On the Psalms (part 1 of 4)

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)

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Psalm 1

1. ”Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly” (ver. 1). This is to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Man. ”Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly,” as ”the man of earth did,” who consented to his wife deceived by the serpent, to the transgressing the commandment of God. ”Nor stood in the way of sinners.” For He came indeed in the way of sinners, by being born as sinners are; but He ”stood” not therein, for that the enticements of the world held Him not. ”And hath not sat in the seat of pestilence.” He willed not an earthly kingdom, with pride, which is well taken for ”the seat of pestilence;” for that there is hardly any one who is free from the love of rule, and craves not human glory. For a ”pestilence” is disease widely spread, and involving all or nearly all. Yet ”the seat of pestilence” may be more appropriately understood of hurtful doctrine; ”whose word spreadeth as a canker.” The order too of the words must be considered: ”went away, stood, sat.” For he ”went away,” when he drew back from God. He ”stood,” when he took pleasure in sin. He ”sat,” when, confirmed in his pride, he could not go back, unless set free by Him, who neither ”hath gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of pestilence.”

2. ”But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate by day and by night (ver. 2). The law is not made for a righteous man,” says the Apostle. But it is one thing to be in the law, another under the law. Whoso is in the law, acteth according to the law; whoso is under the law, is acted upon according to the law: the one therefore is free, the other a slave. Again, the law, which is written and imposed upon the servant, is one thing; the law, which is mentally discerned by him who needeth not its ”letter,” is another thing. ”He will meditate by day and by night,” is to be understood either as without ceasing; or ”by day” in joy, ”by night” in tribulations. For it is said, ”Abraham saw my day, and was glad:” and of tribulation it is said, ”my reins also have instructed me, even unto the night.”

3. ”And he shall be like a tree planted hardby the running streams of waters” (ver. 3); that is either Very ”Wisdom,” which vouchsafed to assume man’s nature for our salvation; that as man He might be ”the tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; for in this sensecan that too be taken which is said in another Psalm, ”the river of God is full of water. Or by the Holy Ghost, of whom it is said, ”He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost; and again, ”If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink; and again, ”If thou knewest the gift

of God, and who it is that asketh water of thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water, of which whoso drinketh shall never thirst, but it shall be made in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Or, "by the running streams of waters" may be by the sins of the people, because first the waters are called "peoples" in the Apocalypse; and again, by "running stream" is not unreasonably understood "fall," which hath relation to sin. That "tree" then, that is, our Lord, from the running streams of water, that is, from the sinful people's drawing them by the way into the roots of His discipline, will "bring forth fruit," that is, will establish Churches; "in His season," that is, after He hath been glorified by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven.

For then, by the sending of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, and by the confirming of their faith in Him, and their mission to the world, He made the Churches to "bring forth fruit. "His leaf also shall not fall," that is, His Word shall not be in vain. For, "all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And whatsoever He doeth shall prosper" that is, whatsoever that tree shall bear; which all must be taken of fruit and leaves, that is, deeds and words.

4. "The ungodly are not so," they are not so, "but are like the dust which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth" (ver. 4). "The earth" is here to be taken as that stedfastness in God, with a view to which it is said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, yea, I have a goodly heritage." With a view to this it is said, "Wait on the Lord and keep His ways, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the earth." With a view to this it is said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." A comparison too is derived hence, for as this visible earth supports and contains the outer man, so that earth invisible the inner man. "From the face of" which "earth the wind casteth forth the ungodly," that is, pride, in that it puffeth him up. On his guard against which he, who was inebriated by the richness of the house of the Lord, and drunken of the torrent stream of its pleasures, saith, "Let not the foot of pride come against me." From this earth pride cast forth him who said, "I will place my seat in the north, and I will be like the Most High." From the face of the earth it cast forth him also who, after that he had consented and tasted of the forbidden tree that he might be as God, hid himself from the Face of God. That his earth has reference to the inner man, and that man is cast forth thence by pride, may be particularly seen in that which is written, "Why is earth and ashes proud? Because, in his life, he cast forth his bowels." For, whence he hath been cast forth, he is not unreasonably said to have cast forth himself.

5. "Therefore the ungodly rise not in the judgment" (ver. 5): "therefore," namely, because "as dust they are cast forth from the face of the earth." And well did he say that this should be taken away from them, which in their pride they court, namely, that they may judge; so that this same idea is more clearly expressed in the following sentence, "nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous." For it is usual for what goes before, to be thus repeated more clearly. So that by "sinners" should be understood the "ungodly;" what is before "in the judgment," should be here "in the counsel of the righteous." Or if indeed the ungodly

are one thing, and sinners another, so that although every ungodly man is a sinner, yet every sinner is not ungodly; "The ungodly rise not in the judgment," that is, they shall rise indeed, but not that they should be judged, for they are already appointed to most certain punishment. But "sinners" do not rise "in counsel of the just" that is that the may, judge, but peradventure that they may be judged; so as of these it were said, "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall then suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

6. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous" (ver. 6). As it is said, medicine knows health, but knows not disease, and yet disease is recognised by the art of medicine. In like manner can it be said that "the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," but the way of the ungodly He knoweth not. Not that the Lord is ignorant of anything, and yet He says to sinners, "I never knew you." "But the way of the ungodly shall perish;" is the same as if it were said, the way of the ungodly the Lord knoweth not. But it is expressed more plainly that this should be not to be known of the Lord, namely, to "perish;" and this to be known of the Lord, namely, to "abide;" so as that to be should appertain to the knowledge of God, but to His not knowing not to be. For the Lord saith, "I Am that I Am," and, "I Am hath sent me."

Psalm 2

1. ”Why do the heathen rage, and the people meditate vain things?” (ver. 1). ”The kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ” (ver. 2). It is said, ”why?” as if it were said, in vain. For what they wished, namely, Christ’s destruction, they accomplished not; for this is spoken of our Lord’s persecutors, of whom also mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles. 2. ”Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us” (ver. 3). Although it admits of another acceptation, yet is it more fitly understood as in the person of those who are said to ”meditate vain things.” So that ”let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us,” may be, let us do our endeavour, that the Christian religion do not bind us, nor be imposed upon us.

3. ”He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall have them in derision” (ver. 4). The sentence is repeated; for ”He who dwelleth in the heavens,” is afterwards put, ”the Lord;” and for ”shall laugh them to scorn,” is afterwards put, ”shall have them in derision.” Nothing of this however must be taken in a carnal sort, as if God either laugheth with cheek, or derideth with nostril; but it is to be understood of that power which He giveth to His saints, that they seeing things to come, namely, that the Name and rule of Christ is to pervade posterity and possess all nations, should understand that those men ”meditate a vain thing.” For this power whereby these things are foreknown is God’s ”laughter” and ”derision.” ”He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn.” If by ”heavens” we understand holy souls, by these God, as foreknowing what is to come, will ”laugh them to scorn, and have them in derision.”

4. ”Then He shall speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure” (ver. 5). For showing more clearly how He will ”speak unto them,” he added, He will ”vex them;” so that ”in His wrath,” is, ”in His sore displeasure.” But by the ”wrath and sore displeasure” of the Lord God must not be understood any mental perturbation; but the might whereby He most justly avengeth, by the subjection of all creation to His service. For that is to be observed and remembered which is written in the Wisdom of Solomon, ”But Thou, Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity, and with great favour orderest us.” The ”wrath” of God then is an emotion which is produced in the soul which knoweth the law of God, when it sees this same law transgressed by the sinner. For by this emotion of righteous souls many

things are avenged. Although the ”wrath” of God can be well understood of that darkening of the mind, which overtakes those who transgress the law of God.

5. ”Yet am I set by Him as King upon Sion, His holy hill, preaching His decree” (ver. 6). This is clearly spoken in the Person of the very Lord our Saviour Christ. But if Sion signify, as some interpret, beholding, we must not understand it of anything rather than of the Church, where daily is the desire raised of beholding the bright glory of God, according to that of the Apostle, ”but we with open face beholding the glory of the Lord.” Therefore the meaning of this is, Yet I am set by Him as King over His holy Church; which for its eminence and stability He calleth a mountain. ”Yet I am set by Him as King.” I, that is, whose ”bands” they were meditating ”to break asunder,” and whose ”yoke” to ”cast away.” ”Preaching His decree.” Who doth not see the meaning of this, seeing it is daily practised?

6. ”The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee” (ver. 7)., Although that day may also seem to be prophetically spoken of, on which Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh;. and in eternity there is nothing past as if it had ceased to be, nor future as if it were not yet, but present only, since whatever is eternal, always is; yet as ”today” intimates presentiality, a divine interpretation is given to that expression, ”To-day have I begotten Thee,” whereby the uncorrupt and Catholic faith proclaims the eternal generation of the power and Wisdom of God, who is the Only-begotten Son. 7. ”Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance” (ver. 8). This has at once a temporal sense with reference to the Manhood which He took on Himself, who offered up Himself as a Sacrifice in the stead of all sacrifices, who also maketh intercession for us; so that the words, ”ask of Me,” may be referred to all this temporal dispensation, which has been instituted for mankind, namely, that the ”nations” should be joined to the Name of Christ, and so be redeemed from death, and possessed by God. ”I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance,” which so possess them for their salvation, and to bear unto Thee spiritual fruit. ”And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” The same repeated, ”The uttermost parts of the earth,” is put for ”the nations;” but more clearly, that we might understand all the nations. And ”Thy possession” stands for ”Thine inheritance.”

8. ”Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron,” with inflexible justice, and ”Thou shall break them like a potter’s vessel” (ver. 9); that is,”Thou shalt break” in them earthly lusts, and the filthy doings of the old man, and whatsoever hath been derived and inured from the sinful clay. ”And now understand, ye kings”(ver. 10). ”And now;” that is, being now renewed, your covering of clay worn out, that is, the carnal vessels of error which belong to your past life, ”now understand,” ye who now are ”kings;” that is, able now to govern all that is servile and brutish in you, able now too to fight, not as ”they who beat the air, but chasteningyour bodies, and bringing them into subjection.” ”Be instructed, all ye who judge the earth.” This again is a repetition; ”Be instructed” is instead of ”understand; and” ye who judge the earth instead of ye kings.For He signifies the spiritual by ”those who judge the earth.” For whatsoever we judge, is below us; and whatsoever is below the spiritual man, is with good reason called ”the earth;” because it is defiled with earthly corruption.

