR IN THE FIRE AND IN THE BUSH? — The angelic nature in itself is simple, and its substance as such desires higher, not lower things. Therefore the Lord appeared in fire, whose nature is always reaching upward, where Christ is. But He appeared in the bush for this reason: because it has thorns that hurt, and it is easily combustible, and yet it was not burned by the fire. Take the fire as representing the Law, because for sinners it is fire. The bush, however, signifies sins, because in comparison with other trees the bush is shown by

the Savior to be an evil tree; and sins are nothing other than evil. Therefore, although the fire appeared in the person of the Law, it did not consume the bush: just as the Law, given with regard to past sin, did not in fact punish, but rather restrained the full force of its justice, so that later, once given, if it were despised, it would punish. For this reason, then, the Lord appeared in fire and in a bush, because in the bush the fire signified the Law.

(Exodus 4:24) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 16. WHY DID THE ANGEL WHO WANTED TO KILL MOSES, IN THE ROUTE, BE APPEASED BY THE CIRCUMCISION OF HIS CHILD? — What Moses had done without taking counsel was corrected by the appearance of the threatening angel. Finally, when the angel saw being done what had been neglected through carelessness, he ceased from his wrath. Therefore Moses saw the angel so hostile against him and ready for punishment, because the fault of a man of high rank is a grave sin. For the more exalted his position is, the more serious is his offense. Therefore whatever is done by a man of highest standing, as the leader of the people, is a most bitter sin. He was going to the sons of Israel, sent by the God of Abraham, and he was not bearing the sign of Abraham's righteousness, in which he knew the Jews took pride, so that he would either be called a deceiver, or not be considered sent by that same God who had chosen Abraham. For while living in Midian he had by no means circumcised his sons: whom he ought either not to have taken with him to Egypt, since he was going there to lead the others out; or certainly to have taken them circumcised, for the reasons we stated above. Therefore Zipporah, the wife of Moses, because Scripture speaks briefly, knowing well for what reason the angel appeared hostile to her husband, took a stone, circumcised her son, and the angel departed.

For by that action the anger was softened by the same cause by which it had been kindled. Sometimes Scripture speaks in brief form, wanting things to be understood from the reasoning presented: just as in that passage where the Savior says among other things to the Jews, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition? For God said, Honor your father and mother; and, Whoever curses father or mother, let him surely die. But you say, Whoever shall say to his father or mother, Whatever gift you might have had from me shall profit you, shall not honor his father or mother (Matt. 15:3–6). Without doubt the Savior said this in summary, so that the Jewish priests may be understood, in that, being devoted to greed, they despised the Law of God. For in sinful conspiracy they gave counsel to sons that, when they cursed father or mother, whatever they might offer as if a gift to God would dissolve the sentence previously given against those who curse: and therefore the sons, made secure, in defiance of God's commandment despised their parents. So also Moses, when he saw the angel hostile to him, understanding the cause, showed his wife what ought to be done so that the angel who sought to kill him would depart from him. This is to be understood covertly in this case, just as in the passage we mentioned above concerning the priests.

(Exodus 7:10) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 8. THERE WAS NO OTHER SIGN THAT MOSES PERFORMED OPENLY BEFORE PHARAOH EXCEPT THE SERPENT (Exod.

7:10) — Whoever considers this blameworthy should say what else ought to have been done. For indeed he made a serpent, which both inspired terror yet did not harm, because it is somewhat slow to injure due to a certain stupor. For if he had made a lion, or a bear, or something of that sort, how would those present have escaped? He did not wish to kill anyone, but only to instill fear and to show power; so that since the first transgression began through a serpent, in like manner the calling to mind of the knowledge of God and the correction of conduct might come through the sign of a serpent, so that as sin came about, so it might also be corrected. Just as sin came through a woman, so it was taken away through a woman, namely Mary, the Mother of the Lord, from whom Christ was born and condemned sin. Eve was still a virgin when she transgressed, just as Mary was a virgin. In this way, therefore, the things that had perished were recalled to their former state: for the kingdom too had been lost through the tasting of wood, and again through wood it was sought. For "the Lord," it is said, "reigned from the tree" (Ps. 95:10). In a similar way, the world in which it was made, in it also must be reformed, that is, at the beginning of the first month, which is Passover. Therefore no nature will be evil except transgression alone; since sin has been corrected through that by which it was also committed.

(Exodus 12:11)

QUESTION 116. THE REASON FOR THE PASSOVER. — Passover, dearest brothers, is named from "passion," as the prefiguration of this tradition teaches us, which was fulfilled in Egypt through God's servant Moses, as Scripture says: "It is the victim of the Lord's Passover" (Exod. 12:11). What then is the reason that the mystical ceremony was celebrated by blood, and the restoration of life came through death; so that when death thought it was increasing its power, it was diminished and dissolved by receiving the blood of the Savior; and when it believed it was acting with strength, it collapsed, weakened? For death found death through His work, by divine ordering: so that, since it always wills evil, it was allowed to prevail for a time, in order that, its own work of injustice being destroyed, it could not complain that its kingdom had been taken away. For although God can do all things, He nevertheless does nothing that is contrary to reason. The justice that He requires is the very justice He performs; He does not presume upon His power. Therefore there is great providence toward the human race, in that, while preserving justice, He therefore loosed what had been justly decreed, and rescued man from death, although he was not held without cause. But because he had been deceived by the Devil's envy, it was just that he should be helped. For the sentence was God's, but it was Satan who had brought this about.

Therefore, just as it was seen to be just that man should be delivered, so it would have been unjust that this should be done by mere power, with justice disregarded. Since man, overcome at the Devil's persuasion, was to receive mercy, the Devil, as accuser, resisted. Therefore it was brought about that the one who gloried in man's sin should be caught sinning, so that then at last, made guilty, he would not dare to contradict. Therefore it came to pass that the Son of God was born as man, and, proclaiming justice, provoked the

Devil because He restrained men from his vices, to the point that he even killed Him who knew no sin. Then he was found to have sinned, and more gravely indeed than the man whom he accused. For while, by God's decree, he claimed man for himself on account of sin, since he who sins belongs in part to the Devil, he was found to have sinned more, when he killed Him who had not sinned, that he might seize Him for himself. Through death, therefore, destruction entered into death; so that, in order that blood might be restored, blood was shed. Because, as I have said, the author of death, who is the Devil, since he was found to have sinned in the death of the Savior, lost His blood together with that of us all: for just as through one Adam, who sinned, he held all in death, so through one who did not sin he lost all.

Therefore the blood of the Savior, shed unjustly, obtained this reward: that, recovering with triumph the blood of His own stock, He might return restored human nature to its former state in a better condition. Conquered death could not resist Him who had conquered it. Blessed, then, is the mystery of Passover, which redeemed us by blood, with death having been conquered through death, just as poison is often overcome by poison.

(Exodus 20) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 7. WHAT ARE THE TEN WORDS GIVEN ON THE TABLETS; OR WHAT DID EACH TABLET CONTAIN, AND HOW MANY WORDS DID EACH HAVE? — He called ten sentences "ten words," because the Savior also used the word "word" to mean a sense or meaning, when he said among other things to the Jews, I also ask you one word; answer me: the baptism of John, where was it, from heaven or from men? (Matt. 21:24). This sense he called a word. In a similar way, the ten words written on the two tablets are said to be ten meanings. Indeed, he says, You shall not have other gods besides me (Exod. 20:3): this is the first word. And he added the second, You shall not make for yourself any likeness in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. (Exod. 20:4) Then he added the third, You shall not take the name of your God in vain. (Exod. 20:7) For the Lord will not cleanse him who takes his name in vain: that is, You shall not take the name of your God in a lie, so that you swear falsely by it. Then in the fourth place he says, You shall keep the sabbath of the Lord your God, (Exod.20:8) and you shall do no servile work on it. These four words properly belong to God, and are contained on the first tablet. The remaining are these: the first word is, Honor your father and your mother;

the second, You shall not murder; the third, You shall not commit fornication; the fourth, You shall not steal; the fifth, You shall not bear false witness; the sixth, You shall not covet anything of your neighbor's (Exod. 20:3–17). The Apostle Paul proves that these were written on the second tablet, saying, Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with a promise (Eph. 6:2). For how could it be the first, unless he had begun with it on the second tablet itself? He says "with a promise" for this reason, because he immediately added, That you may live long upon the earth, and that it may go well with you. This is the promise made to those who keep the commandments. Therefore you have

both the commandments distinguished, and their number completed, and what and how many were written on each tablet.

(Exodus 20:5) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 14. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT GOD, WHO IS PROCLAIMED AS JUST, HAS PROMISED TO REPAY THE SINS OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN TO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION? — Anyone who doubts that God does nothing and says nothing unjust is out of his mind. Therefore, if the words of the Lord are not suppressed, but everything that relates to this same question is set forth, what seems obscure will come to light, and what is thought hardly just will be recognized as devout. For whoever suppresses the words of a question is either ignorant or shifty, preferring accusation to teaching. Further, the Lord indeed promised that He would repay the sins of the fathers upon the children, but upon those who hate Him, that is, those who, involved in their fathers' evils, have served idols just as their fathers did. For he is an enemy of God who transfers the honor of His name to a creature. Just as the sons of the righteous, being themselves righteous, dignify the line of righteousness in themselves, while both the righteousness of the fathers and their own are exalted; so also the sons of the utterly wicked, being themselves wicked, increase hatred, because they are children of the evil and have copied their wickedness to the ruin of many. God therefore appears to speak with terror; but it is true, and it has its basis.

For who does not detest both an evil man and the son of an evil man in a double way, just as he judges both a good man and the son of a good man deserving of double honor? He therefore promised to repay to the third and fourth generation so that, if after an evil father the son does not follow his father's treachery, but the grandson becomes an imitator of his grandfather's evils, he may know that he will not be exempt from the severity of judgment; or if the grandson, not following his grandfather but his father's footsteps, loves the Covenant of God, the great grandson may not be ignorant that the sentence reaches to him, if he rivals the disloyalty of his great grandfather. By this revealing of the Law God wished to deter wicked fathers, so that, recognizing how much evil the pursuit of idolatry produces, they might be recalled to reverence for the Creator by affection for their children; or so that the children, fearing lest they experience their fathers' sins, might obey the Law of God. But those who add to their wickedness began to interpret this differently, saying, "Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge," so that, feeling secure about exemption, because the sins would be repaid to their children, they would have no devotion either in spirit or in flesh. Therefore it is said to them, "The son shall not die for the father, nor the father for the son;

but the soul that sins, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:2, 4). In order that they might learn that it would not be without penalty for them, but that the sins of the fathers are repaid to the children in this way: since they have followed the wickedness of their parents and have repeated the evils which should have been blotted out, they are punished more bitterly. After God showed what evil idolatry produces, He immediately added what good follows for

those who love Him, saying, "And showing mercy to thousands upon thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments" (Exod. 20:6): so that the good of a father is repaid not only up to the great grandson, but up to thousands upon thousands. Suppose, for instance, that someone from the seed of David loves God, knowing for certain that David lived a thousand years earlier: to this man the mercy of God is added, so that in time of need, with two reasons to support him, he may merit to receive mercy, because he himself is a worshiper of God, and because he is of the seed of one who loved God. And in this the mercy of God is praiseworthy, that He repays to those who hate Him only up to the third and fourth generation, and not to thousands upon thousands: so that, if evil is drawn out into a fifth generation, from there it again begins to have its starting point, so that from that point it is counted up to a third and fourth generation.

But someone will say: It seems more just that more should be repaid to the originator than to the imitator. Vengeance is rightly given to the originator; but what is said about more being repaid to the sons is a punishment upon the fathers. And if you seek the reason, by the coming of the Law sinners become more guilty, like Lamech and those after Lamech. Yet it seems to some that the sins of the fathers were repaid to the children in this way: when they were led into captivity because of their fathers and remained there up to the fourth generation. If this is true, He repaid the sins of the fathers not only to those who hated Him, but also to those who loved His name: for Daniel was taken away, and the three youths, and Baruch, and Ezekiel, and Ezra was born there. It clearly appears, then, that what we said above fits the question that has been proposed.

(Exodus 28:26; Deuteronomy 7:14) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 17. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE LAW CALLS THOSE ACCURSED WHO HAVE NOT LEFT SEED IN ISRAEL, WHILE THROUGH ISAIAH IT IS SAID THAT EUNUCHS SUFFER NO DISADVANTAGE, BECAUSE THEY CANNOT GENERATE OFFSPRING? — Because it had begun to be understood in a way different from how it was spoken, therefore the prophet Isaiah later showed in what sense it had been said. For since this had been set down in the manner of a sentence of judgment on account of God's displeasure, because those who abandoned God were struck in this way, that even though they took wives they would not leave offspring, human error seized on this as if those would be guilty before God who either did not want wives, or, having taken them, could not generate children as is usual; as though God sought nothing else but offspring, just as they are criticized through the prophet Malachi. Therefore Isaiah, in order to console those whom wrong understanding had saddened, taught that it is no hindrance if someone either cannot have children or does not wish to, provided that he keeps God's law. For that curse applied to those who, though they could and wished to, by divine judgment standing against them were barren, so that they might have no fruit of God's creation, which they despised; so that when they saw either that they could not generate, or that they in no way possessed those born, they might recognize this as the wrath of an outraged God and, turning back, make satisfaction.

For even holy men, when they were eager for children and did not obtain this, thought that sins were standing in the way and were grieved, not knowing that it was the providence of God for whom they were being reserved. Finally, by God's arrangement, Hannah conceived and bore Samuel (1 Sam. 1:20), and Elizabeth John (Luke 1:57), and Manoah's wife Samson (Judg. 13:24). For the spiritual understanding in this matter is this: that those are held accursed who have not left seed that shall see God, that is, who have not instilled either a son, or a servant, or a neighbor, who will teach the fear of God upon the earth.

(Exodus 34:29) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 8. WHY DID MOSES, COMING DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN WITH THE TABLES OF THE LAW, HAVE A FACE SO BRIGHT THAT IT COULD NOT BE FIXED ON HIM? — Having received authority over sinners, he came down from the mountain with honor, his face glorious. For the Law was given against sinners. Moses therefore, because he had not sinned, appeared glorious, to such an extent that he could not be seen by sinners. For it was shown in him that sinners do not deserve to behold the glory of God. After the idol of the molten calf and the breaking of the tablets on which the Law had been given, Moses again went up the mountain with tablets; and when he came down after receiving the Law on them, his face became glorious, so that the children of Israel could not gaze upon his face, nor could Aaron, because he too had sinned. But with a veil placed over his face he spoke to them, so that they would remain unworthy of the glory of God as long as they continued in sins (Exod. 34:29). Therefore the Apostle says, "When one turns to God, the veil is removed" (2 Cor. 3:16), so that, cleansed by the gift of God, they might become worthy to contemplate the glory of God. In the breaking of the tablets that he had previously received, he prefigured the depraved people of the Jews, because by persisting in sins they would become unworthy of God's promise. But in the fact that the Law was given again, another people was signified, for whom the Law given on the mountain would be of benefit.