9. ”Serve the Lord with fear;” lest what is said, ”Ye kings and judges of the earth,” turn into pride: ”And rejoice with trembling” (ver. 11). Very excellently is ”rejoice” added, lest ”serve the Lord with fear” should seem to tend to misery. But again, lest this same rejoicing should run on to unrestrained inconsiderateness, there is added ”with trembling,” that it might avail for a warning, and for the careful guarding of holiness. It can also be taken thus, ”And now ye kings understand;” that is, And now that I am set as King, be ye not sad, kings of the earth, as if your excellency were taken from you, but rather ”understand and be instructed.” For it is expedient for you, that ye should be under Him, by whom understanding and instruction are given you. And this is expedient for you, that ye lord it not with rashness, but that ye ”serve the Lord” of all ”with fear,” and ”rejoice” in bliss most sure and most pure, with all caution and carefulness, lest ye fall therefrom into pride.

10. ”Lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way” (ver. 12). This is the same as, ”understand,” and, ”be instructed.” For to understand and be instructed, this is to lay hold of discipline. Still in that it is said, ”lay hold of,” it is plainly enough intimated that there is some protection and defence against all things which might do hurt unless with so great carefulness it be laid hold of. ”Lest at any time the Lord be angry,” is expressed with a doubt, not as regards the vision of the prophet to whom it is certain, but as regards those who are warned; for they, to whom it is not openly revealed, are wont to think with doubt of the anger of God. This then they ought to say to themselves, let us ”lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and we perish from the righteous way.” Now, how ”the Lord be angry” is to be taken, has been said above. And ”ye perish from the righteous way.” This is a great punishment, and dreaded by those who have had any perception of the sweetness of righteousness; for he who perisheth from the way of righteousness, in much misery will wander through the ways of unrighteousness.

11. ”When His anger shall be shortly kindled, blessed are all they who put their trust in Him;” that is, when the vengeance shall come which is prepared for the ungodly and for sinners, not only will it not light on those ”who put their trust in” the Lord, but it will even avail for the foundation and exaltation of a kingdom for them. For he said not, ”When His anger shall be shortly kindled,” safe ”are all they who put their trust in Him,” as though they should have this only thereby, to be exempt from punishment; but he said, ”blessed;” in which there is the sum and accumulation of all good things. Now the meaning of ”shortly” I suppose to be this, that it will be something sudden, whilst sinners will deem it far off and long to come.

Psalm 3

A Psalm OF David, When HE Fled From The Face OF Abessalon His Son.

1. The words, "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up," lead us to believe that this Psalm is to be understood as in the Person of Christ; for they sound more applicable to the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, than to that history in which David's flight is described from the face of his rebellious son. And, since it is written of Christ's disciples, "The sons of the bridegroom fast not as long as the bridegroom is with them; it is no wonder if by his undutiful son be here meant that undutiful disciple who betrayed Him. From whose face although it may be understood historically that He fled, when on his departure He withdrew with the rest to the mountain; yet in a spiritual sense, when the Son of God, that is the Power and Wisdom of God, abandoned the mind of Judas; when the Devil wholly occupied him; as it is written, "The Devil entered into his heart," may it be well understood that Christ fled from his face; not that Christ gave place to the Devil, but that on Christ's departure the Devil took possession. Which departure, I suppose, is called a flight in this Psalm, because of its quickness; which is indicated also by the word of our Lord, saying, "That thou doest, do quickly. So even in common conversation we say of anything that does not come to mind, it has fled from me; and of a man of much learning we say, nothing flies from him.

Wherefore truth fled from the mind of Judas, when it ceased to enlighten him. But Absalom, as some interpret, in the Latin tongue signifies, Patris pax, a father's peace. And it may seem strange, whether in the history of the kings, when Absalom carried on war against his father; or in the history of the New Testament, when Judas was, the betrayer of our Lord; how "father's peace" can be understood. But both in the former place they who read carefully, see that David in that war was at peace with his son, who even with sore grief lamented his death, saying, "O Absalom, my son, would God I had died for thee! And in the history of the New Testament by that so great and so wonderful forbearance of our Lord; in that He bore so long with him as if good, when He was not ignorant of his thoughts; in that He admitted him to the Supper in which He committed and delivered to His disciples the figure of His Body and Blood; finally, in that He received the kiss of peace at the very time of His betrayal; it is easily understood how Christ showed peace to. His betrayer, although

he was laid waste by the intestine war of so abominable a device. And therefore is Absalom called "father's peace," because his father had the peace, which he had not.

2. "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me!" (ver. 1). So multiplied indeed were they, that one even from the number of His disciples was not wanting, who was added to the number of His persecutors. "Many rise up against me; many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God" (ver. 2). It is clear that if they had had any idea that He would rise again, assuredly they would not have slain Him. To this end are those speeches, "Let Him come down from the cross, if He be the Son of God;" and again, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Therefore, neither would Judas have betrayed Him, if he had not been of the number of those who despised Christ, saying, "There is no salvation for Him in His God." 3. "But Thou, O Lord, art my taker." It is said to God in the nature of man, for the taking of man is, the Word made Flesh. "My glory." Even He calls God his glory, whom the Word of God so took, that God became one with Him. Let the proud learn, who unwillingly hear, when it is said to them, "For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" "And the lifter up of my head" (ver. 3). I think that this should be here taken of the human mind, which is not unreasonably called the head of the soul; which so inhered in, and in a sort coalesced with, the supereminent excellency of the Word taking man, that it was not laid aside by so great humiliation of the Passion.

4. "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord" (ver. 4); that is, not with the voice of the body, which is drawn out with the sound of the reverberation of the air; but with the voice of the heart, which to men speaks not, but with God sounds as a cry. By this voice Susanna was heard; and with this voice the Lord Himself commanded that prayer should be made in closets, that is, in the recesses of the heart noiselessly. Nor would one easily say that prayer is not made with this voice, if no sound of words is uttered from the body; since even when in silence we pray within the heart, if thoughts interpose alien from the mind of one praying, it cannot yet be said, "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. Nor is this rightly said, save when the soul alone, taking to itself nothing of the flesh, and nothing of the aims of the flesh, in prayer, speaks to God, where He only hears. But even this is called a cry by reason of the strength of its intention. "And He heard me out of His holy mountain. We have the Lord Himself called a mountain by the Prophet, as it is written, "The stone that was cut out without hands grew to the size of a mountain.

But this cannot be taken of His Person, unless peradventure He would speak thus, out of myself, as of His holy mountain He heard me, when He dwelt in me, that is, in this very mountain. But it is more plain and unembarrassed, if we understand that God out of His justice heard. For it was just that He should raise again from the dead the Innocent who was slain, and to whom evil had been recompensed for good, and that He should render to the persecutor a meet reward, who repaid Him evil for good. For we read, "Thy justice is as the mountains of God."

5. ”I slept, and took rest” (ver. 5). It may be not unsuitably remarked, that it is expressly said, ”I,” to signify that of His own Will He underwent death, according to that, ”Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me; I have power to lay itdown, and I have power to take it again. Therefore, saith He, you have not taken Me as though against My will, and slain Me; but ”I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Scripture contains numberless instances of sleep being put for death; as the Apostle says, ”I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. Nor need we make any question why it is added, ”took rest,” seeing that it has already been said, ”I slept. Repetitions of this kind are usual in Scripture, as we have pointed out many in the second Psalm. But some copies have, ”I slept, and was cast into a deep sleep. And different copies express it differently, according to the possible renderings of the Greek words, egw de ekokoimhQhn kei upnwse. Unless perhaps sleeping may be taken of one dying, but sleep of one dead: so that sleeping may be the transition into sleep, as awakening is the transition into wakefulness. Let us not deem these repetitions in the sacred writings empty ornaments of speech.

”I slept, and took rest,” is therefore well understood as ”I gave Myself up to My Passion, and death ensued. ”And I rose, for the Lord will take Me up. This is the more to be remarked, how that in one sentence the Psalmist has used a verb of past and future time. For he has said, both ”I rose,” which is the past, and ”will take Me up,” which is the future; seeing that assuredly the rising again could not be without that taking up. But in prophecy the future is well joined to the past, whereby both are signified. Since things which are prophesied of as yet to come in reference to time are future; but in reference to the knowledge of those who prophesy they are already to be viewed as done. Verbs of the present tense are also mixed in, which shall be treated of in their proper place when they occur.

6. ”I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me” (ver. 6). It is written in the Gospels how great a multitude stood around Him as He was suffering, and on the cross. ”Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God” (ver. 7). It is not said to God, ”Arise,” as if asleep or lying down, but it is usual in holy Scripture to attribute to God what He doeth in us; not indeed universally, but where it can be done suitably; as when He is said to speak, when by His gift Prophets speak, and Apostles, or whatsoever messengers of the truth. Hence that text, ”Would you have proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?” For he doth not say, of Christ, by whose enlightening or order I speak; but he attributes at once the speaking itself to Him, by whose gift he spake.

7. ”Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. It is not to be pointed as if it were one sentence, ”Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God; since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. For He did not therefore save Him, because He smote His enemies; but rather He being saved, He smote them. Therefore it belongs to what follows, so that the sense is this; ”Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners; that is, thereby hast Thou broken the teeth of the sinners, since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me. It is forsooth the punishment of

the opposers, whereby. their teeth have been broken, that is, the words of sinners rending with their cursing the Son of God, brought to nought, as it were to dust; so that we may understand "teeth" thus, as words of cursing. Of which teeth the Apostle speaks, "If ye bite one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. The teeth of sinners can also be taken as the chiefs of sinners; by whose authority each one is cut off from the fellowship of godly livers, and as it were incorporated with evil livers. To these teeth are opposed the Church's teeth, by whose authority believers are cut off from the error of the Gentiles and divers opinions, and are translated into that fellowship which is the body of Christ.

With these teeth Peter was told to eat the animals when they bad been killed, that is, by killing in the Gentiles what they were, and changing them into what he was himself. Of these teeth too of the Church it is said, "Thy teeth are as a flock of shorn sheep, coming up from the bath, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. These are they who prescribe rightly, and as they prescribe, live; who do what is written, "Let your works shine before men, that they may bless your Father which is in heaven. For moved by their authority, they believe God who speaketh and worketh through these men; and separated from the world, to which they were once conformed, they pass over into the members of the Church. And rightly therefore are they, through whom such things are done, called teeth like to shorn sheep; for they have laid aside the burdens of earthly cares, and coming up from the bath, from the washing away of the filth of the world by the Sacrament of Baptism, every one beareth twins. For they fulfil the two commandments, of which it is said, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets; loving God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and their neighbour as themselves. "There is not one barren among them," for much fruit they render unto God.

According to this sense then it is to be thus understood, "Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners," that is, Thou hast brought the chiefs of the sinners to nought, by smiting all who oppose Me without a cause. For the chiefs according to the Gospel history persecuted Him, whilst the lower people honoured Him.

8. "Salvation is of the Lord; and upon Thy people be Thy blessing" (ver. 8). In one sentence the Psalmist has enjoined men what to believe, and has prayed for believers. For when it is said, "Salvation is of the Lord," the words are addressed to men. Nor does it follow, "And upon Thy people" be "Thy blessing," in such wise as that the whole is spoken to men, but there is a change into prayer addressed to God Himself, for the very people to whom it was said, "Salvation is of the Lord." What else then doth he say but this? Let no man presume on himself, seeing that it is of the Lord to save from the death of sin; for, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." But do Thou, O Lord, bless Thy people, who look for salvation from Thee.

9. This Psalm can be taken as in the Person of Christ another way; which is that whole Christ should speak. I mean by whole, with His body, of which He is the Head, according to the Apostle, who says, "Ye are the body of Christ, and the members. He therefore is the Head of this body; wherefore in another place be saith, "But doing the truth in love, we

may increase in Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, from whom the whole body is joined together and compacted. In the Prophet then at once, the Church, and her Head (the Church rounded amidst the storms of persecution throughout the whole world, which we know already to have come to pass), speaks, "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me; wishing to exterminate the Christian name. "Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. For they would not otherwise hope that they could destroy the Church, branching out so very far and wide, unless they believed that God had no care thereof. "But Thou, O Lord, art my taker; in Christ of course. For into that flesh the Church too hath been taken by the Word, "who was made flesh, and dwelt in us; for that "In heavenly places hath He made us to sit together with Him. When the Head goes before, the other members will follow; for, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Justly then does the Church say, "Thou art my taker. My glory; for she doth not attribute her excellency to herself, seeing that she knoweth by whose grace and mercy she is what she is. "And the lifter up of my head," of Him, namely, who, "the First-born from the dead," ascended up into heaven. "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. This is the prayer of all the Saints, the odour of sweetness, which ascends up in the sight of the Lord. For now the Church is heard out of this mountain, which is also her head; or, out of that justice of God, by which both His elect are set free, and their persecutors punished. Let the people of God also say, "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up; that they may be joined, and cleave to their Head. For to this people is it said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall lay hold on thee. Since they are taken out of sinners, of whom it is said generally, "But they that sleep, sleep in the night. Let them say moreover, "I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me; of the heathen verily that compass me about to extinguish everywhere, if they could, the Christian name. But how should they be feared, when by the blood of the martyrs in Christ, as by oil, the ardour of love is inflamed?

"Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. The body can address this to its own Head. For at His rising the body was saved; who "ascended up on high, led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men. For this is said by the Prophet, in the secret purpose of God, until that ripe harvest which is spoken of in the Gospel, whose salvation is in His Resurrection, who vouchsafed to die for us, shed out our Lord tothe earth. "Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Now while the Church hath rule, the enemies of the Christian name are smitten with confusion; and, whether their curses or their chiefs, brought to nought. Believe then, O man, that "salvation is of the Lord: and," Thou, O Lord, may "Thy blessing" be "upon Thy people."

10. Each one too of us may say, when a multitude of vices and lusts leads the resisting mind in the law of sin, "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me. And, since despair of recovery generally creeps in through the accumulation of vices, as though these same vices were mocking the soul, or even as though the Devil and his angels through their poisonous suggestions were at work to make us despair, it is said with

great truth, ”Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. For this is our hope, that He hath vouchsafed to take the nature of man in Christ. ”My glory; according to that rule, that no one should ascribe ought to himself. ”And the lifter up of my head; either of Him, who is the Head of us all, or of the spirit of each several one of us, which is the head of the soul and body. For ”the head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ. But the mind is lifted up, when it can be said already, ”With the mind I serve the law of God; that the rest of man may be reduced to peaceable submission, when in the resurrection of the flesh ”death is swallowed up in victory. ”With my voice I have cried unto the Lord; with that most inward and intensive voice.

”And He heard me out of His holy mountain; Him, through whom He hath succoured us, through whose mediation He heareth us. ”I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Who of the faithful is not able to say this, when he calls to mind the death of his sins, and the gift of regeneration? ”I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. Besides those which the Church universally hath borne and beareth, each one also hath temptations, by which, when compassed about, he may speak these words, ”Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: that is, make me to arise. ”Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause: it is well in God’s determinate a purpose said of the Devil and his angels; who rage not only against the whole body of Christ, but also against each one in particular. ”Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Each man hath those that revile him, he hath too the prime authors of vice, who strive to cut him off from the body of Christ. But ”salvation is of the Lord. Pride is to be guarded against, and we must say, ”My soul cleaved after Thee. ”And upon Thy people” be ”Thy blessing: that is, upon each one of us.

Psalm 4

TO The End, A Psalm Song TO David. 1. ”Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” For this ”end” signifies perfection, not consumption.Now it may be a question, whether every Song be a Psalm, or rather every Psalm a Song; whether there are some Songs which cannot be called Psalms, and some Psalms which cannot be called Songs. But the Scripture must be attended to, if haply ”Song” do not denote a joyful theme. But those are called Psalms which are sung to the Psaltery; which the history as a high mystery declares the Prophet David to have used. Of which matter this is not the place to discourse; for it requires prolonged inquiry, and much discussion. Now meanwhile we must look either for the words of the Lord Man after the Resurrection, or of man in the Church believing and hoping on Him.

2. ”When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me” (ver. 1). When I called, God heard me, the Psalmist says, of whom is my righteousness. ”In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me. Thou hast led me from the straits of sadness into the broad ways of joy. For, ”tribulation and straitness is on every soul of man that doeth evil. But he who says, ”We rejoice in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; up to that where he says, ”Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us; he hath no straits of heart, they be heaped on him outwardly by them that persecute him. Now the change of person, for that from the third person, where he says, ”He heard,” he passes at once to the second, where he says, ”Thou hast enlarged me; if it be not done for the sake of variety and grace, it is strange why the Psalmist should first wish to declare to men that he had been heard, and afterwards address Him who heard him. Unless perchance, when he had declared how he was heard, in this very enlargement of heart he preferred to speak with God; that he might even in this way show what it is to be enlarged in heart, that is, to have God already shed abroad in the heart, with whom he might hold converse interiorly. Which is rightly understood as spoken in the person of him who, believing on Christ, has been enlightened;

but in that of the very Lord Man, whom the Wisdom of God took, I do not see how this can be suitable. For He was never deserted by It. But as His very prayer against trouble is a sign rather of our infirmity, so also of that sudden enlargement of heart the same Lord may speak for His faithful ones, whom He has personated also when He said, ”I was an

hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink," and so forth. Wherefore here also He can say, "Thou hast enlarged me," for one of the least of His, holding converse with God, whose "love" he has "shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. "Have mercy upon me and hear my prayer. Why does he again ask, when already he declared that he had been heard and enlarged? It is for our sakes, of whom it is said, "But if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience; or is it, that in him who has believed that which is begun may be perfected?

3. "O ye sons of men, how long heavy in heart" (ver. 2). Let your error, says he, have lasted at least up to the coming of the Son of God; why then any longer are ye heavy in heart? When will ye make an end of crafty wiles, if now when the truth is present ye make it not? "Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?" Why would ye be blessed by the lowest things? Truth alone, from which all things are true, maketh blessed. For, "vanity is of deceivers, and all is vanity." "What profit hath a man of all his labour, wherewith he laboureth under the sun?" Why then are ye held back by the love of things temporal? Why follow ye after the last things, as though the first, which is vanity and a lie? For you would have them abide with you, which all pass away, as doth a shadow.

4. "And know ye that the Lord hath magnified his Holy One" (ver. 3). Whom but Him, whom He raised up from below, and placed in heaven at His right hand? Therefore doth he chide mankind, that they would turn at length from the love of this world to Him. But if the addition of the conjunction (for he says, "and know ye") is to any a difficulty, he may easily observe in Scripture that this manner of speech is usual in that language, in which the Prophets spoke. For you often find this beginning, "And" the Lord said unto him, "And" the word of the Lord came to him. Which joining by a conjunction, when no sentence has gone before, to which the following one may be annexed, peradventure admirably conveys to us, that the utterance of the truth in words is connected with that vision which goes on in the heart. Although in this place it may be said, that the former sentence, "Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?" is as if it were written, Do not love vanity, and seek a lie. And being thus read, it follows in the most direct construction, "and know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One." But the interposition of the Diapsalma forbids our joining this sentence with the preceding one. For whether this be a Hebrew word, as some would have it, which means, so be it; or a Greek word, which marks a pause in the psalmody (so as that Psalma should be what is sung in psalmody, but Diapsalma an interval of silence in the psalmody; that as the coupling of voices in singing is called Sympsalma, so their separation Diapsalma, where a certain pause of interrupted continuity is marked): whether I say it be the former, or the latter, or something else, this at least is probable, that the sense cannot rightly be continued and joined, where the Diapsalma intervenes.

5. "The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him." I believe that we are here warned, that with great earnestness of heart, that is, with an inward and incorporeal cry, we should implore help of God. For as we must give thanks for enlightenment in this life, so must we pray for rest after this life. Wherefore in the person, either of the faithful preacher of the

Gospel, or of our Lord Himself, it may be taken, as if it were written, the Lord will hear you, when you cry unto Him.

6. "Be ye angry, and sin not" (ver. 4) For the thought occurred, Who is worthy to be heard? or how shall the sinner not cry in vain unto the Lord? Therefore, "Be ye angry," saith he, "and sin not." Which may be taken two ways: either, even if ye be angry, do not sin; that is, even if there arise an emotion in the soul, which now by reason of the punishment of sin is not in our power, at least let not the reason and the mind, which is after God regenerated within, that with the mind we should serve the law of God, although with the flesh we as yet serve the law of sin consent thereunto; or, repent ye, that is, be ye angry with yourselves for your past sins, and henceforth cease to sin. "What you say in your hearts:" there is understood, "say ye:" so that the complete sentence is, "What ye say in your hearts, that say ye;" that is, be ye not the people of whom it is said, "with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. In your chambers be ye pricked." This is what has been expressed already "in heart." For this is the chamber, of which our Lord warns us, that we should pray within, with closed doors. But, "be ye pricked," refers either to the pain of repentance, that the soul in punishment should prick itself, that it be not condemned and tormented in God's judgment; or, to arousing, that we should awake to behold the light of Christ, as if pricks were made use of. But some say that not, "be ye pricked," but, "be ye opened," is the better reading; because in the Greek Psalter it is katanughte, which refers to that enlargement of the heart, in order that the shedding abroad of love by the Holy Ghost may be received.

7. "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord" (ver. 5). He says the same in another Psalm, "the sacrifice for God is a troubled spirit." Wherefore that this is the sacrifice of righteousness which is offered through repentance it is not unreasonably here understood. For what more righteous, than that each one should be angry with his own sins, rather than those of others, and that in self-punishment he should sacrifice himself unto God? Or are righteous works after repentance the sacrifice of righteousness? For the interposition of Diapsalma not unreasonably perhaps intimates even a transition from the old life to the new life: that on the old man being destroyed or weakened by repentance, the sacrifice of righteousness, according to the regeneration of the new man, may be offered to God; when the soul now cleansed offers and places itself on the altar of faith, to be encompassed by heavenly fire, that is, by the Holy Ghost. So that this may be the meaning, "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord;" that is, live uprightly, and hope for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the truth, in which you have believed, may shine upon you.