LEVITICUS (Leviticus 7:1; Jeremiah 7:1) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 103. HOW HAS THE LORD IN LEVITICUS COMMANDED THAT SACRIFICES AND LIBATIONS BE OFFERED, WHICH ELSEWHERE HE REJECTS? FOR IT IS CLEAR IN LEVITICUS THAT THE LORD COMMANDED THE FATHERS TO OFFER LIBATIONS OR SACRIFICES OR BURNT OFFERINGS: YET HE SAYS THEREFORE THROUGH THE PROPHET JEREMIAH: THEREFORE SAYS THE LORD, GATHER YOUR BURNT OFFERINGS WITH YOUR SACRIFICES, AND EAT FLESH; FOR I DID NOT SPEAK TO YOUR FATHERS, NOR DID I COMMAND THEM, IN THE DAY THAT I BROUGHT THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT (Jer. 7:21–22) ABOUT BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES. — If you look closely, there is really no question to be raised on this matter; nor should you think the Lord lied or changed, as if he commanded and later denied. For of this kind of sacrifices and drink offerings or burnt offerings, nothing is found that he commanded, regarding those of which he now testifies that he spoke. Notice that there are two kinds of sacrifices: one which was commanded to be offered for each specific kind, and another which was called voluntary. As for that which

was commanded to be offered in various kinds, whether for sins or for firstborn, it was prescribed what it was, of what sort, and how it was to be offered. But the voluntary sacrifice was certainly not commanded, because it was left to free choice, so that if anyone wished to offer, he would offer what seemed good to him; for these sacrifices were voluntary.

And because they offered these carelessly and rashly, without considering that whoever offers to one greater should offer chosen gifts, it is therefore said to them, I did not command you about these: but if you wish to offer, you ought to offer what is worthy. Therefore it is found that Cain also sinned, when he did not consider that what is better ought to be offered to God. For when they claimed to offer these to appease God, in that very act they provoked God to anger, so that in what they said they were doing well, they sinned by offering unworthy burnt offerings to God. Therefore he says in the prophet Malachi: "If you bring a blind or lame or sick animal as a victim, it is not good. Offer it to your leader or governor; if he will receive you, says the Lord almighty" (Mal. 1:8). From this it is that through Isaiah God complains of the same matter, saying: "What are your sheep of burnt offering to me? Nor in your sacrifices have you honored me. For I did not make you for this purpose, that you should toil over incense, or that you should buy incense for me with silver; nor have I desired the fat of your sacrifices: instead, you have stood before me in your sins and iniquities" (Isa. 1:11).

It is therefore clear that complaints arose because, while they were offering voluntary sacrifices, they were not honoring God in them, since they offered what was unworthy, although these were in no way a matter of necessity. For if they had been commanded, they would seem to offer whatever they could by necessity; but when they offered these of their own free will, they ought to have offered such things as would show God's service in themselves. But because their mind wandered through the desire for idols, they acted in these matters without due thought. Therefore they are reproached in a twofold way, because they dared to offer to God while acting wickedly, and they offered things that were unworthy; since wicked deeds are not redeemed by sacrifices, but by weeping and mercy. Therefore David, when he had sinned, says: "If you had willed it, I would have given sacrifices: surely you will not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifice to God is a regretful spirit; and a broken and humbled heart God does not despise" (Ps. 50:18–19). Finally, Samuel says to Saul, who, after he had despised the command of the Lord, thought God could be appeased by a sacrifice: "For," he says, "God does not desire sacrifice more than that his voice be heard" (1 Sam. 15:22). And Scripture says: "I desire mercy rather than sacrifice" (Hos. 6:6). The Jews, though unjust and without mercy, thought God could be made favorable by offerings;

just as even now certain people, despising righteousness, think they are to be praised for their offerings. An offering is therefore good, if righteousness is preserved and mercy is not neglected; because what we ask for ourselves, we must also grant to others.

JOSHUA 1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Joshua 7:24-25) QUESTION 36. IF THE SOUL THAT SINS SHALL ITSELF DIE, WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT ACHAR, THE SON OF CHARMI, SINNED, AND THIRTY MEN WERE KILLED ON HIS AC-

COUNT? — Scripture spoke in a different sense from what is proposed. For it did not speak of that death which is of course common to all, but of that which is called the second death. This is what befalls sinners; but for those who died in battle, Achar's sin was not avenged to them; rather, it harmed them by preventing them, lacking divine protection, from prevailing over their enemies. For it is not by reason of Achar that they were made weak, but because they were in no way fortified by God's help, so that, being unable to act bravely, they were killed. Indeed, they were few against many, from which it is clear that they were overcome. There is therefore no injustice in the will of God. For He has it in His power whether He wishes to help: if He is present, He is merciful; if He is unwilling, He is just; for in such matters He is not a debtor, so as to be bound and liable. Therefore it is that Joshua, son of Nun, in distress tore his garments (ibid. 6), understanding that God had not withdrawn His help without cause.

(Joshua 7:24-25) QUESTION 14. IF THE SOUL THAT SINS SHALL ITSELF DIE, HOW IS IT THAT, WHEN CHARMI SINS, THIRTY SIX MEN APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN KILLED ON HIS ACCOUNT? — Charmi indeed sinned, and died by stoning. But those thirty-six men who died in battle were not crushed by God, but were not helped. Through their own weakness, since they were unable to act bravely, they were killed. Therefore, on account of Charmi this came about or was hindered, because those who should have been helped were neglected by God. So, therefore, Joshua, son of Nun, in distress tore his garments, because he understood that God his helper had withdrawn His aid in this situation. JUDGES (Judges 11:39) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 43. SINCE ABRAHAM WAS FORBIDDEN TO SACRIFICE HIS SON, WHY WAS JEPHTHAH NOT FORBIDDEN TO CARRY OUT THE SACRIFICE OF HIS DAUGHTER? (Gen. 22:11–12; Judg. 11)? — There is a great difference between Abraham's case and Jephthah's case. First, Abraham was legitimately born, whereas Jephthah was illegitimate, for he was the son of a prostitute. Next, Abraham was of excellent conduct, but Jephthah was a leader of bandits. Abraham was a righteous man, proven in temptation; in Jephthah, however, there is no testimony of righteousness. Abraham, therefore, was commanded to offer his son to God so that it might be shown to people how greatly Abraham trusted God, since at His command he did not hesitate even to kill his own son. For He who, contrary to worldly hope, could cause him to be born of a barren old woman, was clearly able, contrary to worldly reasoning, to raise him from the dead (Heb. 11:19). By this act Abraham's righteousness was increased. For God showed that He did not desire the boy's blood, but that His servant Abraham might become greater by this deed. For He wills those who love Him to suffer something, so that His advancing them may appear just. But Jephthah, a violent and thoughtless man, in foolish devotion promised a gift to God, saying: "Whatever comes out to meet me from the doors of my house when I return from the slaughter, I will offer it to God.

Was he forced to make this vow, or did he understand how a vow ought to be made? What if a dog or a donkey had met him, which the Lord forbade to be offered? Or if someone else's son,

or his wife, so that in another's grief he might exult that he had paid his vow? Therefore, what his careless mind had vowed to another's ruin was, by divine judgment, turned back upon himself. And Jephthah was so senseless that he did not afterwards recognize that he had vowed foolishly, so that his error, which began with him, might be corrected by him. For he ought to have understood that God does not delight in such a sacrifice, and to have prayed for pardon for his foolishness, and offered something else that was not against the Law. Instead, he showed himself "faithful" by becoming a murderer, whereas it is clear that foolish faith not only fails to benefit, but harms. Therefore in the matter of his daughter he himself was struck down, and for this reason God took no notice of such a sacrifice. For if He had forbidden it, Jephthah would have seemed to want to offer something else to Him, although he knew that what was unworthy must not be offered. But his daughter gained by it: because she, innocent, died on account of her father's sins, she escaped the punishment of hell, which perhaps she might not have attained by living long.

And as for the triumph of Jephthah's victory, it was not achieved by his merit nor by that of the people; for it is not written that they requested God to give them a defender. Or did the Lord send Jephthah himself, or speak to him? Rather, because the Philistines were praising their gods as those who had made the sons of Israel subject to them, and were reviling the God of Abraham, therefore, for the honor of His name, God took vengeance on the Philistines, even if not for these men's sake, yet for Abraham's merit and His own glory. Or shall Samson be called worthy because the Spirit of the Lord came upon him while he was consorting with prostitutes (Judg. 14:6, 19; 15:14), when this is to be understood as done for the destruction of the Philistines?

1 SAMUEL (1 Samuel 7:9) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 46. WHETHER SAMUEL WAS ONE OF THE SONS OF AARON, AND WHETHER HE IS TO BE CONSIDERED A PRIEST? — There are some among us who, partly occupied with secular affairs and partly less studious concerning the Holy Scriptures, fall into error, thinking that Samuel was a priest, that is, that he traced his origin from Aaron, whose offspring the Lord God ordained should be born priests, not made priests. Nor was it granted to anyone except his sons to place incense on the altar. Some, going even further astray, indeed deny that Samuel was of the line of Aaron; that is, they say he was not born a priest, and nevertheless assert that he exercised the priesthood. These must first be answered. For it is worse to deny that Samuel was born a priest and yet claim that he exercised the priesthood, than to say he was a priest from among the sons of Aaron. In the latter case it is ignorance; in the former, foolishness. For when those who think he was born a priest learn that he was not of the sons of Aaron, they will clearly see that he was not a priest, being unaware that no one was permitted to perform any priestly act unless he was of the seed of Aaron.

For they know the established fact, indeed it is evident, that Korah, since he was not of the sons of Aaron and wanted to place incense upon the altar, was swallowed up with his associates by the opening of the earth (Num. 16:1–34). And Uzziah the king, since he was

certainly not of the seed of Aaron but of the tribe of Judah, and boldly undertook to perform priestly functions while standing before the altar, was struck with leprosy on his forehead and therefore died (2 Chron. 26:16–21). But those who say that Samuel was not born a priest and nonetheless assert that he exercised the priesthood speak quite foolishly; and to persuade a fool of what is good is the greatest labor. For with what dullness are they led, that, while the sun is shining upon the earth, they say that it is night? For when they read, and they read this not in one place only, that it is decreed by God that no one should dare to exercise the priesthood except Aaron and his sons, they stubbornly contend that Samuel was a priest. They do not understand that if Samuel was not born a priest and yet exercised the priesthood, he must be called a shameless pretender; for God established that priests should be born, not made. And I think it is not safe to hold this opinion about Samuel. For how could it be that a praiseworthy man, praised by God's own testimony, did what he knew was forbidden?

He was certainly aware of the punishment for such belief, having seen it carried out once and again. Nor could he have sought to this by God's judgment, whom he knew to be binding; if he had perhaps heard such a thing from God, he would rather have believed himself to be tested, knowing that God's decree in no way can be revoked. He could more likely have believed that, under the appearance and name of God, this was being done with him in order that he be deceived by the adversary, than that God could change His judgment. Indeed, when Balaam had been forbidden by God to go to Balak, and later asked again whether he should go, God, angered with him, rebuked him through the mouth of a donkey, because the donkey, seeing the angel who was forbidding the way, refused to continue the journey begun (Num. 22:28). But Balaam, though forbidden by God to go, asked again whether He wished him to go, and therefore judged of God as of a man, who through his ignorance is changeable and alterable. Yet Balaam is nowhere praised by any divine testimony; for he was a soothsayer. But Samuel, a man dear to God and knowing that God's judgments are fixed, how could he believe that anything should be done other than what he knew was established by God? "But," they say, "when Eli died, and his sons who were priests, Samuel began to exercise the priesthood. This neither the text teaches nor reason admits.

In saying this, they suppose that at that time there was no one left to perform the priesthood, so that when those three were dead, unless Samuel offered the people's gifts, the priesthood would have ceased to be exercised. This claim is hostile to God. By it God is judged negligent, as though ignorant, since He establishes something that cannot endure. For why did He decree that no one other than the sons of Aaron should exercise the priesthood until the end of the age, that is, until the times of the coming of Christ, if He knew this would fail? But if He did not know, which be far from us to say, then He was negligent; and therefore it could have happened that, when those failed, not even Samuel was a priest. But if God is provident and foreknowing, what He established remained in force; and if what He established remained in force, Samuel did not exercise the priesthood, since he was not God's priest. For in the Old Law God decreed that priests should be born; in the New Law the Lord ordered that priests should be made. Let them now choose one of two: either prove

Samuel to have been born a priest, or made a priest. Yet they agree that he was not born a priest, because they know he was not of the sons of Aaron.

If therefore Samuel was not born a priest and is nowhere read or proved to have been made a priest, since God had not ordained that priests should be made, it is absolutely clear that Samuel was by no means a priest. But the objectors, with their eyes closed, say: "If he was not a priest, yet he acted in the stead of a priest, because it is written that he offered a sacrifice to God. Who would dare deny what is proved by Scripture (1 Sam. 7:9)? Samuel indeed offered a sacrifice to God, but from this it is not shown that he acted in the position of a priest. For he is always said to offer whose offerings they are that the priest places upon the altar. And Saul offered in this very manner, that is, through a priest, just as sacrifices are now offered; and David offered, and Solomon offered, and the others likewise offered. Did they all act in the position of a priest? Although the priest performs his own proper office, yet he is said to offer in whose name the priest acts. The offering is accounted to the one whose gifts are presented. And if a man was not a priest, how could he act in the stead of a priest? Can a deacon act in the position of a priest? A captain may indeed act in the position of another captain, and a magistrate in the position of another magistrate; yet a private person cannot act in the position of any authority.

How much less can one who is not a priest act in the position of a priest? With what reasoning would he dare desire to that which he knows is not permitted to him? For if a priest is lacking in some place, a priest from another place can be asked to come and take his place; yet a prophet, even if he lives a holy life, cannot perform what he knows has by no means been granted to him. For it is one thing to live well, and another to receive the authority of a certain office. Just as someone who is a priest ought not to think that his life is thereby automatically worthy, so also someone of holy conduct and life ought not on that basis claim the priesthood for himself. For although the priesthood is a good thing, it will nevertheless be evil for the one to whom it has not been granted and who ventures upon it. For if we look at what is written about the holy Samuel, we shall see what testimony Scripture gives him, saying: "And it became known," it says, "to all the people that Samuel was faithful as a prophet to the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:20). And in the Psalm: "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name" (Ps. 98:6).