8. But yet, "hope in the Lord," is as yet expressed without explanation. Now what is hoped for, but good things? But since each one would obtain from God that good, which he loves; and they are not easy to be found who love interior goods, that is, which belong to the inward man, which alone should be loved, but the rest are to be used for necessity, not to be enjoyed for pleasure; excellently did he subjoin, when he had said, "hope in the Lord" (ver. 6), "Many say, Who showeth us good things? This is the speech, and this the daily inquiry of all the foolish and unrighteous; whether of those who long for the peace and quiet of a worldly

life, and from the frowardness of mankind find it not; who even in their blindness dare to find fault with the order of events, when involved in their own deservings they deem the times worse than these which are past: or, of those who doubt and despair of that future life, which is promised us; who are often saying, Who knows if it's true? or, who ever came from below, to tell us this? Very exquisitely then, and briefly, he shows (to those, that is, who have interior sight), what good things are to be sought; answering their question, who say, "Who showeth us good things? "The light of Thy countenance," saith he, "is stamped on us, O Lord.

This light is the whole and true good of man, which is seen not with the eye, but with the mind. But he says, "stamped on us," as a penny is stamped with the king's image. For man was made after the image and likeness of God, which he defaced by sin: therefore it is his true and eternal good, if by a new birth he be stamped. And I believe this to be the bearing of that which some understand skilfully; I mean, what the Lord said on seeing Caesar's tribute money, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's. As if He had said, In like manner as Caesar exacts from you the impression of his image, so also does God: that as the tribute money is rendered to him, so should the soul to God, illumined and stamped with the light of His countenance. (Ver. 7. "Thou hast put gladness into my heart. Gladness then is not to be sought without by them, who, being still heavy in heart, "love vanity, and seek a lie; but within, where the light of God's countenance is stamped. For Christ dwelleth in the inner man, as the Apostle says; for to Him doth it appertain to see truth, since He hath said, "I am the truth. And again, when He spake in the Apostle, saying, "Would you receive a proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?

He spake not of course from without to him, but in his very heart, that is, in that chamber where we are to pray.

9. But men (who doubtless are many) who follow after things temporal, know not to say aught else, than, "Who showeth us good things? when the true and certain good within their very selves they cannot see. Of these accordingly is most justly said, what he adds next: "From the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, they have been multiplied. For the addition of His, is not superfluous. For the corn is God's: inasmuch as He is "the living bread which came down from heaven. The wine too is God's: for, "they shall be inebriated," he says, "with the fatness of thine house. The oil too is God's: of which it is said, "Thou hast fattened my head with oil. But those many, who say, "Who showeth us good things? and who see not that the kingdom of heaven is within them: these, "from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, are multiplied. For multiplication does not always betoken plentifulness, and not, generally, scantiness: when the soul, given up to temporal pleasures, burns ever with desire, and cannot be satisfied; and, distracted with manifold and anxious thought, is not permitted to see the simple good. Such is the soul of which it is said, "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things.

A soul like this, by the departure and succession of temporal goods, that is, "from the time of His corn, wine, and oil," filled with numberless idle fancies, is so multiplied, that it cannot do that which is commanded, "Think on the Lord in goodness, and in simplicity of heart seek Him. For this multiplicity is strongly opposed to that simplicity. And therefore leaving these, who are many, multiplied, that is, by the desire of things temporal, and who say, "Who showeth us good things? which are to be sought not with the eyes without, but with simplicity of heart within, the faithful man rejoices and says, "In peace, together, I will sleep, and take rest" (ver. 8). For such men justly hope for all manner of estrangement of mind from things mortal, and forgetfulness of this world's miseries; which is beautifully and prophetically signified under the name of sleep and rest, where the most perfect peace cannot be interrupted by any tumult. But this is not had now in this life, but is to be hoped for after this life. This even the words themselves, which are in the future tense, show us. For it is not said, either, I have slept, and taken rest; or, I do sleep, and take rest; but, "I will sleep, and take rest. Then shall "this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall death be swallowed up in victory. Hence it is said, "But if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience."

10. Wherefore, consistently with this, he adds the last words, and says, "Since Thou, O Lord, in singleness hast made me dwell in hope." Here he does not say, wilt make; but, "hast made." In whom then this hope now is, there will be assuredly that which is hoped for. And well does he say, "in singleness." For this may refer in opposition to those many, who being multiplied from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, say, "Who showeth us good things?" For this multiplicity perishes, and singleness is observed among the saints: of whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, "and of the multitude of them that believed, there was one soul, and one heart." In singleness, then, and simplicity, removed, that is, from the multitude and crowd of things, that are born and die, we ought to be lovers of eternity, and unity, if we desire to cleave to the one God and our Lord.

Psalm 5

1. The title of the Psalm is, "For her who receiveth the inheritance." The Church then is signified, who receiveth for her inheritance eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ; that she may possess God Himself, in cleaving to whom she may be blessed, according to that, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth." What earth, but that of which it is said, "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living"? And again more clearly, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup." And conversely the word Church is said to be God's inheritance according to that, "Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Therefore is God said to be our inheritance, because He feedeth and sustaineth us: and we are said to be God's inheritance, because He ordereth and ruleth us. Wherefore it is the voice of the Church in this Psalm called to her inheritance, that she too may herself become the inheritance of the Lord.

2. "Hear my words, O Lord" (ver. 1). Being called she calleth upon the Lord; that the same Lord being her helper, she may pass through the wickedness of this world, and attain unto Him. "Understand my cry." The Psalmist well shows what this cry is; how from within, from the chamber of the heart, without the body's utterance, it reaches unto God: for the bodily voice is heard, but the spiritual is understood. Although this too may be God's hearing, not with carnal ear, but in the omnipresence of His Majesty.

3. "Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication;" that is, to that voice, which he maketh request that God would understand: of which what the nature is, he hath already intimated, when he said, "Understand my cry. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God" (ver. 2). Although both the Son is God, and the Father God, and the Father and the Son together One God; and if asked of the Holy Ghost, we must give no other answer than that He is God; and when the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are mentioned together, we must understand nothing else, than One God; nevertheless Scripture is wont to give the appellation of King to the Son. According then to that which is said, "By Me man cometh to the Father," rightly is it first, "my King;" and then, "my God." And yet has not the Psalmist said, Attend Ye; but, "Attend Thou." For the Catholic faith preaches not two or three Gods, but the Very Trinity, One God. Not that the same Trinity can be together, now the Father, now the Son, now the Holy Ghost, as Sabellius believed: but that the Father must be none but the Father, and the Son none but the Son, and the Holy Ghost none but the

Holy Ghost, and this Trinity but One God. Hence when the Apostle had said, "Of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things," he is believed to have conveyed an intimation of the Very Trinity; and yet he did not add, to Them be glory; but, "to Him be glory."

4. "Because I will pray unto Thee (ver. 3). O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. What does that, which he said above, "Hear Thou," mean, as if he desired to be heard immediately? But now he saith, "in the morning Thou wilt hear; not, hear Thou: and, "I will pray unto Thee; not, I do pray unto Thee: and, as follows, "in the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see; not, I do stand by Thee, and do see. Unless perhaps his former prayer marks the invocation itself: but being in darkness amidst the storms of this world, he perceives that he does not see what he desires, and yet does not cease to hope, "For hope that is seen, is not hope. Nevertheless, he understands why he does not see, because the night is not yet past, that is, the darkness which our sins have merited. He says therefore, "Because I will pray unto Thee, O Lord; that is, because Thou art so mighty to whom I shall make my prayer, "in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. Thou art not He, he says, that can be seen by those, from whose eyes the night of sins is not yet withdrawn: when the night then of my error is past, and the darkness gone, which by my sins I have brought upon myself, then "Thou wilt hear my voice. Why then did he say above not, "Thou wilt hear," but "hear Thou"?

Is it that after the Church cried out, "hear Thou," and was not heard, she perceived what must needs pass away to enable her to be heard? Or is it that she was heard above, but doth not yet understand that she was heard, because she doth not yet see by whom she hath been heard; and what she now says, "In the morning Thou wilt hear," she would have thus taken, In the morning I shall understand that I have been heard? Such is that expression, "Arise, O Lord," that is, make me arise. But this latter is taken of Christ's resurrection: but at all events that Scripture, "The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know whether ye love Him," cannot be taken in any other sense, than, that ye by Him may know, and that itmay be made evident to yourselves, what progress ye have made in His love.

5. "In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see" (ver. 3). What is, "I will stand," but "I will not lie down"? Now what else is, to lie down, but to take rest on the earth, which is a seeking happiness in earthly pleasures? "I will stand by," he says, "and will see." We must not then cleave to things earthly, if we would see God, who is beheld by a clean heart. "For Thou art not a God who hast pleasure in iniquity. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee, nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lordwill abominate" (vers. 4-6). Iniquity, malignity,lying, homicide, craft, and all the like, are the night of which we speak: on the passing awayof which, the morning dawns, that God may be seen. He has unfolded the reason, then, why he will stand by in the morning, and see: "For," he says, "Thou art not a God who hast pleasure in iniquity." For if He were a

God who hadpleasure in iniquity, He could be seen even by the iniquitous, so that He would not be seen in the morning, that is, when the night of iniquity is over.

6. "The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee:" that is, he shall not so see, as to cleave to Thee. Hence follows, "Nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes." For their eyes, that is, their mind is beaten back by the light of truth, because of the darkness of their sins; by the habitual practice of which they are not able to sustain the brightness of right understanding. Therefore even they who see sometimes, that is, who understand the truth, are yet still unrighteous, they abide not therein through love of those things, which turn away from the truth. For they carry about with them their night, that is, not only the habit, but even the love, of sinning. But if this night shall pass away, that is, if they shall cease to sin, and this love and habit thereof be put to flight, the morning dawns, so that they not only understand, but also cleave to the truth.

7. "Thou hast hated all that work iniquity. God's hatred may be understood from that form of expression, by which every sinner hates the truth. For it seems that she too hates those, whom she suffers not to abide in her. Now they do not abide, who cannot bear the truth. "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. For this is the opposite to truth. But lest any one should suppose that any substance or nature is opposite to truth, let him understand that "a lie" has relation to that which is not, not to that which is. For if that which is be spoken, truth is spoken: but if that which is not be spoken, it is a lie. Therefore saith he, "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie; because drawing back from that which is, they turn aside to that which is not. Many lies indeed seem to be for some one's safety or advantage, spoken not in malice, but in kindness: such was that of those midwives in Exodus, who gave a false report to Pharaoh, to the end that the infants of the children of Israel might not be slain. But even these are praised not for the fact, but for the disposition shown; since those who only lie in this way, will attain in time to a freedom from all lying. For in those that are perfect, not even these lies are found. For to these it is said, "Let there be in your mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay;

whatsoever is more, is of evil. Nor is it without reason written in another place, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul: lest any should imagine that the perfect and spiritual man ought to lie for this temporal life, in the death of which no soul is slain, neither his own, nor another's. But since it is one thing to lie, another to conceal the truth (if indeed it be one thing to say what is false, another not to say what is true), if haply one does not wish to give a man up even to this visible death, he should be prepared to conceal what is true, not to say what is false; so that he may neither give him up, nor yet lie, lest he slay his own soul for another's body. But if he cannot yet do this, let him at all events admit only lies of such necessity, that he may attain to be freed even from these, if they alone remain, and receive the strength of the Holy Ghost, whereby he may despise all that must be suffered for the truth's sake. In fine, there are two kinds of lies, in which there is no great fault, and yet they are not without fault, either when we are in jest, or when we lie that we may do good.

That first kind, in jest, is for this reason not very hurtful, because there is no deception. For he to whom it is said knows that it is said for the sake of the jest.

But the second kind is for this reason the more inoffensive, because it carries with it some kindly intention. And to say truth, that which has no duplicity, cannot even be called a lie. As if, for example, a sword be intrusted to any one, and he promises to return it, when he who intrusted it to him shall demand it: if he chance to require his sword when in a fit of madness, it is clear it must not be returned then, lest he kill either himself or others, until soundness of mind be restored to him. Here then is no duplicity, because he, to whom the sword was intrusted, when he promised that he would return it at the other's demand, did not imagine that he could require it when in a fit of madness. But even the Lord concealed the truth, when He said to the disciples, not yet strong enough, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: and the Apostle Paul when he said, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Whence it is clear that it is not blamable, sometimes not to speak what is trite. But to say what is false is not found to have been allowed to the perfect.

8. "The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate." What he said above, "Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie," may well seem to be repeated here: so that one may refer "the man of blood" to "the worker of iniquity," and "the crafty man" to; the "lie." For it is craft, when one thing is done, another pretended. He used an apt word too, when he said, "will abominate." For the disinherited are usually called: abominated. Now this Psalm is, "for her who receiveth the inheritance;" and she adds the exulting joy of her hope, in saying, "But I, in the multitude of Thy mercy, will enter into Thine house" (ver. 7). "In the multitude of mercy:" perhaps he means in the multitude of perfected and blessed men, of whom that city shall consist, of which the Church is now in travail, and is bearing few by few. Now that many men regenerated and perfected, are rightly called the multitude of God's mercy, who can deny; when it is most truly said, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? I will enter into Thine house:" as a stone into a building, I suppose, is the meaning. For what else is the house of God than the Temple of God, of which it is said, "for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"? Of which building He is the cornerstone, whom the Power and Wisdom of God coeternal with the Father assumed.

9. "I will worship at Thy holy temple, in Thy fear." "At the temple," we understand as, "near" the temple. For he does not say, I will worship "in" Thy holy temple; but, "I will worship at Thy holy temple." It must be understood too to be spoken not of perfection, but of progress toward perfection: so that the words, "I will enter into Thine house," should signify perfection. But that this may come to a happy issue, "I will" first, he says, "worship at Thy holy temple." And perhaps on this account he added, "in Thy fear;" which is a great defence to those that are advancing toward salvation. But when any one shall have arrived there, in him comes to pass that which is written, "perfect love casteth out fear." For they

do not fear Him who is now their friend, to whom it is said, "henceforth I will not call you servants, but friends," when they have been brought through to that which was promised.

10. "O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of mine enemies" (ver. 8). He has here sufficiently plainly declared that he is on his onward road, that is, in progress toward perfection, not yet in perfection itself, when he desires eagerly that he may be led forth. But, "in Thy justice," not in that which seems so to men. For to return evil for evil seems justice: but it is not His justice of whom it is said, "He maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil:" for even when God punishes sinners, Hedoes not inflict His evil on them, but leaves them to their own evil. "Behold," the Psalmist says, "he travailed with injustice, he hath conceived toil, and brought forth iniquity: he hath opened a ditch, and digged it, and hath fallen into the pit which he wrought: his pains shall be turned on his own head, and his iniquity shall descend on his own pate." When then God punishes, He punishes as a judge those that transgress the law, not by bringing evil upon them from Himself, but driving them on to that which they have chosen, to fill up the sum of their misery. But man, when he returns evil for evil, does it with an evil will: and on this account is himself first evil, when he would punish evil.

11. "Direct in Thy sight my way." Nothing is clearer, than that he here sets forth that time, in which he is journeying onward. For this is a way which is traversed not in any regions of the earth, but in the affections of the heart. "In Thy sight," he says, "direct my way:" that is, where no man sees; who are not to be trusted in their praise or blame. For they can in no wise judge of another man's conscience, wherein the way toward God is traversed. Hence it is added, "for truth is not in their mouth" (ver. 9). To whose judgment of course then there is no trusting, and therefore must we fly within to conscience, and the sight of God. "Their heart is vain." How then can truth be in their mouth, whose heart is deceived by sin, and the punishment of sin? Whence men are called back by that voice, "Wherefore do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?"

12. "Their throat is an open sepulchre." It may be referred to signify gluttony, for the sake of which men very often lie by flattery. And admirably has he said, "an open sepulchre:" for this gluttony is ever gaping with open mouth, not as sepulchres, which, on the reception of corpses, are closed up. This also may be understood hereby, that with lying and blind flattery men draw to themselves those whom they entice to sin; and as it were devour them, when they turn them to their own way of living. And when this happens to them, since by sin they die, those by whom they are led along, are rightly called open sepulchres: for themselves too are in a manner lifeless, being destitute of the life of truth; and they take in to themselves dead men, whom having slain by lying words and a vain heart, they turn unto themselves. "With their own tongues they dealt craftily:" that is, with evil tongues. For this seems to be signified, when he says "their own." For the evil have evil tongues, that is, they speak evil, when they speak craftily. To whom the Lord saith, "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?"

13. "Judge them, O God: let them fall from their own thoughts" (ver. 10). It is a prophecy, not a curse. For he does not wish that it should come to pass; but he perceives what will come to pass. For this happens to them, not because he appears to have wished for it, but because they are such as to deserve that it should happen. For so also what he says after wards, "Let all that hope in Thee rejoice," he says by way of prophecy; since he perceives that they will rejoice. Likewise is it said prophetically, "Stir up Thy strength, and come:" for he saw that He would come. Although the words, "Let them fall from their own thoughts," may be taken thus also, that it may rather be believed to be a wishfor their good by the Psalmist, whilst they fall from their evil thoughts, that is, that they may no more think evil. But what follows, "drive them out," forbids this interpretation. For it can in no wise be taken in a favourable sense, that one is driven out by God. Wherefore it is understood to be said prophetically, and not of ill will; when this is said, which must necessarily happen to such as chose to persevere in those sins, which have been mentioned. "Let them," therefore, "fall from their own thoughts," is, let them fall by their self-accusing thoughts, "their own conscience also bearing witness," as the Apostle says, "and their thoughts accusing or excusing, in the revelation of the just judgment of God."

14. "According to the multitude of their ungodlinesses drive them out:" that is, drive them out far away. For this is "according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses," that they should be driven out far away. The ungodly then are driven out from that inheritance, which is possessed by knowing and seeing God: as diseased eyes are driven out from the shining of the light, when what is gladness to others is pain tothem. Therefore these shall not stand in the morning, and see. And that expression is as great a punishment, as that which is said, "But for me it is good to cleave to the Lord," is a great reward. To this punishment is opposed, "Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord;" for similar to this expulsion is, "Cast him into outer darkness." 15. "Since they have embittered Thee, O Lord: I am," saith He, "the Bread which came down from heaven;" again, "Labour for the meat which wasteth not;" again, "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet." But to sinners the bread of truth is bitter. Whence they hate the mouth of him that speaketh the truth. These then have embittered God, who by sin have fallen into such a state of sickliness, that the food of truth, in which healthy souls delight, as if it were bitter as gall, they cannot bear.

16. "And let all rejoice that hope in Thee;" those of course to whose taste the Lord is sweet. "They will exult for evermore, and Thou wiltdwell in them" (ver. 11). This will be the exultation for evermore, when the just become the Temple of God, and He, their Indweller, will be their joy. "And all that love Thy name shall glory in Thee:" as when what they love is present for them to enjoy. And well is it said, "in Thee," as if in possession of the inheritance, of which the title of the Psalm speaks: when they too are His inheritance, which is intimated by, "Thou wilt dwell in them." From which good they are kept back, whom God, according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, driveth out.

17. "For Thou wilt bless the just man" (ver. 12). This is blessing, to glory in God, and to be inhabited by God. Such sanctification is given to the just. But that they may be justified,

a calling goes before: which is not ofmerit, but of the grace of God. ”For all havesinned, and want the glory of God.” ”For whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He, justified, them He also glorified.” Since then calling is not of our merit, but of the goodness and mercy of God, he went on to say, ”O Lord, as with the shield of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us.” For God’s good will goes before our good will, to call sinners to repentance. And these are the arms whereby the enemy is overcome, against whom it is said, ”Who will bring accusation against God’s elect?” Again, ”if God be for us, who can be against us? Who spared not His Only Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” ”For if, when we were enemies, Christ died for us; much more being reconciled shall we be saved from wrath through Him.” This is that unconquerable shield, whereby the enemy is driven back, when he suggests despair of our salvation through the multitude of tribulaions and temptations.

18. The whole contents of the Psalm, then, are a prayer that she may be heard, from the words, ”hear my words, O Lord,” unto, ”my King, and my God.” Then follows a view of those things which hinder the sight of God, that is, a knowledge that she is heard, from the words, ”because I shall pray unto Thee, O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice,” unto, ”the man of blood and the crafty man the Lord will abominte.” Thirdly, she hopes that she, who is to be the house of God, even now begins to draw near to Him in fear, before that perfection which casteth out fear, from the words, ”but I in the multitude of Thy mercy,” unto, ”I will worship at Thy holy temple in Thy fear.” Fourthly, as she is progressing and advancing amongst those very things which she feels to hinder her, she prays that she may be assisted within, where no man seeth, lest she be turned aside by evil tongues, for the words, ”O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of my enemies,” unto, ”with their tongues they dealt craftily.” Fifthly, is a prophecy of what punishment awaits the ungodly, when the just man shall scarcely be saved; and of what reward the just shall obtain, who, when they were called, came, and bore all things manfully, till they were brought to the end, from the words, ”judge them, O God,” unto the end of the Psalm.

Psalm 6

TO The End, IN The Hymns OF The Eighth, A Psalm TO David.