Who does not notice from this distinction that the persons are separated on account of their dignities, so that Moses and Aaron are recognized as having obtained priestly dignity, whereas Samuel is regarded as having been worthy before God among the prophets, who by their prayers called upon God to protect his people, as we read? Moreover, priests are shown to have by no means been lacking, to such an extent that, when the Ark had been brought back from the Philistines by the Levite bearers, the men of Beth-shemesh offered sacrifices to God in Samuel's absence. And when Saul had been made king, Ahimelech was the great-grandson of Eli the priest, who carried the vestment. "But here," they say, "Samuel seems to have been a priest because he was clothed with a vestment. As though deacons today are not vested with dalmatics, just as bishops are. And we read that David

too was clothed with a vestment, and with a double vestment (2 Sam. 6:14). But Samuel, while still a little boy, was girded with a vestment (1 Sam. 2:18): could a little boy offer to God the people's gifts? You see therefore that "vestment" is indeed one word, but it does not always signify one and the same thing. For priests carried the vestment; they were not clothed with it. Kings, however, and the Levite Samuel were clothed with the vestment. Therefore sometimes "vestment" signifies a garment, sometimes a sort of small chest which the priests carried for inquiring of the Lord.

So far as appears, it has been proven that Samuel was not a priest, but a prophet. Now we answer those who, not knowing that Samuel was not of the sons of Aaron the priest, suppose that he was a priest; for it would not have been lawful that someone descended from the line of Aaron should not be a priest. I want such people first to recognize that, if Samuel was a priest, then without doubt Elkanah his father was also a priest; it would likewise have been fitting that his sons be priests. But because they were not priests, he appointed them judges over the sons of Israel (1 Sam. 8:1), just as Samuel himself was. For we read that he judged the sons of Israel. Elkanah, however, Samuel's father, precisely because he was not a priest, "went up," it says, "year by year from his city Ramathaim to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty of hosts; and there were Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, priests of the Lord" (1 Sam. 1:3). What could be clearer, than that Elkanah came to offer his gifts before the Lord through the priests at the appointed time, according to what Moses had established, that three times a year they should offer their gifts and tithes in the place where the Ark of the Lord and the priests were? Especially since he had two wives at the same time, which is unlawful for priests.

For Elkanah was of the Levites, as the order of generations is set forth in the book of Chronicles (1 Chron. 6:33). For at that time the Levites did not yet have a fixed order of ministry established concerning the priests and the Ark of the Lord. David, indeed, in his reign arranged courses for the priests and Levites, so that from twenty years and up, which in the Law is from twenty five years and up, they would begin to perform their service in the Lord's ceremonies; and so that there should be, from the sons of Aaron, that is from the line of Phinehas and Ithamar, twenty four classes of priests, which would perform their courses at appointed times. The Levites, moreover, were appointed to be doorkeepers of the tabernacle, bearers of the Ark of the Lord, watchmen, keepers of the vessels, and receivers of common offerings. And twenty four classes of singers, harp players, and other musicians were established, so that these too, that is, all the Levites, would have their appointed turns in time; for it was necessary for them also to have leisure, so that they could take care of their households. And not only do these matters contribute to the above mentioned case, namely that Samuel was not of the sons of Aaron; but also what his mother says to the Lord: "If," she says, "you give me a son, I will lend him to the Lord all the days of his life" (1 Sam. 1:11).

She would not have said this if he were to be born a priest; he would have been obliged to serve at the altar. But because he was a Levite, and as yet no law had been laid down for the

Levites, but each man acted according to his own will, so that as wanderers they presumed unlawful things, for Jonathan, the son of Moses' son, although enrolled among the Levites, presumed to exercise the priesthood for the tribe of Dan, on this account we read in the book of Judges: "Each man did what was right in his own eyes, because there was no king in Israel" (Judg. 17:6). Therefore Hannah vowed, saying, "I will lend him to the Lord," so that he might not wander with the rest. And so that the question may be examined more fully, let us also treat that point which is said of Elkanah, that he came year by year to offer his gifts and tithes: how did he offer tithes if he possessed nothing? For the Levites did not receive fields, since they sought their livelihood from the tithes given by the people. But it can be, and so it may be understood, that he could have had the property of his wife, or a purchased possession; for they took wives from other tribes, not only they, but others as well, so that even priests took wives from other tribes. For Jehoiada the high priest took as wife from the tribe of Judah the daughter of King Joram (2 Chron. 22:11).

(1 Samuel 15:24; 2 Samuel 12:13) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 18. WHY IS IT THAT SAUL, WHEN HE SINNED, ASKED THAT PRAYER BE MADE FOR HIM SO THAT HE MIGHT BE FORGIVEN AND COULD NOT OBTAIN IT, WHILE DAVID, WHEN HE SINNED, ASKED AND OBTAINED PARDON? — It is not fitting that God's judgment be revoked: for human weakness and ignorance ought to be instructed by God's judgment in what it does not understand, so that from God's decision it may grasp the truth, and recognize that nothing else ought to have been done than what it sees God has done, knowing that He is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). For if God received David's prayer and rejected Saul's, we must not think that God did anything unjust. Knowing with what nature each one spoke, He accepted the petition of the one whom He saw asking for pardon with a troubled heart; but He despised the other, because the pain of repentance had not touched his soul. For God is more a hearer of the heart than of the voice. Therefore it is said, Man looks on the outward appearance, but God on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). Therefore we too are often deceived, because hoax in words and in countenance misleads us: for we cannot see what is in the heart. Wherefore we must follow God's judgment, who examines each person according to the heart, in which the nature of each one is found. We discover that the Savior did this as well. For He did not receive the scribe when he presented himself (Matt. 8:19);

but He called Levi as he sat at the tax booth (Matt. 9:9; Luke 5:27): because the scribe's words were not followed by the heart, whereas Levi, in silence, had in his heart what the scribe had in his words. But Jesus, who, as it is written, knew what was in man (Jn. 2:25), chose Levi. Moreover, David did not wish that another should be humbled for him as Saul did, but he himself, as a pleading with a troubled heart, asked for pardon.

(1 Samuel 26:16) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 35. HOW CAN DAVID STILL CALL SAUL THE ANOINTED OF THE LORD, AND DO HIM HONOR IN THIS EXCELLENCE AFTER THE LORD HAD DEPARTED FROM HIM? — David is not unaware that there is a divine institution in the office of the royal order; therefore he honors Saul, who is still placed

within that same institution, lest he seem to do injury to God, who has decreed honor for these orders. For the king bears the image of God, just as the bishop does that of Christ. As long, therefore, as he is within that institution, he is to be honored, if not for his own sake, then for the sake of the order. Therefore the Apostle says, Be subject to the higher powers. There is no power except from God; and the powers that exist are ordained by God (Rom. 13:1). From this it follows that we honor even a pagan who holds power, although he himself is unworthy, since, while holding God's order, he gives thanks to the Devil. For authority demands honor, because it deserves it. Therefore the dream of the coming famine was revealed to Pharaoh (Gen. 41:1–37); and Nebuchadnezzar, while others stood by him, alone saw the Son of God in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:92), not indeed by his own merit, he who wished to be adored in an idol, but by the merit of the royal order.

2 SAMUEL (2 Samuel 28:7–20) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 27. WHEN SAMUEL WAS SUPPOSEDLY RAISED UP BY THE PYTHONESS, AND HE WAS SEEN BY HER AND SPOKE TO SAUL—THIS STORY IS REPORTED IN THE BOOK OF KINGS? — I consider it an unworthy deed if assent is given in accordance with the wording of the story. For how could it happen that a man holy by birth and righteous by the works of his life might be drawn by magical art? Or if he was not drawn against his will, did he give consent? To believe either of these about a righteous man is absurd. For if he was brought unwillingly, his justice has no support; but if he came willingly, he lost the spiritual merit which, being in the flesh, he had sought: which is very absurd, because whoever departs from here righteous, remains righteous. Moreover, this is a trick of Satan, by which, so that he may deceive many, he even pretends to have the good in his power. The Apostle, among other things, says, "Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14). For, in order to cause an error in which he himself might glory, he disguised himself in the guise and name of a righteous man: so that he might lie and claim that the hope proclaimed to the worshipers of God would accomplish nothing, when he pretended that the righteous going forth from here were in his power. But some are deceived by the fact that he did not lie about the death of Saul and his sons:

as though it were a great thing for the Devil to foresee the day of a body's fall beforehand, when certain signs are accustomed to appear in those who are dying, from whom the protection of God seems to have been removed. How much more the Devil, whom prophetic oracles testify to have been exalted with angelic majesty; of whose greatness the Apostle says, "Do you not know the height of Satan? (see 2 Cor. 2:11). What wonder, then, if he was able to foresee a death that was close at hand, since this is the very thing by which he deceives and wants to be worshiped as if he were in God's power? For Saul, made senseless by such dullness, fled to the pythoness. Corrupted by the cause of sin, he turned himself to those things which he had condemned. But if someone, on account of the story and the things expressed in words, thinks they should not be passed over, lest the logic of the narrative be empty, he will indeed do rightly, provided he does not drag this into the realm of truth,

but keeps it to sight and understanding. For Saul, having become reprobate, could not have a good understanding. The narrator described Saul's mind and Samuel's appearance, expressing the things that were said and seen, omitting whether they were true or false. For what does he say? When he heard in what form he had been raised up, "He understood," he says, "that this was Samuel. He reported what Saul understood;

and because he did not understand rightly, he adored someone other than God, contrary to Scripture; and thinking it was Samuel, he worshiped the Devil, so that Satan might have the fruit of his deceit. For this he strives after, that he may be worshiped as though he were God. For if Samuel had truly appeared to him, surely that righteous man would not have allowed himself to be worshiped, he who had preached that God alone is to be adored. And how could the man of God, who was with Abraham in refreshment, say to a man of disease, worthy of the burning of Gehenna, "Tomorrow you will be with me"? In these two points the unwary Satan betrayed the subtleness of his deception, both because he allowed himself to be worshiped in the guise and name of Samuel contrary to the Law, and because he falsely claimed that a man weighed down by sins, although there is a great distance between sinners and the righteous, would be with Samuel, the most righteous. In truth, it can seem reasonable if the name of Samuel is left aside, since Saul was going to be with the Devil. For he passed over to him whom he worshiped. For the Devil, always lurking under a veil, reveals himself when he invents things that clash with the persons through whom he seeks to deceive.

1 KINGS (1 Kings 3:11) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 18. WHY DID SOLOMON HAVE THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM (1 Kings 3), WHEN HE DID NOT HAVE A PURE LIFE? FOR HE TOOK GREAT DELIGHT IN WOMEN, AND BY THIS HE SINNED (ibid. 11). — At first Solomon received the spirit of wisdom by his own merit; but later, when he began to make excessive use of women and thereby to sin, if he had the spirit of wisdom, he had it by reason of his royal office, just as Nebuchadnezzar, by reason of his royal office, saw Christ in the furnace. 2 KINGS (2 Kings 2:10) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 26. QUESTION ABOUT ELISHA: DID HE OBTAIN WHAT HE IS SAID TO HAVE ASKED TOO HARSHLY OF ELIJAH? — Elisha, eager in spirit for performing miracles and enticed by the example of his master, when he received the permission to ask for whatever he wished, greedily for good things requested that the spirit be present in him in double measure compared with what it was in his master. To him the man of God Elijah said, "You have asked a hard thing. For in his eagerness he did not consider that the disciple is not above the master (Matt. 10:24). Yet Elijah, knowing that he had not asked this out of ambition for present glory, replied: "Nevertheless, if you see me taken from you, it shall be so for you. (2 Kings 2:10) This meaning must be weighed carefully. Having first said with some displeasure, "You have asked a hard thing," he added, "Yet if you see me taken up, it shall be so for you," and therefore he did not seem to have refused him. He showed that it would be so for him as was fitting, not as he himself had requested. For Scripture intends many things to be understood completely, so that the sense gathered from the words may

not be contrary to the rule of religion. Indeed, such a hard request ought in justice to have lost its reward;

but because he desired the good so earnestly, God, who knows what should be given to each person, did not allow him to be deprived of the merits of his good intentions. Let us therefore see whether the merit of Elijah would allow that Elisha should deserve to receive a double portion of his gift. For it was said by the Holy Spirit through Zechariah what the merit of John would be: "He shall go," he says, "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17). He therefore shows John to be equal to Elijah. And the Lord says, "Among those born of women there has arisen no greater prophet than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). He did not say, "He is greater than all," but, "No one is greater than he"; that is, he has an equal, but he has no superior. Elijah therefore is equal to him, certainly not lesser than he; how then is Elisha greater than Elijah, when John, than whom no one is greater, is equal to Elijah? For when Elisha came to the crossing of the waters, he did not receive honor from them so as to be able to cross, unless he invoked the God of Elijah (2 Kings 2:14); so that by this his hard request might appear corrected, since he was heard only in the name of Elijah, lest he be thought to have obtained what he had asked too harshly, as though the dispensation of the Spirit granted to Elijah were not sufficient for the merit of that time.

TOBIT 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 119. ON TOBIT. — Such is the providence of the Lord God toward us that, unwilling for us to go astray, He has given both the law and examples of good works, by which life can be conducted modestly and peacefully in the fear of God. For He who is the author of life certainly does not will that His work be subject to death. Although nature itself is not without a law, yet because the Lord is good and merciful, He has shown by writings and examples, as the present reading shows, so that there might be a greater knowledge both of what must be followed and of what must be avoided. Therefore the holy servant of God, Tobit, has been given to us as an example after the law, so that we may know how those things which we read are to be carried out; and if temptations come, we may not depart from the fear of God, nor hope for help from any other than Him, remembering that it is written: I have been young, and now am old, and I have never seen the righteous man forsaken, nor his offspring begging bread (Ps. 36:25). Therefore, whoever hopes in God with his whole mind can never be deceived. Although for a time tribulations may arise through the plots of Satan, the examples of holy men teach us that these are not permitted by God except for the increase of our merits:

for if they are accepted with a calm spirit, here comfort with effect will be given to us, and in the future eternal life with glory. For since our God is just, and with Him there is no respect of persons (Rom. 2:11), He allows us to be tempted because He loves us, so that after toil He may be able to bestow upon us the richest rewards. Accordingly, when the Apostle prayed that temptations might depart from him, the Lord said, My grace is sufficient for you; for strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore the Apostle added, When I am weak, then I am strong; and he says, I rejoice in my tribulations, that the power of Christ may

dwell in me (2 Cor. 12:9–10). We are taught by Scripture how praiseworthy the holy Tobit is: neither captivity diminished his devotion, nor did the loss of his eyes persuade him to cease blessing God, nor did the exhaustion of his substance turn him aside from the path of righteousness and truth (Tob. 1–3). For necessity tests the righteous man; and to preserve righteous in poverty is true and perfect righteousness. From that very source from which the devotion of some is diminished, the praiseworthy Tobit drew increase. For, it is said, poverty humbles a man; and one who is humbled cannot preserve righteousness. But the soul of the holy Tobit, lifted up toward God, was neither broken by captivity nor cast down by poverty:

for even against the edict, he committed the bodies of the slain to burial, and, confident in the generosity of God, he showed mercy out of that very little he had, knowing that mercy shown from limited resources is especially pleasing to God; as also did that widow whom the Lord in the Gospel praised highly (Luke 21:2–4). For he is truly faithful, he does not doubt the promises of God, who gives from the little he has. Therefore, consoling his soul with the hope of future things, Tobit, consecrated to God, was found strong and unwavering in temptation, showing that in necessity one must be all the more watchful in the fear of God; for if necessity does not drive us to seek God's help, how much less will security? Holy men, being certain that God has reserved to Himself the judgment of all things that happen in this world, not only bore with tribulations and losses and other disasters or insults without distress, but even accepted them gladly: as did our apostles, who rejoiced after being beaten, because they were found worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41). For the misfortunes that unjustly happen to the faithful, whether in tribulations or in insults, are signs of future merits. Therefore the just Tobit pleased God so greatly that by a double kind of merit he obtained his reward:

for in the present life he recovered the sight he had lost through the ministry of an angel, and was enriched also with possessions pertaining to this present life; and in the future he was made an heir of the kingdom of heaven. In this we are taught that whoever obeys the law of God with all his heart and does not doubt His promises, God often increases his riches even in this world, and in the future grants him eternal life. There is also another point that invites us to divine service. For holy Tobit not only obtained rewards for his own righteousness; there is added to the fullness of his glory also the good that comes from those who become his imitators. For in imitators examples are praised. This too can happen for us, if we live in such a way that it is fitting for us also to have imitators.