1. ”Of the eighth,” seems here obscure. For the rest of this title is more clear. Now it has seemed to some to intimate the day of judgment, that is, the time of the coming of our Lord, when He will come to judge the quick and dead. Which coming, it is believed, is to be, after reckoning the years from Adam, seven thousand years: so as that seven thousand years should pass as seven days, and afterwards that time arrive as it were the eighth day. But since it has been said by the Lord, ”It is not yoursto know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power: and, ”But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, neither angel, nor Power, neither the Son, but the Father alone: and again, that which is written, ”that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief,” shows clearly enough that no man should arrogate to himself the knowledge of that time, by any computation of years. For if that day is to come after seven thousand years, every man could learn its advent by reckoning the years. What comes then of the Son’s even not knowing this? Which of course is said with this meaning, that men do not learn this by theSon, not that He by Himself doth not know it: according to that form of speech, ”the Lord your God trieth you that He may know; that is, that He may make you know: and, ”arise, O Lord; that is, make us arise.

When therefore the Son is thus said not to know this day; not because He knoweth it not, but because He causeth those to know it not, for whom it is not expedient to know it, that is, He doth not show it to them; what does that strange presumption mean, which, by a reckoning up of years, expects the day of the Lord as most certain after seven thousand years?

2. Be we then willingly ignorant of that which the Lord would not have us know: and let us inquire what this title, ”of the eighth,” means. The day of judgment may indeed, even without any rash computation of years, be understood by the eighth, for that immediately after the end of this world, life eternal being attained, the souls of the righteous will not then be subject unto times: and, since all times have their revolution in a repetition of those seven days, that per-adventure is called the eighth day, which will not have this variety. There is another reason, which may be here not unreasonably accepted, why the judgment should be called the eighth, because it will take place after two generations, one relating to the body, the other to the soul, For from Adam unto Moses the human race lived of the body, that is, according to the flesh: which is called the outward and the old man, and to which the

Old Testament was given, that it might prefigure the spiritual things to come by operations, albeit religious, yet carnal. Through this entire season, when men lived according to the body, ”death reigned,” as the Apostle saith, ”even over those that had not sinned. Now it reigned ”after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” as the same Apostle saith;

for it must be taken of the period up to Moses, up to which time the works of the law, that is, those sacraments of carnal observance, held even those bound, for the sake of a certain mystery, who were subject to the One God. But from the coming of the Lord, from whom there was a transition from the circumcision of the flesh to the circumcision of the heart, the call was made, that man should live according to the soul, that is, according to the inner man, who is also called the ”new man” by reason of the new birth and the renewing of spiritual conversation. Now it is plain that the number four has relation to the body, from the four well known elements of which it consists, and the four qualities of dry, humid, warm, cold. Hence too it is administered by four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, winter. All this is very well known. For of the number four relating to the body we have treated elsewhere somewhat subtilly, but obscurely: which must be avoided in this discourse, which we would have accommodated to the unlearned. But that the number three has relation to the mind may be understood from this, that we are commanded to love God after a threefold manner, with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the whole mind: of each of which severally we must treat, not in the Psalms, but in the Gospels:

for the present, for proof of the relation of the number three to the mind, I think what has been said enough. Those numbers then of the body which have relation to the old man and the Old Testament, being past and gone, the numbers too of the soul, which have relation to the new man and the New Testament, being past and gone, a septenary so to say being passed; because everything is done in time, four having been distributed to the body, three to the mind; the eighth will come, the day of judgment:which assigning to deserts their due, will transfer at once the saint, not to temporal works, but to eternal life; but will condemn the ungodly to eternal punishment.

3. In fear of which comdemnation the Church prays in this Psalm, and says, ”Reprove me not, O Lord, in Thine anger” (ver. 1). The Apostle too mentions the anger of the judgment; ”Thou treasurest up unto thyself,” he says, ”anger against the day of the anger of the just judgment of God. In which he would not be reproved, whosoever longs to be healed in this life. ”Nor in Thy rage chasten me. ”Chasten,” seems rather too mild a word; for it availeth toward amendment. For for him who is reproved, that is, accused, it is to be feared lest his end be condemnation. But since ”rage” seems to be more than ”anger,” it may be a difficulty, why that which is milder, namely, chastening, is joined to that which is more severe, namely, rage. But I suppose that one and the same thing is signified by the two words. For in the Greek qumoj, which is in the first verse, means the same as orgh, which is in the second verse. But when the Latins themselves too wished to use two distinct words, they looked out for what was akin to ”anger,” and ”rage” was used. Hence copies vary. For in some ”anger”

is found first, and then ”rage: in others, for ”rage,” ”indignation” or ”choler” is used. But whatever the reading, it is an emotion of the soul urging to the infliction of punishment.

Yet this emotion must not be attributed to God, as if to a soul, of whom it is said, ”but Thou, O Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity. Now that which is tranquil, is not disturbed. Disturbance then does not attach to God as judge: but what is done by His ministers, in that it is done by His laws, is called His anger. In which anger, the soul, which now prays, would not only not be reproved, but not even chastened, that is, amended or instructed. For in the Greek it is, Paideuhj, that is, instruct. Now in the day of judgment all are ”reproved” that hold not the foundation, which is Christ. But they are amended, that is, purged, who ”upon this foundation build wood, hay, stubble. For they shall suffer loss, but shall be saved, as by fire. What then does he pray, who would not be either reproved or amended in the anger of the Lord? what else but that he may be healed? For where sound health is, neither death is to be dreaded, nor the physician’s hand with caustics or the knife.

4. He proceeds accordingly to say, ”Pity me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled” (ver. 2), that is, the support of my soul, or strength: for this is the meaning of ”bones.” The soul therefore says, that her strength is troubled, when she speaks of bones. For it is not to be supposed, that the soul has bones, such as we see in the body. Wherefore, what follows tends to explain it, ”and my soul is troubled exceedingly” (ver. 3), lest because he mentioned bones, they should be understood as of the body. ”And Thou, O Lord, how long?” Who does not see represented here a soul struggling with her diseases; but long kept back by the physician, that she may be convinced what evils she has plunged herself into through sin? For what is easily healed, is not much avoided: but from the difficulty of the healing, there will be the more careful keeping of recovered health. God then, to whom it is said, ”And Thou, O Lord, how long?” must not be deemed as if cruel: but as a kind convincer of the soul, what evil she hath procured for herself. For this soul does not yet pray so perfectly, as that it can be said to her, ”Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Behold, here I am.” That she may at the same time also come to know, if they who do turn meet with so great difficulty, how great punishment is prepared for the ungodly, who will not turn to God: as it is written in another place, ”If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear?”

5. ”Turn, O Lord, and deliver my soul” (ver. 4). Turning herself she prays that God too would turn to her: as it is said, ”Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord.” Or is it to be understood according to that way of speaking, ”Turn, O Lord,” that is make me turn, since the soul in this her turning feels difficulty and toil? For our perfected turning findeth God ready, as says the Prophet, ”We shall find Him ready as the dawn.” Since it was not His absence who is everywhere present, but our turning away that made us lose Him; ”He was in this world,” it is said, ”and the world was made by Him, and theworld knew Him not.” If, then, He was in this world, and the world knew Him not, our impurity doth not endure the sight of Him. But whilst we are turning ourselves, that is, by changing our old life are fashioning our spirit; we feel it hard and toilsome to be wrested back from the

darkness of earthly lusts, to the serene and quiet and tranquillity of the divine light. And in such difficulty we say, "Turn, O Lord," that is, help us, that that turning may be perfected in us, which findeth Thee ready, and offering Thyself for the fruition of them that love Thee. And hence after he said, "Turn, O Lord," he added, "and deliver my soul:" cleaving as it were to the entanglements of this world, and suffering, in the very act of turning, from the thorns, as it were, of rending and tearing desires. "Make me whole," he says, "for Thy pity's sake." He knows that it is not of his own merits that he is healed: for to him sinning, and transgressing a given command, was just condemnation due. Heal me therefore, he says, not for my merit's sake, but for Thy pity's sake.

6. "For in death there is no one that is mindful of Thee" (ver. 5). He knows too that now is the time for turning unto God: for when this life shall have passed away, there remaineth but a retribution of our deserts. "But in hell who shall confess to Thee? That rich man, of whom the Lord speaks, who saw Lazarus in rest, but bewailed himself in torments, confessed in hell, yea so as to wish even to have his brethren warned, that they might keep themselves from sin, because of the punishment which is not believed to be in hell. Althoughtherefore to no purpose, yet he confessed that those torments had deservedly lighted upon him; since he even wished his brethren to be instructed, lest they should fall into the same. What then is, "But in hell who will confess to Thee? Is hell to be understood as that place, whither the ungodly will be cast down after the judgment, when by reason of that deeper darkness they will no more see any light of God, to whom they may confess aught? For as yet that rich man by raising his eyes, although a vast gulf lay between, could still see Lazarus established in rest: by comparing himself with whom, he was driven to a confession of his own deserts. It may be understood also, as if the Psalmist calls sin, that is committed in contempt of God's law, death:

so as that we should give the name of death to the sting of death, because it procures death. "For the sting of death is sin. In which death this is to be unmindful of God, to despise His law andcommandments: so that by hell the Psalmist would mean that blindness of soul which overtakes and enwraps the sinner, that is, the dying. "As they did not think good," the Apostle says, "to retain God in" their "knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. From this death, and this hell, the soul earnestly prays that she may be kept safe, whilst she strives to turn to God, and feels her difficulties.

7. Wherefore he goes on to say, "I have laboured in my groaning. And as if this availed but little, he adds, "I will wash each night my couch" (ver. 6). That is here called a couch, where the sick and weak soul rests, that is, in bodily gratification and in every worldly pleasure. Which pleasure, whoso endeavours to withdraw himself from it, washes with tears. For he sees that he already condemns carnal lusts; and yet his weakness is held by the pleasure, and willingly lies down therein, from whence none but the soul that is made whole can rise. As for what he says, "each night," he would perhaps have it taken thus: that he who, ready in spirit, perceives some light of truth, and yet, through weakness of the flesh, rests sometime in the pleasure of this world, is compelled to suffer as it were days and nights in

an alternation of feeling: as when he says, "With the mind I serve the law of God," he feels as it were day; again when he says, "but with the flesh the law of sin," he declines into night: until all night passeth away, and that one day comes, of which it is said, "In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. For then he will stand, but now he lies down, when he is on his couch; which he will wash each night, that with so great abundance of tears he may obtain the mostassured remedy from the mercy of God.

"I will drench my bed with tears. It is a repetition. For when he says, "with tears," he shows with what meaning he said above, "I will wash. For we take "bed" here to be the same as "couch" above. Although, "I will drench," is something more than, "I will wash: since anything may be washed superficially, but drenching penetrates to the more inward parts; which here signifies weeping to the very bottom of the heart. Now the variety of tenses which he uses; the past, when he said, "I have laboured in my groaning; and the future, when he said, "I will wash each night my couch; the future again, "I will drench my bed with tears; this shows what every man ought to say to himself, when he labours in groaning to no purpose. As if he should say, It hath not profited when I have done this, therefore I will do the other.