(Tobit 12:7) 2ND CATEGORY OT & NT QUESTION 8. IN TOBIT IT IS SAID: "TO REVEAL AND CONFESS THE WORK OF GOD IS HONORABLE" (Tob. 12:7). BUT THE SAVIOR, WHEN PERFORMING THE WORK OF GOD, SAYS: "TELL NO ONE" (Mark 8:26). — The Savior did not say that the work of God ought to be concealed; for elsewhere he says: "Go and tell how great things God has done for you" (Mark 5:19). Rather, he sometimes rejected their testimony and checked their boasting, lest he should appear, as

would seem absurd to the wise, to be bearing witness to himself as a deceiver. JOB 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 118. ON JOB. — Great is the love, dearest brothers, of Almighty God toward the human race: when it is understood, it leads to the heavenly kingdoms; when it is not understood, it leads down to Hades. For God wills His favor to be received with gratitude and to be fruitful, so that it may profit us and give Him delight in showing mercy. Therefore, since He is good and wills all men to be saved, He has shown us a model of righteousness in His servant Job, as the present reading bears witness, so that by following him we may both avoid evil and attain to good, and not only be freed from punishment, but also receive reward. How admirable, then, is the most holy Job, who, before the written law was given, displayed in his deeds the pattern of the Law; taking no instruction from any external teaching in this matter, but guided by nature itself, in which God decreed that the seeds of righteousness should naturally reside, he preserved reverence for his Creator through devout virtue. How great, then, is the praise he deserves, and with what words should his deeds be celebrated, since we can find no equal to him either before the Law or after the Law? For although someone might be able to imitate his achievements, he is still not to be compared with him, nor will he be rightly called his equal. It would not be his own achievement that he became such a man if he merely followed another's example.

But Saint Job, having seen nothing of the kind, nor read of it in any books, showed himself to be such that he had nothing in himself derived from another, but rather imparted to others, offering the pattern of wondrous deeds by which God might be won. Therefore he is praised by the testimony of the Lord, who says: Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a true worshiper of God (Job 1:8). Who could have deserved so much that the Lord should bear such witness of him, unless it be this man who is found not as an imitator, but as the author of the things he did? Therefore he is proclaimed a true worshiper of God. No counterfeit impression of a fabricated truth can appear in one who has no such predecessor. Everyone who pretends, pretends to what is seen and imitated. And yet even greater things than these are said. For in these praises there were no proofs of tribulations, but only a purpose dedicated to God, established in exercise and observance. Since this did not appear to the tempter to be complete for the crown of merits, he asked that he might be allowed to test Job's righteousness with various temptations, so that, pressed in many ways, he might somewhere be entangled and exceed due measure. For it is for this end that various punishments are usually inflicted on sinners:

since no one can bear all forms of torment, one of them may wring from him a confession of the truth. Therefore the tempter was allowed to destroy and ruin all his possessions, even to the death of his sons: so that if he could bear the loss of his oxen, he might not bear that of his sheep; or if he could bear the loss of his sheep, he might not bear the loss of his camels, nor of his servants, nor of his entire substance; or if, because he was of great spirit and of pure devotion, he was not overcome by all these things, then at least he might be broken by the compelling affection of love through the immediate death of all his children. But

because, before the written Law was given, he had the Law written in his heart, neither losses nor griefs made him any less devoted to God, so that he gave a pattern of loving God with all the heart above all things. How great, then, is the glory he deserves, who before the Law kept the Law, so that the Law that was to come might be shown in deeds, not words, as to how it should be observed, he being its author in action? And because the tempter is disrespectful, this glory did not seem sufficient to him for proving the righteous man, unless he manufactured something else against him which he knew could not be tolerated by a man;

he asked again that he might strike Job himself with a cruel wound from the crown of his head to the nails of his feet. And when this was granted, since no trust should be placed in him, he was commanded to spare his soul for the sake of free will, and not to dare anything violent against him whom he could not overcome by right reason. Having received this power, and his cruelty raging anew within him, he struck the righteous man with a very great blow, so that there was nothing in his body that was free from injury, something no man could have endured except Job alone, who was able to conquer Satan. And when even so the hatred of the Devil could not draw from the righteous man any murmur against God, remembering his former cunning by which he deceived Adam, he strove to see if he could also deceive this man through a woman; for one is more easily deceived by someone of one's own household. And in all these things Satan, utterly shameless, achieved nothing, indeed suffered loss: he not only found God's servant immovable, but even his teacher. For in the very extremity of his necessity, Job not only persevered in the fear of God, but also, rebuking his wife who suggested the opposite, taught that all things which happen by God's permission must be bravely endured (Job 2:1–10):

which belongs to a double punishment of the foolish Satan, because he neither persuaded what he wished, and while envying this man, he made others learn what he did not even want this man to know. How much temptation profits the servants of God and harms the Devil we are more fully taught by this reading. For when he thinks he is harming them, he is advancing them; and when he persecutes one, he rouses many to virtue. Seeing this man protected by the helps of God, many become his imitators. Therefore, wishing to make a gain, he suffers loss. His rage is always ruinous to himself. For when he persecutes the righteous so that they may not be rewarded, he makes them more worthy; and when he envies Saint Job, he doubles his excellence in heaven and on earth; for here he is increased, and in heaven he is received with the Savior; so that all these things may contribute to the glory of the saints, and to the punishment of the Devil.

PSALMS (Psalm 1) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 110. ON THE FIRST PSALM. — "Blessed is the man who has not stood in the way of sinners. (Ps. 1:1a) But if he has stood, he is no longer blessed, but guilty and worthy of blows. For he seems to have some hope of correction, because he is not wicked, but a sinner. But if there is one who has not gone in the counsel of the wicked, and has not stood in the way of sinners, he is blessed in a twofold way. For he cannot be blessed if he

does not go into the counsel of sinners yet stands in the way of sinners; for even if he is not destined for destruction, he is still accountable to punishment. Then he added, "And has not sat in the chair of pestilence. (Ps. 1:1b) He says this is the blessedness which consists in these three steps and is guarded by this threefold rule; that is, that one neither go into the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the chair of pestilence. But since only two kinds are mentioned, that of the wicked and that of sinners, in the record of those things just mentioned, to which class did he wish to assign this third, which he added, saying, "And has not sat in the chair of pestilence": to that of the wicked, or of the sinners?

But let us see what it is to sit in the chair of pestilence, and then we shall understand to which class he assigns this. We call that the chair of pestilence which is outside the ordering of God, clearly devised for this purpose, that unjust judgments may proceed from it. For this reason it is called the chair of pestilence, because it is a corruption that produces death, just as iniquity produces condemnation. Therefore that chair which is the chair of death is not from God. For Moses received the chair of life. It was given for this purpose, that in it there might be the authority of the just judge or of the creator God. Therefore the Lord says, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' chair" (Matt. 23:2); and the Apostle, "There is," he says, "no power except from God; and those that exist are ordained by God" (Rom. 13:1). Therefore he says to the leader of the people: "You indeed sit judging according to the Law, and against the Law you order me to be struck" (Acts 23:3). When he said "according to the Law," he indicated the just and saving authority of the chair. But in that he said "against the Law you order me to be struck," he showed that very judge to be unjust, so that, sitting in God's chair, he judged unjustly. Therefore also Daniel says, "The kingdom is God's, and he will give it to whom he will" (Dan. 4:14).

For just as the authority of an earthly emperor runs therefore through all, so that in all there is reverence for him, so God has ordained that from the king the authority of God should begin and run through all: although the world often does not understand this, and subjects itself to others placed in power than it ought, still the ordinance is that there should be one who is feared. Where, then, this ordinance is not, there the chair of pestilence is found. Nowhere is the authority of the one God denied except among those who proclaim fear and reverence of many gods. These, then, are those who sit in the chair of pestilence, because what their priests proclaim is death. For they deem it necessary that worshippers of the one God, as fools and enemies, should either be held up to reproach or removed from this life. This is the very material of wickedness, which also extends into other areas, through which it may display the laws of its own wickedness. For at Jezebel's command the priests of iniquity sat in the chair of pestilence, who, against the innocent Naboth, though they were not judges, plotting stubbornness, with false witnesses corrupted, pronounced a sentence of death (1 Kings 21:11–13). Therefore also in another Psalm he says, "I will not sit with the wicked" (Ps. 25:5). For this is the judgment of him whose also is the chair of pestilence. Therefore, if, while sitting in God's chair, they oppress the innocent, the judgment will be unjust, not the chair.

For where the chair of pestilence is, the judgment cannot be other than iniquitous, even though they may attach to themselves certain coverings, as it were, by which they cloak their wickedness so that those who see are deceived. For sheer wickedness cannot be put forth by itself, because it finds no buyer; and where the law of the Devil is, if he himself is named, he is shuddered at. But as honey is mixed with poison that it may lie hidden, so too they mix certain just things into the law of the Devil, and apply to it the name of truth; yet each person's understanding must be judged, because sometimes it shows something true in order to deceive, so that when it proclaims evil things they may be thought good. Since we have asserted that the chair of pestilence is not from the ordering of God, we also call the chair of pestilence that of those who, outside the Church or against the Church, have set up chairs for themselves. For whoever presumes what is not granted is guilty; how much more if he also corrupts the tradition of him whose seat he takes? For they disturb the order begun by the Apostle Peter and preserved up to this time through the succession of bishops in an unbroken line, claiming for themselves an order without an origin, that is, professing a body without a head; therefore it is fitting to call their seat also the chair of pestilence.

Nor will it be without punishment merely because they do this under the name of God. For it is clear that they conduct their own causes under the name of God. They do not do this out of zeal for God, but wishing to defend a place for themselves. Though we know that Korah and the two hundred and fifty men, who by presumption made offerings to God, were swallowed up by the opening of the earth (Num. 16:31, 35), and that King Uzziah, when he made an unlawful offering to God, was struck with leprosy on his forehead (2 Kings 15:5 and 2 Chron. 26:21). Since it has become clear that the chair of pestilence belongs to the wickedness mentioned above, let us pursue what follows. For he added: "But his will was in the law of the Lord. (Ps. 1:2a) He says that his will is in the law of the Lord who, despising the wicked and abandoning sinners, refusing the chair of pestilence, has fixed his will in the law of God. Therefore he called this man blessed. And it continues: "And in his law he will meditate day and night. (Ps.1:2b) It is clear that such a man, free from all allurements and untouched by those things that are opposed to the law of God, occupies himself with nothing else than the law of God; strengthened by the sacraments of the Son of God, by day he persists in good works, and by night in prayers.

For this is he of whom it is said in the Song of Songs that he sleeps and his heart keeps watch (Cant. 5:2). Therefore he says: And he shall be like a tree that is planted beside streams of water. (Ps. 1:3a) Who doubts that one who meditates on the law of God has hope of receiving the reward? For just as a tree planted beside water cannot be barren, so one who diligently studies the law of God by frequent use cannot fail to obtain the effect of his work. And he added: Which will yield its fruit in due season. (Ps. 1:3b) Every plantation that is well tended gives fruit at the proper time; so too the one who obeys the law of God will have fruit at the appointed time. For then he will receive the reward of this devotion, when the Lord Jesus Christ begins to sit in judgment of the living and the dead. Then he subjoined: And its leaf shall not fall. (Ps. 1:3c) It is clear that in a tree whose leaves do not fall, he has signified life. For a tree nourished by the moisture of running water keeps its

leaves. And the Lord Jesus also says: If they do these things in the green wood, what will happen in the dry? (Luke 23:31). In the green wood he signified life and fruit.

Therefore, just as a tree with the help of running water does not feel dryness, so the one who studies the law of God, when temptation approaches, remains safe by the protection of God and does not lose but gains salvation, as the Apostle says: Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:21). And it continues: And all that he does shall prosper. (Ps. 1:3d) It is clear what he says, that one who keeps faith with the law of God, eager for his commandments, becomes happy in all his deeds, just like Joseph, who, because he placed the fear of God before this present life, God made all that he did prosper in his hands. And he added: Not so the wicked, not so. (Ps. 1:4a) The repetition of the phrase signifies that it will in no way turn out differently from what he promises, because nothing will be prosperous for the wicked in the future, but all things adverse, even to their destruction. Therefore he says: But like dust which the wind drives away from the face of the earth. (Ps. 1:4b) In the same way he says that the wicked perish like dust which the wind blows away from the face of the earth so that it may vanish. Once lifted away from its own substance, scattered through the air, it gradually disappears; so too the wicked, cast out by the ministering angels from the presence of God their author, without whom one cannot live, will perish. And it continues:

Therefore the wicked shall not rise in the judgment. (Ps. 1:5a) What he says is fitting. For why should those rise in the judgment who chose to believe that no business of God was entrusted to them for which they would have to render an account? Since they spurned and denied the law of God, there is nothing from which they might produce an account, so as, when questioned in the judgment according to the law entrusted to them, to present their case. Therefore, found to be arrogant and rebellious against God, they rise only to see that what they refused to believe is true, so that they may perish, because they judged God to be a liar. And he added: Nor sinners in the council of the righteous. (Ps.1:5b) In this psalm the Psalmist denotes three kinds of men: the wicked, sinners, and the just, in the order in which the error began. But the wicked are strangers to these, because, as I said, they refused to live under the decree of God. Sinners, however, who act under the law of God, are to stand before the tribunal of Christ, separated from the righteous, so that they may render an account of the commandments of the law they received, in which they did not labor, so that they may have more praise than blame. The righteous, however, found to be very zealous in the exercise of fulfilling the law, are to be rewarded. And he added: For the Lord knows the way of the righteous.

(Ps.1:6a) God is said to know these who, mindful of his precepts, persist in good works so that, counted as righteous, they may be crowned. But to those who, forgetful of him, are negligent about the care of their soul, he will say: Depart from me; I do not know you, workers of iniquity (Luke 13:27). And it continues: And the way of the wicked shall perish. (Ps.1:6b) Therefore the psalm is begun and ended so that, when the case of the wicked is treated, they may be shown to be accountable to nothing other than destruction. For, as I

have said, God is therefore said to know the way of the righteous because they walk in his law; but the way of the wicked, because it is outside the law of God, shall perish. For all the ways of the wicked are dark (Prov. 4:19), as Solomon says, but those of the virtuous are very bright, with Christ our Lord as their guide.

1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Psalm 31:9) QUESTION 38. IF A HORSE AND A MULE DO NOT HAVE UNDERSTANDING, HOW MUCH LESS SO DOES THE EARTH, A THING WITHOUT SENSATION? WHAT THEN DOES IT MEAN WHEN THE EARTH IS SAID TO BLESS THE LORD (Ps. 31:9; Dan. 3:74)? — It is not to be understood in the way the words sound. For a work, although it is mute, is said to cry out the praise of its Creator: for it urges those who look upon it to bless the Maker; just as every well crafted vessel praises the craftsperson. Indeed, when it is read in the Psalms, Shall the dust give thanks to you, or declare your truth? (Ps. 29:10) Therefore, in every insensible substance, it is not the will, of which there is certainly none, but the works that bless the author. But if you wish to take this spiritually, understand that man is signified by "earth," according to the saying of the prophet: Remember, O Lord, that we are dust (Ps. 102:14); he whom the works of creation exhort to burst forth in praise of his Maker.

(Psalm 31:9) QUESTION 16. IF A HORSE AND A MULE DO NOT HAVE UNDERSTANDING, HOW MUCH LESS SO DOES THE EARTH, A THING WITHOUT SENSATION? WHAT THEN DOES IT MEAN WHEN THE EARTH IS SAID TO BLESS THE LORD (Ps. 31:9; Dan. 3:74)? — Let the earth bless the Lord, he says; that is, let it praise and confess your truth. How then in the Psalms does he say, Shall the dust give thanks to you, or declare your truth? (Ps. 29:10) It is not to be understood simply as it is read and as the words sound. For the earth does not have understanding, that it might give thanks to the Creator. But if you take this spiritually, understand "earth" as man, according to the saying of the prophet, Remember, O Lord, that we are dust. (Ps. 102:14) The work of the created world urges him to burst forth into praise of the Creator, so that he may gain the confession of His truth through those things which, although silent, are said to cry out the praise of the Creator, whose work they are. This, then, is the reason why, in the creation, the earth is said to bless God.

(Psalm 19:4; 40) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 17. HE HAS, HE SAYS, SET UP HIS TABERNACLE IN THE SUN (Ps. 18:6), THAT IS, HIS BODY IN WHICH CHRIST DWELT, WHO WAS SCOURGED BY PILATE: HOW THEN IS IT SAID IN THE PSALM OF CHRIST, THE SCOURGE SHALL NOT COME NEAR YOUR TENT (Ps. 90:10)? SINCE HE CALLED HIS BODY A TEMPLE. — The body of the Son of Man and of the Son of God is understood to be a temple. Yet God, that is, the Son of God, although he came in the flesh, dwelt nonetheless in the soul. Therefore both soul and body are the tabernacle of the Son of God, although there is one God and man, the Son of God and the son of man. Therefore from this standpoint it is said that the scourge did not come near his tabernacle; that is, his soul, in which his divinity dwells, was free from the punishment of hell or its rulers. Lest anyone think that because here he was crucified as if a sinner,

though he is innocent, and the flesh suffered, his soul suffered some sorrow in the lower regions, Scripture shows that his soul could not be disturbed in hell, because he descended there for this very purpose, that is, he allowed himself to suffer, so that he might put the darkness to shame and render its rulers powerless. Hence the Lord himself says: My soul is sorrowful even unto death (Matt. 26:38). It was allowed, as belonged to its nature, to be sorrowful, immediately bearing off the trophy, and the spoils of those by whom it had been saddened even unto death, after death now established in eternal joy. It can also be understood of the whole man; for he who knew no sin could not be scourged by the law.

(Psalm 23) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 111. ON PSALM 23. — The title of the Psalm hints at its meaning. For, about to speak of the mystery of Christ our Lord, he marked the Lord's day, saying: For David, on the first day of the week. For when it is said, For David, it relates to the one of whom this David bears the image, of whom the prophet says: And my servant David shall pasture them (Ezek. 37:24). Now the "first of the sabbath" is the first weekday. For after the sabbath the first day is the Lord's day, as the Gospel affirms, saying: Now on the first of the sabbath Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the tomb, etc. (Matt. 28:1). On the Lord's day he signified the mystery of the Savior. But so that the Psalm might be expounded according to the order of reason, he began from the person of God the Father, so that the mystery of the divinity might not be revealed to men without order. For whoever wants to lay out some case, unless he grasps its head and origin, will not be able to show its proper nature or teach what its truth is. And so the Prophet began therefore and said: The earth is the Lord's and its fullness. (Ps. 23:1a) He preserved the truth of things by saying: The earth is the Lord's and its fullness. For he followed the authority of the ancient saints, who said that the earth and the things that are in it belong to the Lord God.

And he added: The world and all who dwell in it. (Ps. 23:1b) Lest perhaps it be thought that he had signified something less when he said, The earth is the Lord's and its fullness, he revealed his meaning by saying, the world and all who dwell in it, so that he might teach that absolutely all the earth is the Lord's, and the things that are in it, so that nothing should be excepted that is not God's. As some heretics think, who, according to the saying of the apostle Peter, deny dominion to God (2 Pet. 2:10), about whom the prophetic oracles have taught that all things belong to God for condemnation. And it continues, He has founded it upon the seas; (Ps. 23:2a) that is what he expressed in another psalm, saying, You formed the earth upon the waters (Ps. 135:6): so that testimony might follow faith, he shows how he made it. For while there was confusion of things, and neither earth nor water had its own distinct form, at God's command the earth was gathered together and fixed upon the waters, so that both earth and water might have the proper character of their origin. Therefore in the book of Kings there is the voice of God saying, Did I not make the waters? And he added: And he prepared it upon the rivers.

(Ps. 23:2b) Therefore it is prepared upon the rivers, since it contains within itself stored waters, which, flowing as though through the pipes of veins, give it solidity, lest it be com-

pletely dry, fragile, and useless for cultivation. For they grant a vital effect to the roots of growing things, and at the same time they are a help against thirst in dry places. And to show that profession without a good life does not profit greatly, he says: Who shall ascend the mountain of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? (Psalm 23:3-4) He sets forth what sort of person one must be who professes God as creator, lest, because he has shown that those who, as I said, deny God's dominion are to be punished, those who confess him should think themselves free from punishment if they do not live rightly. By the mountain of the Lord he means heaven. Therefore in another psalm he says: I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from where help will come to me (Ps. 120:1). The place of the Lord is where he appears. It is said to Joshua son of Nun, when the Lord had appeared to him, The place on which you stand is holy ground (Josh. 5:16); and Jacob, where he saw God, said, This is the house of God (Gen. 28:17). And it continues: Innocent of hands and pure of heart.

(Ps. 23:4b) This person he calls worthy to ascend the mountain of the Lord, that is, into heaven, or to stand in his holy place, if someone is innocent in works and has a pure heart in the cause of God, that is, of faith. A person of this kind can ascend into heaven and stand in his holy place. For when he departs from this life he ascends into heaven. Then, when the city Jerusalem descends from heaven at the coming of the Lord, he will be worthy to stand where the Lord is going to judge the living and the dead as one who is innocent; but the ungodly and sinners will be unworthy to stand in the holy place of God's judgment, because the ungodly will rise to destruction, sinners to punishment. For if the sons of Israel, because of sin, could not bear to look upon the glorified face of Moses when he came down from the mountain (Ex. 34:29–30), how much more will a conscience burdened by sins dread to behold the Lord himself of glory sitting on the throne of his majesty? For they will hear, I do not know you, workers of iniquity (Matt. 7:23). And he added: Who has not taken his soul in vain. (Ps. 23:4c) Now he touches on the very kinds of sins. First of all, in this place, he is innocent and has a pure heart, who is free from the fornication of idolatry.

For this is vanity itself, and whoever bends himself to it brings his soul into bondage to corruption. And it continues: Nor has sworn deceitfully to his neighbor. He has mentioned two causes, which are principal: those of God and of neighbor; because whoever is found upright in these will without doubt be approved in other matters also, as the Lord says, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets (Matt. 22:37–40). Who then, loving God with all his heart, would not keep his law? Or who, having love for his neighbor, would strive after sins? since it is because of fear of God that he loves his neighbor. And he added: He shall receive blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Savior. (Ps. 23:5) Now he shows what is the reward of one who has had faith and love in the cause of God and man, of the creator and of neighbor: that he will both be blessed by the Lord, so that he may appear praised, and will obtain mercy in those things which he has not been able to

fulfill. For no one can be so watchful as never to err at all; but because he is found zealous and faithful in great matters, he may also receive mercy from his God in lesser ones.

He is therefore called Savior, because he does not will the death of one who is dying, but that he should turn back and live (Ezek. 18:32). And it continues: This is the generation of those who seek the Lord, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. (Ps. 23:6) He has said there is one generation of those who seek God, and of those who seek the face of the God of Jacob, and this is not idle. For although both are good, yet by these words he has indicated two degrees. It is a good thing to seek God; it is a fullness of good to seek the face of the God of Jacob. For those are more worthy who are before the face of the judge. Of these merits, therefore, this is the generation: because innocence and purity of heart bring one to this point; just as, in turn, if one is to come to evil, unrighteousness and iniquity go before. For there are two generations: one on the side of iniquity, which is the mother of Cain; the other on the side of righteousness, which is the mother of Abel: the latter consists in faith and good conduct; the former in treachery and crooked works. These are the two laws, of good and of evil, of God and of the Devil; and whichever one a person has followed, he will be called its son. And therefore this is the generation of those who seek God:

faith in God and love for neighbor, as we have said above. For whoever has faith in God is always seeking his help; nor does he show himself unjust to men who wishes to have God as his gracious protector. The sign of this is when he is called the God of Jacob, because God is known in Judah (Ps. 75:2). But why are they said to seek his face, when Moses heard, For, he says, my face shall not be seen by you (Ex. 33:20)? If therefore even Moses sought the face of God and could not see it, then these are said to seek in vain, because they are not better than Moses. But no one should be said to seek the face of God in vain, because they are therefore said to seek the face of God so that it may be known whom they seek, since they are worthy also to see him. For everyone who is sought is then known if his face is seen. But since the face of God cannot be seen by mortals, this expression stands for "face" when it is said, the God of Jacob. Diapsalma. In this passage Diapsalma signifies a change of person. For after those things which pertain to the person of God the Father, he adds those which pertain to the mystery of God the Son, so that the full order of Father and Son is preserved.

For the Law was given through Moses so that it might be as an instructor for men, instructing and preparing them as a teacher of righteousness, so that they might become worthy of the year of the Lord's expiation and the day of recompense; so that those who under the hope of the future Christ had been faithful might receive him and be able to escape Adam's sin, being secure regarding their own, because his coming, which they had hoped for, would grant them mercy concerning those things in which it slipped upon them so that they sinned. This is what he mentioned above, saying, He shall receive mercy from God his savior. He therefore says: Lift up your gates, you princes. (Ps. 23:7a) This is the voice of the holy angels, of whom he says in the Gospel that, he says, angels came and ministered to him (Matt. 4:11). These then speak to the princes and powers against whom the Apostle says

we have our wrestling (Eph. 6:12), that they should lift up the gates of their prince, that is, of the Devil, who is the prince of princes set in error, through which one goes into Gehenna. These gates are unbelief and the deceit of idolatry. And it continues: And be lifted up, you everlasting gates. (Ps. 23:7b) Faith and hope with love are everlasting gates, because what is proclaimed through truth cannot be abolished. But those gates which I said are unbelief and the deceit of idols are temporal, because no lie remains.

For when the truth is revealed, it will perish. They are therefore taught to take away the gates of their prince of darkness, that is, that with the error of many gods removed, the faith of the one God may be brought in, in Christ. This is what the Apostle testifies that he was sent to teach, that he might show not only to men, but to princes and powers in the heavenly places the mystery of the one God in Christ (Eph. 3:8–12). And he added: And the king of glory shall enter. (Ps. 23:7c) He commands that the deceitful gates, subtly fashioned by the Devil, be taken away, these are presumption, through which he thought himself a god, so that the king of glory may enter, who is Christ Jesus our Lord. For faith in God enters no one's mind unless he has removed from himself the error invented by the Devil's transgression. And the princes mentioned above cannot receive Christ the king into the faith of the one God unless they cast from themselves the tradition by which slander is brought upon the one God; not only the earthly slander, but also that which in heavenly places has been seized by the prince of princes, Satan. For the error which they conspired among themselves, so that at the Devil's instigation they called themselves gods, they also arranged here on earth, so that this error might be its image here. And it continues: Who is this king of glory?

(Ps. 23:8) Lest it might perhaps be thought that Christ was called king of glory unnecessarily, he introduces the person of one asking and saying, Who is this king of glory? As though he were in amazement or wished to be taught whether it is true and fitting to call Christ king of glory. And therefore they answered him: The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, so that by this being added he might learn Christ to be king of glory, not by basic words but with testimony. For the strength and power by which he subdued and crushed the Devil with his attendants show him to be the king of glory. And he added: Lift up your gates, you princes, and be lifted up, you everlasting gates; (Ps. 23:9a) that is, since by the testimony of his power, which it is wicked to contradict, you have learned that it is worthy that Christ be called king of glory, remove error from your minds. And in that he says, The king of glory shall enter, it is shown that they cannot share in the faith of Christ unless they have cleansed their hearts from all impurity of idolatry. For unless man has been renewed, the Holy Spirit will not enter him. And it continues: Who is this king of glory? (Ps. 23:9b) This repetition brings confirmation. For everything that is heard as new is not grasped in the heart unless it is repeated.

And it brings wonder and astonishment when that which has never been heard before is spoken. And he added: The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory. (Ps. 23:10) By repeating the same, he teaches that it is rightly said that this one is king of glory, who is the Lord of

hosts. For he is not undeservedly called king of glory who rules over the powers. Where the Apostle: For if they had understood, he says, they would never have crucified the Lord of majesty (1 Cor. 2:8).

(Psalm 35:7) 2ND CATEGORY OT & NT QUESTION 7. WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN THE PSALM, "MEN," HE SAYS, "AND BEASTS YOU WILL SAVE" (Ps. 35:7); AND IN THE PROPHET JONAH, "I WILL NOT SPARE," HE SAYS, "THE CITY IN WHICH LIVE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY THOUSAND PEOPLE, AND MANY ANIMALS" (Jonah 4:11); WHEREAS THE APOSTLE SAYS, "DOES GOD CARE FOR OXEN?" (1 Cor. 9:9). — As far as the wording goes, it seems contradictory; but if the purpose of man and of animals is considered, it will become clear that it is not different. God takes care of all, as the maker of all; but he does not preserve animals for their own sake, he preserves animals for the sake of men, not men for the sake of animals. Therefore, in caring for men, he keeps the animals, so that his concern is not for oxen, but for human beings. For what hope is there in animals?