8. "Mine eye is disordered by anger" (ver. 7): is it by his own, or God's anger, in which he maketh petition that he might not be reproved, or chastened? But if anger in that place intimate the day of judgment, how can it be understood now? Is it a beginning of it, that men here suffer pains and torments, and above all the loss of the understanding of the truth; as I have already quoted that which is said, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind"? For such is the blindness of the mind. Whosoever is given over thereunto, is shut out from the interior light of God: but not wholly as yet, whilst he is in this life. For there is "outer darkness," which is understood to belong rather to the day of judgment; that he should rather be wholly without God, whosoever whilst there is time refuses correction. Now to be wholly without God, what else is it, but to be in extreme blindness? If indeed God "dwell in inaccessible light," whereinto they enter, to whom it is said, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It is then the beginning of this anger, which in this life every sinner suffers. In fear therefore of the day of judgment, he is in trial and grief; lest he be brought to that, the disastrous commencement of which he experiences now. And therefore he did not say, mine eye is extinguished, but, "mine eye is disordered by anger." But if he mean that his eye is disordered by his own anger, there is no wonder either in this. For hence perhaps it is said, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath;" because the mind, which, from her own disorder, is not permitted to see God, supposes that the inner sun, that is, the wisdom of God, suffers as it were a setting in her.

9. "I have grown old in all mine enemies." He had only spoken of anger (if it were yet of his own anger that he spoke): but thinking on his other vices, he found that he was entrenched by them all. Which vices, as they belong to the old life and the old man, which we must put off, that we may put on the new man, it is well said, "I have grown old." But "in all mine enemies," he means, either amidst these vices, or amidst men who will not be converted to

God. For these, even if they know them not, even if they bear with them, even if they use the same tables and houses and cities, with no strife arising between them, and in frequent converse together with seeming concord: notwithstanding, by the contrariety of their aims, they are enemies to those who turn unto God. For seeing that the one love and desire this world, the others wish to be freed from this world, who sees not that the first are enemies to the last? For if they can, they draw the others into punishment with them. And it is a great grace, to be conversant daily with their words, and not to depart from the way of God's commandments. For often the mind which is striving to go on to God-ward, being rudely handled in the very road, is alarmed; and generally fulfils not its good intent, lest it should offend those with whom it lives, who love and follow after other perishable and transient goods. From such every one that is whole is separated, not in space, but in soul. For the body is contained in space, but the soul's space is her affection.

10. Wherefore after the labour, and groaning, and very frequent showers of tears, since that cannot be ineffectual, which is asked so earnestly of Him, who is the Fountain of all mercies, and it is most truly said, "the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart:" after difficulties so great, the pious soul, by which we may also understand the Church, intimating that she has been heard, see what she adds: "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping" (ver. 8). It is either spoken prophetically, since they will depart, that is, the ungodly will be separated from the righteous, when the day of judgment arrives, or, for this time present. For although both are equally found in the same assemblies, yet on the open floor the wheat is already separated from the chaff, though it be hid among the chaff. They can therefore be associated together, but cannot be carried away by the windtogether.

11. "For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord hath received my prayer" (ver. 9). The frequent repetition of the same sentiments shows not, so to say, the necessities of thenarrator, but the warm feeling of his joy. For they that rejoice are wont so to speak, as that it is not enough for them to declare once for all the object of their joy. This is the fruit of that groaning in which there is labour, and those tears with which the couch is washed, and bed drenched: for, "he that sows in tears, shall reap in joy:" and, "blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

12. "Let all mine enemies be ashamed and vexed" (ver. 10). He said above, "depart from me all ye: which can take place, as it has been explained, even in this life: but as to what he says, "let them be ashamed and vexed," I do not see how it can happen, save on that day when the rewards of the righteous and the punishments of the sinners shall be made manifest. For at present so far are the ungodly from being ashamed, that they do not cease to insult us. And for the most part their mockings are of such avail, that they make the weak to be ashamed of the name of Christ. Hence it is said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father. But now whosoever would fulfil those sublime commands, to disperse, to give to the poor, that his righteousness may endure for ever; and selling all his earthly goods, and spending them on the needy, would follow Christ, saying,

”We brought nothing into this world, and truly we can carry nothing out; having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; incurs the profane raillery of those men, and by those who will not be made whole, is called mad; and often to avoid being so called by desperate men, he fears to do, and puts off that, which the most faithful and powerful of all physicians hath ordered.

It is not then at present that these can be ashamed, by whom we have to wish that we be not made ashamed, and so be either called back from our proposed journey, or hindered, or delayed. But the time will come when they shall be ashamed, saying as it is written, ”These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach: we fools counted their life madness, and their end to be without honour: how are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of rightousness hath not shined into us, nor the sun risen upon us: we have been filled with the way of wickedness and destruction, and have walked through rugged deserts, but the way of theLord we have not known. What hath pride profited us, or what hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow.”

13. But as to what he says, ”Let them be turned and confounded,” who would not judge it to be a most righteous punishment, that they should have a turning unto confusion, who would not have one unto salvation? After this he added, ”exceeding quickly. For when the day of judgment shall have begun to be no longer looked for, when they shall have said, ”Peace,then shall sudden destruction come upon them. Now whensoever it come, that comes very quickly, of whose coming we give up all expectation; and nothing makes the length of this life be felt but the hope of living. For nothing seems more quick, than all that has already passed in it. When then the day of judgment shall come, then will sinners feel how that all the life which passeth away is not long. Nor will that any way possibly seem to them to have come tardily, which shall have come without their desiring, or rather without their believing. Although it can too be taken in this place thus, that inasmuch as God has heard, so to say, her groans, and her long and frequent tears, she may be understood to be freed from her sins, and to have tamed every disordered impulse of carnal affection: as she saith, ”Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: and when she has had this happy issue, it is no marvel if she be already so perfect as to pray for her enemies.

The words then, ”Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and vexed,” may have this meaning; that they should repent of their sins, which cannot be effected without confusion and vexation. There is then nothing to hinder us from taking what follows too in this sense, ”let them be turned and ashamed,” that is, let them be turned to God, and be ashamed that they sometime gloried in the former darkness of their sins; as the Apostle says, ”For what glory had ye sometime in those things of which ye are now ashamed? But as to what he added, ”exceeding quickly,” it must be referred either to the warm affection of her wish, or to the

power of Christ; who converteth to the faith of the Gospel in such quick time the nations, which in their idols' cause did persecute the Church.

Psalm 7

A Psalm TO David Himself, Which HE Sung TO The Lord, For The Words OF Chusi, Son OF Jemini.

1. Now the story which gave occasion to this prophecy may be easily recognised in the second book of Kings. For there Chusi, the friend of king David, went over to the side of Abessalon, his son, who was carrying on war against his father, for the purpose of discovering and reporting the designs which he was taking against his father, at the instigation of Achitophel, who had revolted from David's friendship, and was instructing by his counsel, to the best of his power, the son against the father. But since it is not the story itself which is to be the subject of consideration in this Psalm, from which the prophet hath taken a veil of mysteries, if we have passed over to Christ, let the veil be taken away. And first let us inquire into the signification of the very names, what it means. For there have not been wanting interpreters, who investigating these same words, not carnally according to the letter, but spiritually, declare to us that Chusi should be interpreted silence; and Gemini, right-handed; Achitophel, brother's ruin. Among which interpretations, Judas, that traitor, again meets us, that Abessalon should bear his image, according to that interpretation of it as a father's peace; in that his father was full of thoughts of peace toward him: although he in his guile had war in his heart, as was treated of in the third Psalm.

Now as we find in the Gospels that the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are called sons, so in the same Gospels we find they are called brethren also. For the Lord on the resurrection saith, "Go and say to My brethren. And the Apostle calls Him "the first begotten among many brethren. The ruin thenof that disciple, who betrayed Him, is rightly understood to be a brother's ruin, which we said is the interpretation of Achitophel. Now as to Chusi, from the interpretation of silence, it is rightly understood that our Lord contended against that guile in silence, that is, in that most deep secret, whereby "blindness happened in part to Israel," when they were persecuting the Lord, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and "so all Israel might be saved. When the Apostle came to this profound secret and deep silence, he exclaimed, as if struck with a kind of awe of its very depth, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the wind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Thus that great silence he does not so much discover by explanation, as

he sets forth its greatness in admiration. In this silence the Lord, hiding the sacrament of His adorable passion, turns the brother's voluntary ruin, that is, His betrayer's impious wickedness, into the order of His mercy and providence:

that what he with perverse mind wrought for one Man's destruction, He might by providential overruling dispose for all men's salvation. The perfect soul then, which is already worthy to know the secret of God, sings a Psalm unto the Lord, she sings "for the words of Chusi," because she has attained to know the words of that silence: for among unbelievers and persecutors there is that silence and secret. But among His own, to whom it is said, "Now I call you no more servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you: among His friends, I say, there is not the silence, but the words of the silence, that is, the meaning of that silence set forth and manifested. Which silence, that is, Chusi, is called the son of Gemini, that is, righthanded. For what was done for the Saints was not to be hidden from them. And yet He saith, "Let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. The perfect soul then, to which that secret has been made known, sings in prophecy "for the words of Chusi," that is, for the knowledge of that same secret. Which secret God at her fight hand, that is, favourable and propitious unto her, has wrought. Wherefore this silence is called the Son of the right hand, which is, "Chusi, the son of Gemini."

2. "O Lord my God, in Thee have I hoped: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me" (ver. 1). As one to whom, already perfected, all the war and enmity of vice being overcome, there remaineth no enemy but the envious devil, he says, "Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me (ver. 2): lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion." The Apostle says, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Therefore when the Psalmist said in the plural number, "Save me from all them that persecute me:" he afterwards introduced the singular, saying, "lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion." For he does not say, lest at any time they tear: he knew what enemy and violent adversary of the perfect soul remained. "Whilst there be none to redeem, nor to save:" that is, lest he tear me, whilst Thou redeemest not, nor savest. For, if God redeem not, nor save, he tears.