(Psalm 39; 50) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 12. WHY IS IT THAT IN THE LAW EVEN AARON HIMSELF IS TOLD THAT HE MUST OFFER BURNT OFFERINGS FOR HIS SINS, WHEN DAVID SAYS, "FOR FAULTS YOU HAVE NOT REQUIRED A BURNT OFFERING" (Ps. 39:7), AND LATER, "YOU WILL NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN BURNT OFFERINGS" (Ps. 50:18)? HOW DID HE COMMAND THAT THERE BE OFFERED WHAT HE DOES NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN? — It is clear that God does not take delight in burnt offerings, but that by way of satisfaction for sin, through the groaning and sorrow of the heart, pardon can be earned. He willed that the sacrifice should be a testimony of sin, so that the sinner, by the offering of the sacrifice, might confess that he had sinned. But how forgiveness might be obtained, He showed in another place, saying, "Break your bread for the hungry; if you see one naked, clothe him, and do not despise your own flesh and blood" (Isa. 58:7), or certainly, "A contrite and humbled heart, O God, you will not despise" (Ps. 50:19). First, then, He instructed that the offense must be confessed; then He showed how it can be forgiven. For He never commanded a sacrifice for an obvious, clear offense, but for sins of ignorance; because even when a man does not know, he sins, and when he thinks he is acting rightly, by a certain intention he goes astray. Such a sin, He said, can be cleansed by a sacrifice.

(Psalm 39:16) 2ND CATEGORY OT & NT QUESTION 6. WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN DAVID SAYS, "LET THEM BE CONFUSED AND ASHAMED WHO SAY TO ME, 'WELL DONE, WELL DONE' " (Ps. 69:4), WHILE THE LORD SAYS, "WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT" (Matt. 25:21, 23), ETC.? THAT WHICH DAVID TOOK AS SOMETHING BAD, THE SAVIOR SHOWS TO BE WORTHY OF GOOD MERITS. — This does not differ much from the previous question. For one and the same word has different meanings, as I mentioned above1. For the detractors of David, since they supported his destruction, were rejoicing at his misfortunes. While he was suffering pressures and distresses from Saul and from his son Absalom, they said that this was rightly and well done to him.

It is like when someone says, of a man who is suffering wrongs, “It serves him right”; that is, to rejoice in another’s troubles: this is to say, “He is getting what he deserves.” In a similar way, the Savior, rejoicing in good works, proclaims a man’s merit by saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” For he exults because the servant has made himself more worthy, saying, “Well done,” that is, “You have acted rightly, so that you might place yourself in a position of greater merit.” Therefore one word is applied to two opposite causes. For we are accustomed to say of someone, “He has been judged.” But how it is said is made clear by the cause that either follows or precedes. For sometimes it is said with reference to good, sometimes to evil; just as desire is sometimes directed to good, sometimes to evil.

1 In the second part of the New Testament questions, question 54. (Psalm 50) 1ST CATEGORY NT

QUESTION 112. ON PSALM FIFTY. — The Fiftieth Psalm is placed here not according in chronological order, but according to rationale. For its title is governed not by number, but by meaning. As far as history is concerned, it comes before the third. For the prophet Nathan rebuked him for his sin before his son Absalom rose up against him to deprive him of both life and kingdom. This is therefore the reason why the Fiftieth is placed here, as is evident from the Law. For there it is established that the number fifty carries remission. It comes after seven weeks and is the first that bears the type of the Lord’s Day: because just as after seven days, the first day is that which was made at the beginning, and which, after each completed week, is always the first; so also, after seven weeks, the fiftieth, when counted, is in mystery the first, and is called in a double sense the Lord’s Day: first, because it was made at the beginning by the Lord, and, always recurring upon the completion of the weekly cycle, is the first; then, because on it the Lord rose again, having triumphed over death, it is also called the Lord’s Day. Not without reason, then, in the number fifty, which we observe as mystically signifying the first, remission is contained. Indeed, the Law was given on the fiftieth day.

For from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, they were commanded on the forty-eighth day to be washed, so that, purified for two days, on the third day they might be ready to receive the Law (Exod. 19:10, 11). And what else does that washing indicate but that remission was granted on the fiftieth day, so that, purified, they might receive the Law? From that point on, with past things blotted out, they should render an account of their conduct according to the Law entrusted to them. For this same reason the Law also commanded that a purchased possession be restored in the fiftieth year (Levit. 25:10). From this, therefore, comes the title of the Fiftieth Psalm. In it King David asks for remission according to this prefigured meaning; therefore he says: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy. (Ps. 50:1a) Knowing that he had sinned gravely, King David therefore asks, saying: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy. For mercy is great when great sins are forgiven. And he adds: And according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my iniquity. (Ps. 50:1b) To make clear that he had sinned

grievously, he calls his sin "iniquity," because iniquity is no light fault; and he who blots out iniquity, that is, does not credit it, abounds in mercy.

He therefore tries in no way to excuse himself in his case, so that he may not only soften the mind of the Judge toward him, but also move Him to compassion. For the mind is stirred to mercy when it sees the accused confess his sins in such a way as to show that he is grieved because he has sinned. For whoever does not grieve seems to mock the judge; for he prays only to escape, meaning to commit the same again. And he continues: Wash me thoroughly, he says, from my injustice, and cleanse me from my sin. (Ps. 50:2) Since he proclaims the abundant mercy of God, he begs to be cleansed completely, so that nothing of fault or injustice may remain in him that could cause suspicion. And that he might obtain or secure this very thing, he adds: For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me. (Ps. 50:3) Because he knows that he has sinned grievously, he is anxious lest it be not entirely forgiven him. Considering the greatness of his sins, he fears, knowing that grave sins are not easily forgiven; and therefore he confesses with tears, keeping his sin before his eyes, in order in every way to make the Judge merciful toward him. For he knows it is written: Declare your iniquities first, that you may be justified (Isa. 43:26). And he continues: Against you alone have I sinned, and done evil before you.

(Ps. 50:4a) Now, from another angle, he provides a remedy for his fault, so as to bring his petition to its effect. By this line of argument he declares himself innocent in the primary matter: for whoever sins against another god is an enemy of the God who is Creator. For he chooses another in place of Him, to whom he attributes His authority. Therefore, showing that he is free from such iniquity, he says: Against you alone have I sinned, and done evil before you; (Ps. 50:4b) that is, because I have sinned against you, and not against any other whom through error I might call god, my guilt is less than that of others, who are subject to punishment. For I am not wicked, but a sinner, because I have not sinned against you yourself, but against your Law; nor have I denied you, but, confessing you as God and Lord, I have sinned against a man. Therefore, since in that which is your own proper cause I am not guilty, forgive what I have done against a fellow-servant. For therefore I have sinned that I neither denied the honor of your name nor gave it to another. There was therefore reason for the Judge to be moved to mercy. For although many sin against Him, whom He even urges to turn back to Him, yet when those who do not sin directly against Him nevertheless ask pardon for other reasons, He readily receives them. For the Lord always wills His servants to flee to His help.

Therefore he adds: That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged. (Ps. 50:4c) While asking for mercy, he prays that God may not change His justice, since justice is ordinarily a middle course such that it is not equal toward those who do not sin and those who do, that is, that it renders to each according to his works; but the innocent man in the mystery of God does not fail to understand what he asks. For knowing that God has frequently said in the Law, For I am merciful, says the Lord your God (Exod. 22:27), from there he begs that this faith may remain firm, and that God may be justified in His

words, by remaining in what He has spoken, and not be overcome by the sins of men so as not to show mercy. For those who sin, knowing what God has promised to those who live well, and that He perseveres in this, judge Him to be a liar. For by living badly they do not believe that what He promised is true. Therefore King David asks that God may overcome this opinion men entertain, and may give what He has promised, so that those who, not keeping the commandments, judge that He will not give, may be put to shame. And he continues: Behold, I was conceived in iniquities.

(Ps. 50:5) Now, with this added, he recalls the cause of the weakness of the human race, namely that it is easy for man to sin, so that he might soften the severity of the judgment upon himself. For he makes mention of the first fault, by which Adam, through transgression, made the human race subject to sin. Under the persuasion and deceit of the enemy, conceiving iniquity, he subjected all his offspring to iniquity, so that all born from him by breeding should be liable to sin. Therefore he added, "And in sins my mother conceived me," (Ps. 50:5b) so that the transmission of sin from Adam would be an obstacle for those conceived and born, hindering them from living a good life; and therefore mercy should not be denied to the suppliant, since he has a hostile enemy who urges him to sin. For through sin the Devil, having subjected the first man to himself, received power to mingle with his flesh and, with a certain restraint of offenses, suggest pleasures, by which he strips captive man of life. Remembering this, the teacher of the Gentiles says: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind" (Rom. 7:23); so that, seeing this, the Judge may stretch out his hand to one in sorrow and under assault. And it continues: "Behold, you have loved truth.

(Ps. 50:6a) Because you love truth, he says, come to the aid of the one who prays, the one whom you know lays bare the true impairments of his heart, and to every guilty person you once, moved by mercy, decreed to give help, so that the error committed on earth might be corrected by heavenly providence. For this reason he adds: "You have made known to me the uncertain and hidden things of the heart. (Ps. 50:6b) By "uncertain and hidden things of the heart" he means those things which God has provided for the protection of the human race, just as the Apostle says: "What eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). Who are those who love God, if not those who consent to his law, neither hiding nor excusing sins? These "hidden things of the heart" are revealed to those who love God, so that, because they grieved at being overwhelmed by sins, they might not deny it when corrected, crediting it both to themselves and to their origin, and not transferring to God as author the things they did in sin. Their hearts were illumined by spiritual brightness, so that they might see God's providence in Christ, namely that he was going to come to condemn the sin which, from Adam's transgression, ruled over the human race. This, then, King David prays for:

that what God had decreed for the future, seeing the human race toil, he might first grant to himself, constrained by the same necessity in which he had decreed to help all; so that the

gift which was to be free and could not be given before the time, might, to him, be granted in advance for his prayer and tears. He does not remain silent about how this is to happen, saying: "You will sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed. (Ps. 50:7a) Rightly does he ask to be cleansed by the sprinkling of hyssop. For with this the sons of Israel smeared their doorposts with blood, that they might be kept safe from death (Exod. 12:22–23); so here too he prays by the sprinkling of hyssop to be cleansed from his sins, lest he be touched by death. And it continues: "You will wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (Ps. 50:7b) Clearly, God's work differs from man's work: therefore he says, "I shall be whiter than snow," because what God has done is much better than what man has done. For this reason he asks to be cleansed by the sprinkling of hyssop, so that as the bodily flesh is washed with water, in the same way, through the signification of hyssop, the stains of souls may be washed away by spiritual means. For the sprinkling of hyssop is a kind of purification, so that by means of what is visible, one may be cleansed invisibly. And it continues:

"You will give joy and gladness to my hearing. (Ps. 50:8a) There is no doubt that the voice of one proclaiming forgiveness brings joy to sinners. For who does not rejoice when he hears that pardon is being granted? For when God forgives, he is safe both in the present and the future. "And the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice. (Ps. 50:8b) There is a twofold sense in which the bones are humbled: both in that he was humbled so that he might sin, for no one who sins is exalted, and in that afterward he, as a suppliant, might beg pardon. For he certainly, rolling in sackcloth and ashes, begged for mercy; which, once obtained, he was raised up in the exultation of his mind and the restoration of his body. And he added: "Turn your face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. (Ps. 50:9) With this form of words he asks for forgiveness, just as it was established for the future through faith in Christ, that the Savior, who is promised to him spiritually, should begin with him to grant all sins to those who are converted. For the one whose sins are not looked upon and whose iniquities are all blotted out has no basis on which he may be found guilty, and the mouths of his enemies are closed. For whoever does not look upon sins does not assign them. This is what it means to turn one's face away from someone's sins: not to accept an accusation against him.

And what does it mean that, though he was corrected for two sins, he adds by accusing himself of many? And when he heard from the prophet Nathan that his sin was forgiven, why does he still ask with diligent prayer that he might attain pardon, unless it is because he is not acting only on his own behalf, but under the accusation of his sin he recounts the miseries of the whole people? For he asks for restoration for himself, since no one to whom forgiveness is granted is without shame, unless he is restored to his own place, so that the dignity of his position may excuse his shame; but for the others he signifies the blessing of God that was going to be in Christ, washing away all sins. And it continues: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and establish a right spirit within my inner parts. (Ps. 50:10) This is to ask for mercy with a good heart. He not only prays concerning past things, but is also concerned about future things, so that, as a sinner resolving to hate sin lest he sin, he may be helped by God through the spirit of righteousness which he prays to have established

within his inner parts; that is, that a new spirit may be placed in him for this purpose: that it may guard him from sins, lest he be forced to do what he is known to be unwilling to do.

And he can have a clean heart if he does not sin either within or without; that is, neither in deed nor in thought. Because it is almost impossible that this be observed in all things, at least in the cause of God it must be observed, which is the principal thing: that a clean heart be kept in the mystery of God and of Christ, while faith in them is preserved unaltered; for it is also said elsewhere: Who can boast that he has a pure heart, or that he is free from sins? (Prov. 20:9). Finally, King David had a clean heart in the cause of God, because he neither ever sought help from vanity, which is idolatry, nor failed to fulfill anything else that was commanded from him by God. Therefore of the rest he added: Cast me not away from your face, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. (Ps. 50:11) This is the meaning which I mentioned above: that, though assured of pardon, he is anxious about renewal. For he to whom there is only forgiveness is usually separated from the face of the Lord. For although vengeance is not taken on him, yet in the mind of the Lord or of the judge his crime is not blotted out. Therefore he prays that his sin may be utterly wiped away, and that he may be worthy to approach the face of the Lord and to prophesy again; and this came to pass. For this is what he says:

And take not thy Holy Spirit from me. This is the Spirit of the prophets. And it follows: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and strengthen me with a princely Spirit. (Ps. 50:12) He asks that the joy be given to him which was promised in Christ, that, washed from every stain and renewed, he might rejoice in the salvation he had sought; and that he might not be moved, but confirmed in the kingdom by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he therefore called princely, because he is above every creature, through whom kings reign. And he adds: I will teach the wicked your ways, and sinners shall be converted to you. (Ps. 50:13) He says this in order that in him the wicked may learn the mercy of God, who receives and advances sinners that confess to him; nor does he neglect sinners who are converted, but encourages them while he has mercy on others. And it follows: Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, God of my salvation. (Ps. 50:14) By saying this he shows his sin to be deserving of death, that he may proclaim how great the mercy of God is. By this he also stirs others to flee for refuge to the mercy of God. Therefore he subjoined: My tongue shall exult in your righteousness, O Lord. (Ps. 35:28) He says that he rejoices in the righteousness of the Lord, because he abides in that which he promised, saying: But my mercy I will not take away from them (Ps. 88:34).

Therefore King David, joyful and secure in this respect, proclaims the righteousness of his God. And it follows: You shall open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise. (Ps. 50:15) So he opens his lips, while he does not allow him to be kept down on account of sin. For once freed, his mouth stands open; but the sinner's mouth is shut: seized by shame and fear, he does not dare to speak; whereas the one absolved and liberated, exulting, proclaims the praise of the Judge. For the Apostle also, as he himself testifies, because he was free from men, says: Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians (2 Cor. 6:11). And he added:

For if you had desired a sacrifice, I would indeed have given it. (Ps. 50:16a) He speaks from what is known, knowing that holy Samuel said to King Saul, who thought that his sin could be wiped out not by sorrow of mind nor by the mercy of tears, but by the offering of sacrifice: God does not will sacrifice rather than that his voice be heard (1 Sam. 15:22); because sacrifices of that sort can do harm, but cannot appease God. For God is appeased in this way: if the soul, mindful of its sin, in tribulation and sorrow of heart, weeps over what it has done. And it follows: With burnt offerings you will not be delighted. (Ps. 50:16b) Nor is God delighted with burnt offerings in such cases.

For the soul itself must make satisfaction for itself, not redeem itself from outside. These things indeed can give help. For as the mind was delighted in sins, so it must be afflicted in repentance, and then it will please God to wipe out its sins. Therefore he subjoined: A sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, you will not despise. (Ps. 50:17) He shows what kind of sacrifice for sins God accepts; for he cannot appease God who has rejoiced against his own salvation, unless he has been troubled in heart, and therefore is restored to life. Finally, every restless or undisciplined person often comes to harm, so that he injures the members of his body, which certainly cannot receive the remedy of health without pain: so also sinners cannot redeem their sins, unless the soul that has sinned has felt pain. For this is just: that because he rejoiced against reason, he should, according to reason, suffer grief. And it follows: Deal kindly, O Lord, in thy good will with Sion. (Ps. 50:18a) By Sion he means the Church, so that our perseverance may not seem unacceptable; to which, that God may fulfill his promise, he suggests this, knowing that he would then receive full remission when God should have accomplished in Christ what he had decreed: that is, that those who hope in the promised salvation may be freed from every sin;

because through Christ they will be delivered not only from their own sins, but from Adam's sin, which has come down to all by propagation. And he added: And the walls of Jerusalem shall be built up. (Ps. 50:18b) Were they destroyed? But by "the walls of Jerusalem" he means the Church, which was to be built up, ordered by faith in Christ. Its walls are understood to be holy men, as the Apocalypse of the apostle John teaches us; for both the city of Jerusalem and its walls are to be understood as the servants of God (Rev. 21:12). Knowing also through Christ the promise that was to be fulfilled for the liberation of the servants of God, the king David prays that it may be fulfilled; that is, that by faith the Church may be built up, and that those who hope for salvation from this faith may be delivered. And it follows: Then shall you accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations and burnt offerings. (Ps. 50:19a) He says this because he would then have oblations and burnt offerings as acceptable to himself when the Church had been built; and not at random or according to every custom, but, he says, you shall accept the sacrifice of righteousness. A sacrifice is just when a worthy gift is offered; moreover, nothing is so just and worthy a sacrifice as that we offer ourselves to God.

For since God is spirit (Jn. 4:24), spiritual sacrifices are to be offered to Him, so that a living victim may be offered by one who lives. Since he had said, in the matter of sin, that God is by no means delighted with carnal sacrifices, he shows that in the future it was to be offered to God in a spiritual manner, and that He would accept it; because these are the sacrifices worthy of God: that is, in the past they were lesser, because they were carnal; now they are greater, because they are spiritual. And he added: Then they will place calves upon your altar. (Ps. 50:19b) If, by the ceasing of former sacrifices, he indicated that spiritual sacrifices would follow, what does it mean that he said, Then they will place calves upon your altar, unless that by these bodily things he signifies spiritual realities; especially since he had said that He does not take delight in carnal things? Therefore, in speaking of calves, he signified the new people, reborn through faith in Christ, whose devotion is daily poured out upon the altar of the Lord. For since he is understood to have spoken concerning the Church, the sacrifices of the Church must also be understood to have been meant as spiritual.

(Psalm 77:25) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 20. WHAT DOES THIS SAYING MEAN, "MAN ATE THE BREAD OF ANGELS", WHEN ANGELS DO NOT NEED FOOD, SINCE THEY ARE SIMPLE BY NATURE AND ENDOWED WITH SPIRITUAL POWER? — The bread that he calls "of angels" is manna. Now manna is interpreted as "What is this? For when the children of Israel saw something like white coriander seed fall upon the ground, they said to one another, "What is this? (Exod. 16:15). In the Hebrew language this is called "MAN HU. This bread or food, therefore, was not created by the law of the world, by a mixture of elements; but it came from above, provided by a spiritual ordering. Nor indeed was it kept in the heavens beforehand, since it was created by the power of God in a moment for the nourishment of bodies. It was called, however, the bread of angels because it was created by that same power by which angelic nature survives and lives. For without God there is no life. By the fact, therefore, that it is said to have come from heaven, it is called the bread of angels. In order to recall how great and of what sort God's benefits toward man are, he spoke in this way, so that, recognizing them, they might give thanks to God, who governs His servants with such care that, while they are still in the flesh, He will, if necessary, provide for them those things by which the angels live.

The Apostle said among other things, "The Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4), so that, because water flowed by Christ's power from the rock (Exod. 17:6), Christ might be called the rock. In a similar way, because manna came down from heaven by His power, manna, that is, bread, is so called, so that what was done then may be thought to have been a figure of that reality which is now offered in the Church; so that the Christian people, whom Scripture signified in the angels, should be the "bread" eaten by men, that is, by the Jews. And because the grace is greater now than it was in the prophets, and freedom has been given through Christ, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17), by comparison of times and graces Christians are called angels: and the Jews, whom he called "men," have been satisfied with the bread of these, which is Christ. For Christ belongs especially

to these, to whom He has been revealed, and who are judged worthy to be called by this name. Therefore the question stated above can be understood in a twofold way: so that the bread may be called both that of the heavenly angels and that of Christians, according to the things that have been said.

PROVERBS (Proverbs 10:27) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 33. SOLOMON SAYS, "THE YEARS OF THE UNGODLY WILL BE SHORTENED"; HOW THEN IS IT THAT WE SEE SOME UNGODLY PEOPLE LIVING TO AN OLD AGE? — It would indeed be fitting that all the ungodly not only should be deprived of this light more quickly, but in fact should not enjoy even a single moment of life, since, forgetful of their Creator, they attribute the authority over all life to a creature. But Scripture is addressing those ungodly people who, while living under God's Law, were more inclined toward idols. For they are worse than other ungodly people: knowing God and despising Him, they obey servants. And that these are the ones spoken of, the Apostle proves when he says, "Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law" (Rom. 3:19). The Gentiles, however, are not counted in the number of the living.

(Proverbs 18:17) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 30. IN PROVERBS IT IS SAID, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN IS THE ACCUSER OF HIMSELF AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS SPEECH". HOW IS HE RIGHTEOUS, IF HE IS A SINNER? — All truth is righteous. Therefore, because he confesses what he is, he is righteous: for he speaks the truth; but sinners who defend their own misdeeds cannot be justified. Therefore such a man is rightly called righteous, because in declaring his sin he naturally asks that it be forgiven, begging the mercy of God. For he knows what is written in the Law: "Confess your sins, that you may be justified" (Isa. 43:26). But what does it mean to confess at the beginning of one's speech, if not to admit one's fault not under obligation, but voluntarily? For who, even one who fears God, is without sin, since faults are mixed in even with our thoughts, and at times we sin against our will? Yet this can also be said or thought of one who is called a catechumen, so that when he comes to the faith he may be justified. For when he asks to be changed, he undoubtedly confesses himself a sinner, that he may be justified.

(Proverbs 22:2) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 32. WE READ IN SOLOMON: "THE RICH AND THE POOR HAVE MET TOGETHER; THE LORD MADE BOTH OF THEM". HOW THEN IS THERE NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD? — Far be this wicked claim from the minds of the faithful. For, lest Scripture should teach that the poor are to be despised and the rich to be honored, it shows that God is the maker of both, not, of course, in their poverty and riches, but in the fact that they exist. For if they differ from one another in wealth, they do not differ in the substance of their nature. Nor, because the circumstances of this world bring some people gain, whether prosperous in riches or unfortunate in poverty, are those to be despised whom God has not cast down, or those to be esteemed to whom truth has not developed witness. Those are indeed to be despised who corrupt morals and are sacrilegious against the Law of God; but those are to be honored who love God and cultivate discipline. For these are held

as rich before God, who live a good life; and the more they are despised in the world, the more they are honored in heaven.

For those who have the benefit of time for increasing their resources, if they know themselves and understand the will of God, who has given the earth to all, and commands His sun to rise on everyone, and pours out His rain without distinction (Matt. 5:45), while the injustice of the times, or of chance, or of want denies to some what God has given to all, they themselves supply it to them, so that by fulfilling God's will they may be rich not only in this world, but also in heaven, lest the riches of a brief time shut them out from eternal riches. But those whom people think should be despised because of their poverty, if they reflect on God's future judgment, there they will always be rich, where the rich of this age will be in need, repenting that they were not poor.

ECCLESIASTES 1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Ecclesiastes 9:4) QUESTION 39. WHAT IS THIS THAT IS READ IN SOLOMON: "THERE IS HOPE," HE SAYS, "FOR ONE WHO IS JOINED TO ALL THE LIVING; FOR A LIVING DOG IS BETTER THAN A DEAD LION" (Eccles. 9:4)?" — The "darkness" signifies paganism and ignorance. By what he then adds, "A living dog is better than a dead lion," he wants us to understand that there is greater hope in the pagan people than in the apostate. For just as the lion is stronger than all wild beasts, so is Christianity stronger than all sects. If therefore anyone has turned away from it, he loses salvation, so that he is worse than a pagan. For it can happen that a pagan comes to believe and gains the salvation which the apostate has lost. But if he does not believe, still the apostate is worse; for it is worse to have lost salvation than never to have had it. The Savior shows that the "dog" signifies the pagan when he says, "It is not permitted to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs" (Matt. 15:26).

(Ecclesiastes 9:4) QUESTION 19. IN SOLOMON IT IS SAID, "HOPE IS IN THE DARKNESS, AND A LIVING DOG IS BETTER THAN A DEAD LION." (Eccles. 9:4)." — "Darkness" signifies ignorance and paganism: because there is more hope in the pagan than in the apostate. He calls the latter the "dead lion," that is, the Christian apostate: for as long as he remained in the faith, he was a lion; but when he fell away, he is called dead. The "dog," however, is the pagan in whom there is hope that he may believe: for as long as he lives, there is hope for him. But the apostate's hope will perish. For the Savior shows that the "dog" signifies the pagan when he says, "It is not permitted to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." (Matt. 15:26) (Ecclesiastes 7:17) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 15. SINCE THE LAW PROCLAIMS WHAT IS JUST, AND HE IS TRULY JUST WHO POSSESSES FULL JUSTICE, HOW IS IT THEN THAT SOLOMON SAYS, "DO NOT BE OVERLY JUST"? — Excessive justice falls into sin, while moderated justice makes people perfect. For he who is overly just is not without hatred; because if you answer sinners on every single point, you will not fail to find where you yourself sin. Indeed, God's justice is moderated. For sometimes He pardons sinners, sometimes He grows angry, sometimes He repays them not as much as they deserve: He bears with them, so that there may be those who progress. Since the Law cannot soften itself, it must be hardened by us, so that

it can be of benefit to those acting under it. Therefore this man is not overly just, who is an imitator of God.

(Ecclesiastes 13:16; Psalm 142:2) 1ST CATEGORY OT QUESTION 22. WHY DOES SOLOMON SAY, "JUSTIFY YOUR SOUL BEFORE YOUR DEATH," AS WE READ IN A PSALM, "NO LIVING MAN WILL BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR PRESENCE?" —A person justifies his soul before death when, through hope of future life, he reaches faith, so that he may not die in transgression. But Solomon is speaking of someone who lives under the Law and does not conduct himself justly. If such a person corrects his mind so as to walk in the paths of righteousness, he justifies his soul before death. For Solomon, because of the coming judgment, has given this advice, lest anyone careless about himself should die in his sins. David, however, spoke about the perfection of righteousness: for no one will be justified before God so as to be worthy of the promise, unless he has died in righteousness. As long as a person lives, he does not yet possess the full merit of what is to come. Therefore the Savior says, "He who perseveres to the end, he shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22; 24:13).

WISDOM (Wisdom 1:13; Sirach 11:14) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 34. HOW IS IT THAT THE SAME SOLOMON SAYS, "GOD," HE DECLARES, "DID NOT MAKE DEATH," WHILE IN ANOTHER PLACE HE SAYS, "GOOD THINGS AND EVIL, LIFE AND DEATH, POVERTY AND RICHES ARE FROM GOD" (Wisdom 1:13; Sirach 11:14)?" — There is no doubt that all good things are from God, but the "evils" he mentioned are evils only in that God is avenging himself on us. For even though punishment is justly inflicted, it still seems an evil to the one who suffers it. Therefore God speaks through the prophet to sinners, saying, "I will bring evils upon you," that is, "I will deal with you by punishments. Life and death are from God in this way: he gave a law which promises life to those who keep it, but death to those who reject it, yet that death which is called the second death. For when he judges each person according to what he deserves, it is from him, whether it be freeing leading to life or guilt leading to death. He is therefore not the originator of death, but its judge, because the cause of death is sin. How then could God bring about death, he who does not know how to sin? But when he repays sins, death is said to be from him, although it is not from him, but from the one who has sinned. By the same reasoning, poverty and riches are from God.

Some people, having the fear of God, despise luxury, avoid a wasteful life, and do not turn their eyes away from the needy and the poor: such people increase their store of good things. For it is written in Proverbs, "Poverty and dishonor are removed by discipline" (Prov. 13:18). But those who do not have the fear of God, living more loosely and despising the needy, as it is written, will come to want; they are not only careless and reckless about themselves, but also ridiculers of the law that has been given. In this way God has made poor and rich: because when transgression of the law gives rise to poverty, it is said to be done by God as the author of the law; and when some, through fear, keep the discipline of the law, they become rich by God, the author of the law.

(Wisdom 11:17) 2ND CATEGORY OT QUESTION 20. IN WISDOM IT SAYS, "HE CREATED, IT SAYS, THE WORLD FROM UNSEEN MATTER"; AND ELSEWHERE, THAT WE HAVE BEEN MADE FROM NOTHING (Wis. 11:18 and 2:2). — That God created confused substances at the same time is shown by the meaning of the Scriptures, with darkness of course being mixed in. He called this confusion of things, that is, air, fire, water, earth, darkness, unseen matter, just as it is read in Genesis: "Now the earth, he says, was invisible and without form" (Gen. 1:2). From this confusion, therefore, he created the world by establishing the firmament, so that, with the waters gathered together within it into one place, a dwelling might be made for the human race. For when the substances had been distinguished and separated, he made in the hollow space a habitable home. ISAIAH (Isaiah 4:1) 1ST CATEGORY OT

QUESTION 47. HOW DO THE SEVEN WOMEN MENTIONED IN ISAIAH, "AND SEVEN WOMEN SHALL TAKE HOLD," ETC. (Isa. 4:1), SIGNIFY THE SEVEN CATHOLIC CHURCHES? — "And seven women," he says, "shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let your name be called upon us; take away our reproach. It is absolutely clear that by the seven women the seven Churches are signified: for although the Church is one, it is called sevenfold, so that the one body may consist of a sevenfold number of members. For not only we, but also the citizens above are members of the Church, whose head is Christ (Eph. 5:23). Whether therefore the Churches are called one or seven does not conflict. It is called one because it has one head, which is Christ; it is called seven because, just as the members are diverse, so also the spiritual powers, among which we too are reckoned, have diverse functions, on account of which they are called "of the air. They are diverse for this reason, that not each one can do all things, but all together are the body of Christ: for he is the head of the body, the Church (Col. 1:18), from whom the whole body exists, that is, from whom all things in heaven and on earth have their origin. In this Church which is on earth, mention is made of all the Churches:

for when in it the mystery of the Creator is proclaimed, this teaching is also revealed to the heavenly beings. When it is made known to those below, it is necessary that those above also hear. Therefore the Apostle says, "To me, the least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all as to what is the dispensation of the mystery hidden from ages in God who created all things, so that through the Church the diverse wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Eph. 3:8). Through this Church, therefore, the heavenly beings are taught, because "Truth," it says, "has sprung out of the earth" (Ps. 85:12). In order that mention of the higher ones might be made, seven Churches are here named in one people, and these seven Churches the prophet presents as suppliants to the Savior made man. For they understood that Christ was born for this purpose, that he might take away reproof, first indeed of those who were living under his Law, and then of the rest. They had also in memory that it was written, "There shall come out of Zion one who shall deliver and shall turn ungodliness away from Jacob" (Isa. 59:20). These seven

Churches therefore laid hold of one man, that is, of Christ born, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let your name be called upon us; take away our reproach.

(Isa. 4:1) What is it that they pray for? If they use their own bread and are clothed with their own garments, that is, if they live and are not naked, what do they lack? For if bread signifies life, and clothing signifies being clothed with God, for whoever is without God is called naked, therefore the Apostle says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27); and again, "So that we may not be found naked when unclothed" (2 Cor. 5:3): what is it that they ask, that their reproach may be taken away, unless that this people is signified in the number of the seven Churches, which, living under the Law, was expecting Christ promised for the abolition of sins? Therefore they say, "We will eat our own bread," that is, we will be fed by the words of the Law which hand on the one God: for "Not by bread alone does man live, but by every word of God" (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4). "And we will wear our own apparel," that is, we will be known by the name of our Creator: for each person is said to be clothed in that which he is and professes. Indeed, senators or officials are understood from their garments to be what they are. But because these things are not sufficient to win God's favor, it was further ordained that through the mystery of the knowledge of the one God, man should become heir of the kingdom of heaven.

For cleansed from sins by faith, and alienated from the second death (which, by the judgment pronounced on Adam, kept men in the underworld), held by none, he goes into the paradise of God the Father, of which the Lord said to the thief that he would be with him there (Luke 23:43). For although the aforesaid people, signified by the seven Churches, was under God's law, and by devotion bound both for its own sin and for its ancestral sin, "For all," he says, "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)—therefore the Churches mentioned above pray that their reproach may be taken away by the call of the name of Christ: for those who bear his sign, by which he conquered death, cannot be held by the enemy. And not only these Churches pray that the name of Christ be called upon them, but also the spiritual ones above, dwelling in the heavens. For although the spiritual and heavenly powers are such, yet they are subject to reproach if they are alienated from their Creator, and they will not be members of the body if, not recognizing their head, they wander. And the prophet bears witness in the following words to what we have explained, saying, "In that day God shall give light by counsel upon the earth. And he added, "For the Lord shall wash away," he says, "the filth of the sons and daughters, and shall purge the blood from their midst" (Isaiah 4:2, according to the LXX).

What is more evident than that in that day, that is, when the promise of God was fulfilled and the mystery of faith was declared to men, they were enlightened, so that, purified through knowledge of the Creator, those who had been guilty of death might become heirs of eternal life? The prophet therefore spoke in a general way, so as to signify that all need the gift of God, so that both sinners and righteous may be known to have awaited the mercy of God: sinners on account of their own offenses, that they might be snatched from the jaws

of death; and the righteous, absolved from their ancestral sin, with the sentence given in Adam wiped out, by which all were held by death, might enter the kingdom of God with the liberty received, now made not servants, but sons of God.

1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Isaiah 9:8)

QUESTION 37. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT DEATH WAS SENT INTO JACOB AND CAME INTO ISRAEL, WHEN JACOB HIMSELF IS CALLED ISRAEL? — He gave two names to one people, so that from the names their merits might be understood. For the one who was surnamed Israel was previously called Jacob. Wrestling with the Savior, he realized that the one whom he saw in bodily form was God; and therefore he was called "the man seeing God" (Gen. 32:24–28). Therefore the people whom he calls Jacob, in this passage and for this reason, signifies the carnal people, in the way that names are given by parents to their offspring. But these, that is, the Jews, because of their evil deeds were not called Israelites, since they sacrificed to calves and lights in Samaria, by the zeal and command of King Jeroboam. The people, however, who in Jerusalem offered sacrifices in the temple of the Lord through the priests of God, were called Israel. Samaria therefore, because of its wickedness, was handed over to captivity and death; but Jerusalem was spared, because it had kings who loved God. Yet when Jerusalem itself followed the wickedness of Samaria, the sentence that was given against Samaria also encompassed it. Therefore it is said, "God sent death into Jacob," (Isa. 9:8) that is, into the people of Samaria, who lived carnally, as we said above;

"and it came into Israel," that is, into the people of Jerusalem, because it followed idolatry, imitating Samaria, so that in like manner it might be led into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, just as Samaria was by Shalmaneser, king of the Assyrians. This is plain: the sentence pronounced against the wicked also finds the good, once they cease to be righteous. For death, once sent into Jacob, as was shown above, came into Israel, not passing over Samaria, but when the cause for which it was sent into Samaria was found in Jerusalem, being sent there it also came into the place where the same situation existed. For vengeance follows the cause, not discerning the person.

(Isaiah 9:8)

QUESTION 13. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT DEATH WAS SENT INTO JACOB, THAT IT HAS COME INTO ISRAEL, SINCE JACOB HIMSELF IS ISRAEL? — He gave two names to one people. For the one who was first called Jacob later received the name Israel, when he wrestled with the Son of God and saw Him through understanding, "the man seeing God. (Isa.9:8) Therefore the people whom he calls Jacob, in this passage and for this reason, is understood as not seeing God, but is regarded as carnal, because of its evil works: so that, just as Jacob, before he saw God Christ, was not called Israelite, so these, while they are called the people Jacob, are signified as not seeing God. Israel, however, he calls the people who, by the works of God, are made worthy to see God. Therefore the people Jacob, because it relied on carnal help, despairing of the assistance of God (for it loved idols), is given over to

death, when the king of Assyria is stirred up against them. This is understood of Samaria in what was said by the prophet Isaiah, which was the first to do evil before God, establishing calves for sacrifice, having invented new priesthoods through Jeroboam. Therefore death was sent to them:

for they were the first to be taken and deported by Shalmaneser, king of the Assyrians, so that by their example the people of Judah and Benjamin and Levi, those two tribes that remained, and the half tribe in Jerusalem under Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, who in the temple of the Lord offered sacrifices through the priests of the Lord, might be warned. These he calls the people Israel because of the tribes of Judah and Levi, who themselves, though they ought to have acted rightly, frightened by the example of Samaria, behaved wickedly, serving idols. Yet there were some kings in Jerusalem who, after the passing of Solomon and his son Rehoboam, followed the way of David, walking rightly in the sight of God. But all the kings of Samaria acted wickedly in the sight of the Lord until their deportation. And therefore they are called by the carnal name. And because Jerusalem followed their wickedness, it too is given over to captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and this is "to have sent death into Jacob and to have come into Israel. It was sent to Samaria; but when the cause for which it was sent to Samaria was found in Jerusalem, being sent there it also came into the place where the same situation existed. For vengeance does not follow the place, but the cause.

1ST CATEGORY OT 2ND CATEGORY OT (Isaiah 54:1) QUESTION 40. WHAT DOES THE PROPHET MEAN WHEN HE SAYS, "REJOICE, O BARREN ONE WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND CRY ALOUD, YOU WHO DO NOT LABOR, BECAUSE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE ARE MORE THAN THOSE OF HER WHO HAS A HUSBAND." — Since the children of earthly Jerusalem have fallen away from God, joy cannot be ascribed to her, but rather sorrow. Therefore, as a criticism to this Jerusalem, the prophet says that that higher Jerusalem should rejoice, the one the Apostle calls "our mother" (Gal. 4:26): because without groaning and pains she has far more children than this Jerusalem, which in tears gives birth carnally, namely, the Jews, whereas the other gives birth to Christians spiritually through faith. He calls her "desolate" because she is the life that Adam, the first man, abandoned when he followed death. So when people are reborn, they return to the life they had deserted. This life is Christ, because he says, "I am the life" (Jn. 14:6). And God the Father is also life, because the Lord says, "As the Father has life, so he has given the Son to have life" (Jn. 5:26). Without doubt the Holy Spirit is life as well, since the Lord says, "He will receive from what is mine" (Jn. 16:15). Whoever receives from life is necessarily life. Therefore the three are one life. This is the life by faith in whom we are reborn. She is our mother, as we read in Genesis, because she, namely, Life, is the mother of all the living (Gen. 3:20). And who are the living, if not those who believe?

(Isaiah 54:1) QUESTION 15. WHAT IS IT THAT THE PROPHET SAYS: REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN, YOU WHO DO NOT GIVE BIRTH; BREAK FORTH AND CRY OUT, YOU WHO DO NOT LABOR IN CHILDBIRTH, BECAUSE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESO-

LATE ARE MORE NUMEROUS THAN THOSE OF HER WHO HAS A HUSBAND? — In this passage we understand two mothers: the heavenly and the earthly, that is, the free Jerusalem, of which the Apostle says that she is our mother, and this Jerusalem which he says is in slavery with her children, that is, the Jews. For the prophet, proclaiming the coming of the Lord and seriously calling out in joyful voice for the time of grace, exhorts the heavenly Jerusalem, called "desolate" because she did not yet have dwelling in her the children generated through faith, to rejoice. For the time had come when she should have the children foretold long ago, and many more than those of this Jerusalem, because Christians have surpassed the number of Jews. She is therefore called barren because she is a virgin, who does not bring forth a son through physical union and embrace, but spiritually through faith alone. Therefore she is not said to be in labor; for one who is in labor suffers pains. This one cries out instead in the joy of human salvation. But earthly Jerusalem is said to have a husband because she gave birth carnally. For the city is presented as a kind of mother, just as that heavenly dwelling to which we are called is called our mother.

MATTHEW (Matthew 1:1) 2ND CATEGORY NT QUESTION 3. WHY DOES MATTHEW, WHEN WRITING THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, SAY, "THE BOOK OF THE GENERATION OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF DAVID" (Matt. 1:1), WHEN ABRAHAM CAME EARLIER? — Matthew began this way so that he might first speak about him, describing his genealogy from the promise of his incarnation, just as the Apostle says, "whose are the fathers, and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came" (Rom. 9:5). Therefore he said, "The book of the generation," because the incarnation of Christ is constituted from many and diverse people, so that, since many began to exist from one, he might draw bodily lineage from all. From Jews and Gentiles, and from the worthy and the unworthy: for Ruth was a Moabitess, and Bathsheba became a wife from being an adulteress; so that, drawing the flesh of all to himself, he might call them back to their true unity. For this reason he says, "Jesus Christ, the son of David," though Abraham came earlier, because Christ is called in a special way the son of David on account of the kingdom: so that, just as God is from God, so also a king should take his origin from a king according to the flesh. For therefore it was said to David: "Of the fruit of your womb I will set one upon your throne" (Ps. 131:11).

(Matthew 1:17) 2ND CATEGORY NT QUESTION 4. WHAT IS THE REASON THAT THE APOSTLE MATTHEW, MENTIONED ABOVE, DIVIDED ALL THE GENERATIONS INTO THREE PARTS (Matt. 1:17)? — Causes and times produce divisions. Therefore he distinguished from Abraham up to David. For the first part of the cause is from Abraham up to David, because Abraham is the father of faith and David the father of the kingdom. For Saul, having become unworthy, deprived himself of the kingdom. From David, however, up to the exile is another part of the cause, in which the Jews, having become depraved, lost the kingdom. But after the Babylonian exile up to Christ is the third part of weeping and misery, of captivity and dispersion for them; because although after the Babylonian exile and the period of seventy years, when, having been released by Cyrus, they returned to their own, they never afterwards had either cause or rest. For Judea could not rule thereafter, but they were always anxious and wandering everywhere. Indeed, at the time

of Christ's birth they were in captivity, saying: We have no king but Caesar (Jn. 19:15). For this reason Matthew made three stages of the genealogy, in order also to show the changes of merits and causes from the promise that was made up to Christ, while the seasons of the years remain in one grace until the end.

(Matthew 1:17) 2ND CATEGORY NT QUESTION 5. SO, SINCE THERE ARE FORTY-ONE GENERATIONS, THE EVANGELIST SEEMS TO HAVE COUNTED FORTY-TWO (Matt. 1:17). FOR THREE TIMES FOURTEEN, WHAT DO THEY MAKE IF NOT FORTY-TWO? — According to the number, forty-one generations are counted; but according to the reasoning, forty-two are demonstrated. Now Jeconiah, who was born at the time of the exile, that is, made king, as is contained in Chronicles, brought the second section to an end. And because after the exile he remained in the kingdom by the permission of King Nebuchadnezzar, the third section begins from him, which runs up to Christ. Therefore Jeconiah is counted twice, so that he both closes the second section and begins the third. For it is written therefore: "And after the exile to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Salathiel" (Matt. 1:12). Up to this Salathiel, those from Judah reigned, namely, those of whose stock Joseph is born. For Jeconiah's first son was named Assur. But since Joseph derives his lineage through Salathiel, Assur is passed over, and Salathiel is joined to his father Jeconiah, so that the line might lead to Joseph, to whom the Virgin Mary was betrothed. And after Josiah, Jeconiah follows. But because the line comes to Joseph through Joachim, the father of Jeconiah, he (that is, Joachim) is omitted, and Jeconiah is placed in his stead, so that the number of fourteen generations should not be exceeded, and because after Jeconiah come Salathiel and his son, through whom Joseph arises.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.