3. And that it might be clear that the already perfect soul, which is to be on her guard against the most insidious snares of the devil only, says this, see what follows. "O Lord my God, if I have done this" (ver. 3). What is it that he calls "this"? Since he does not mention the sin by name, are we to understand sin generally? If this sense displease us, we may take that to be meant which follows: as if we had asked,what is this that you say, "this"? He answers, "If there be iniquity in my hands. Now then it is clear that it is said of all sin, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil" (ver. 4). Which none can say with truth, but the perfect. For so the Lord says, "Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven; who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and raineth on the just and the unjust. He then who repayeth not them that recompense evil, is perfect. When therefore the perfect soul prays "for the words of Chusi, the son of Jemini," that is, for the knowledge of that secret

and silence, which the Lord, favourable to us and merciful, wrought for our salvation, so as to endure, and with all patience bear, the guiles of this betrayer:

as if He should say to this perfect soul, explaining the design of this secret, For theeungodly and a sinner, that thine iniquities might be washed away by My blood-shedding, in great-silence and great patience I bore with My betrayer; wilt not thou imitate me, that thou too mayest not repay evil for evil? Considering then, and understanding what the Lord has done for him, and by His example going on to perfection, the Psalmist says, ”If I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, if I have not done what Thou hast taught me by Thy example: ”may I therefore fall by mine enemies empty. And he says well, not, If I have repaid them that do me evil; but, who ”recompense. For who so recompenseth, had received somewhat already. Now it is an instance of greater patience, not even to repay him evil, who after receiving benefits returns evil for good, than if without receiving any previous benefit he had had a mind to injure. If therefore he says, ”I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, If I have not imitated Thee in that silence, that is, in Thy patience, which Thou hast wrought for me, ”may I fall by mine enemies empty. For he is an empty boaster, who, being himself a man, desires to avenge himself on a man; and whilst he openly seeks to overcome a man, is secretly himself overcome by the devil, rendered empty by vain and proud joy, because he could not, as it were, be conquered.

The Psalmist knows then where a greater victory may be obtained, and where ”the Father which seeth in secret will reward. Lest then he repay them that recompense evil, he overcomes his anger rather than another man, being instructed too by those writings, wherein it is written, ”Better is he that overcometh his anger, than he that taketh a city. ”If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. He seems to swear by way of execration, which is the heaviest kind of oath, as when one says, If I have done so and so, may I suffer so and so. But swearing in a swearer’s mouth is one thing, in a prophet’s meaning another. For here he mentions what will really befall men who repay them that recompense evil; not what, as by an oath, he would imprecate on himself or any other.

4. ”Let the enemy” therefore ”persecute my soul and take it” (ver. 5). By again naming the enemy in the singular number, he more and more clearly points out him whom he spoke of above as a lion. For he persecutes the soul, and if he has deceived it, will take it. For the limit of men’s rage is the destruction of the body; but the soul, after this visible death, they cannot keep in their power: whereas whatever souls the devil shall have taken by his persecutions, he will keep. ”And let him tread my life upon the earth: that is, by treading let him make my life earth, that is to say, his food. For he is not only called a lion, but a serpent too, to whom it was said, ”Earth shalt thou eat. And to the sinner was it said, ”Earth thou art, and into earth shalt thou go. ”And let him bring down my glory to the dust. This is that dust which ”the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth,” to wit, vain and silly boasting of the proud, puffed up, not of solid weight, as a cloud of dust carried away by the wind. Justly then has he here spoken of the glory, which he would not have brought down

to dust. For he would have it solidly established in conscience before God, where there is no boasting. ”He that glorieth,” saith the Apostle, ”let him glory in the Lord.

This solidity is brought down to the dustif one through pride despisingthe secrecy of conscience, where God only proves a man, desires to glory before men. Hence comes what the Psalmist elsewhere says, ”God shall bruise the bones of them that please men. Now he that has well learnt or experienced the steps in overcoming vices, knows that this vice of empty glory is either alone, or more than all, to be shunned by the perfect. For that by which the soul first fell, she overcomes the last. ”For the beginning of all sin is pride: and again, ”The beginning of man’s pride is to depart from God.”

5. ”Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger” (ver. 6). Why yet does he, who we say is perfect, incite God to anger? Must we not see, whether he rather be not perfect, who, when he was being stoned, said, ”O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge”? Or does the Psalmist pray thus not against men, but against the devil and his angels, whose possession sinners and the ungodly are? He then does not pray against him in wrath, but in mercy, whosoever prays that that possession may be taken from him by that Lord ”who justifieth the ungodly.” For when the ungodly is justified, from ungodly he is made just, and from being the possession of the devil he passes into the temple of God. And since it is a punishment that a possession, in which one longs to have rule, should be taken away from him: this punishment, that he should cease to possess those whom he now possesses, the Psalmist calls the anger of God against the devil. ”Arise, O Lord; in Thine anger.” ”Arise” (he has used it as ”appear”), in words, that is, human and obscure; as though God sleeps, when He is unrecognised and hidden in His secret workings. ”Be exalted in the borders of mine enemies.” He means by borders the possession itself, in which he wishes that God should be exalted, that is, be honoured and glorified, rather than the devil, while the ungodly are justified and praise God. ”And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given:” that is, since Thou hast enjoined humility, appear in humility; and first fulfil what Thou hast enjoined; that men by Thy example overcoming pride may not be possessed of the devil, who against Thy commandments advised to pride, saying, ”Eat, and your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods.”

6. ”And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee.” This may be understood two ways. For the congregation of the people can be taken, either of them that believe, or of them that persecute, both of which took place in the same humiliation of our Lord: in contempt of which the multitude of them that persecute surrounded Him; concerning which it is said, ”Why have the heathen raged, and the people meditated vain things?” But of them that believe through His humiliation the multitude so surrounded Him, that it could be said with the greatest truth, ”blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in:” and again, ”Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for Thy possession.” ”And for their sakes return Thou on high:” that is, for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: which He is understood to have done by His resurrection and ascension into heaven. For being thus

glorified He gave the Holy Ghost, which before His exaltation could not be given, as it is written in the Gospel, ”for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” Having then returned on high for the sake of the congregation of the people, He sent the Holy Ghost: by whom the preachers of the Gospel being filled, filled the whole world with Churches.

7. It can be taken also in this sense: ”Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger, and be exalted in the borders of mine enemies: that is, arise in Thine anger, and let not mine enemies understand Thee; so that to ”be exalted,” should be this, become high, that Thou mayest not be understood; which has reference to the silence spoken of above. For it is of this exaltation thus said in another Psalm, ”And He ascended upon Cherubim, and flew: and, ”He made darkness His secret place. In which exaltation, or concealment,when for their sins’ desert they shall not understand Thee, who shall crucify Thee, ”the congregation” of believers ”shall surround Thee. For in His very humiliation He was exalted, that is, was not understood. So that, ”And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: may have reference to this, that is, when Thou showest Thyself, be high or deep that mine enemies may not understand Thee. Now sinners are the enemies of the just man, and the ungodly of the godly man. ”And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee: that is, by this very circumstance, that those who crucify Thee understand Thee not, the Gentiles shall believe on Thee, and so ”shall the congregation of the people surround Thee. But what follows, if this be the true meaning, has in it more pain, that it begins already to be perceived, than joy that it is understood.

For it follows, ”and for their sakes return Thou on high,” that is, and for the sake of this congregation of the human race, wherewith the Churches are crowded, return Thou on high, that is, again cease to be understood. What then is, ”and for their sakes,” but that this congregation too will offend Thee, so that Thou mayest most truly foretell and say, ”Thinkest Thou when the Son of man shall come, He will find faith on the earth? Again, of the false prophets, who are understood to be heretics, He says, ”Because of their iniquity the love of many shall wax cold. Since then even in the Churches, that is, in that congregation of peoples and nations, where the Christian name has most widely spread, there shall be so great abundance of sinners, which is already, in great measure, perceived; is not that famine of the word here predicted, which has been threatened by another prophet also? Is it not too for this congregation’s sake, who, by their sins, are estranging from themselves that light of truth, that God returns on high, that is, so that faith, pure and cleansed from the corruption of all perverse opinions, is held and received, either not at all, or by the very few of whom it was said, ”Blessed is he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved”? Not without cause then is it said, ”and for the sake of this” congregation ”return Thou on high:

that is, again withdraw into the depth of Thy secrecy, even for the sake of this congregation of the peoples, that hath Thy name, and doeth not Thy deeds.

8. But whether the former exposition of this place, or this last be the more suitable, without prejudice to any one better, or equal, or as good, it follows very consistently, "the Lord judgeth the people. For whether He returned on high, when, after the resurrection, He ascended into heaven, well does it follow, "The Lord judgeth the people: for that He will come from thence to judge the quick and the dead. Or whether He return on high, when the understanding of the truth leaves sinful Christians, for that of His coming it has been said, "Thinkest thou the Son of Man on His coming will find faith on the earth? "The Lord" then "judgeth the people. What Lord, but Jesus Christ? "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Wherefore this soul which prayeth perfectly, see how she fears not the day of judgment, and with a truly secure longing says in her prayer, "Thy kingdom come: judge me," she says, "O Lord, according to my righteousness. In the former Psalm a weak one was entreating, imploring rather the mercy of God, than mentioning any desert of his own: since the Son of God came "to call sinners to repentance. Therefore he had there said, "Save me, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; that is, not for my desert's sake.

But now, since being called he hath held and kept the commandments which he received, he is bold to say, "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me. This is true harmlessness, which harms not even an enemy. Accordingly, well does he require to be judged according to his harmlessness, who could say with truth, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. As for what he added, "that is upon me," it can refer not only to harmlessness, but can be understood also with reference to righteousness; that the sense should be this, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, which righteousness and harmlessness is upon me. By which addition he shows that this very thing, that the soul is righteous and harmless, she has not by herself, but by God who giveth brightness and light. For of this he says in another Psalm, "Thou, O Lord, wilt light my candle. And of John it is said, that "he was not the light, but bore witness of the light. "He was a burning and shining candle. That light then, whence souls, as candles, are kindled, shines forth not with borrowed, but with original, brightness, which light is truth itself.

It is then so said, "According to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me," as if a burning and shining candle should say, Judge me according to the flame which is upon me, that is, not that wherewith I am myself, but that whereby I shine enkindled of thee.

9. "But let the wickedness of sinners be consummated" (ver. 9). He says, "be consummated," be completed, according to that in the Apocalypse, "Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy be filthy still. For the wickedness of those men appears consummate, who crucified the Son of God; but greater is theirs who will not live uprightly, and hate the precepts of truth, for whom the Son of God was crucified. "Let the wickedness of sinners," then he says, "be consummated," that is, arrive at the height of wickedness, that just judgment may be able to come at once. But since it is not only said, "Let the filthy be filthy still; but it is said also, "Let the righteous become more righteous; he joins on the

words, ”And Thou shalt direct the righteous, O God, who searcheth the hearts and reins. How then can the righteous be directed but in secret? when even by means of those things which, in the commencement of the Christian ages, when as yet the saints were oppressed by the persecution of the men of this world, appeared marvellous to men, now that the Christian name has begun to be in such high dignity, hypocrisy, that is pretence, has increased; of those, I mean, who by the Christian profession had rather please men than God. How then is the righteous man directed in so great confusion of pretence, save whilst God searcheth the hearts and reins; seeing all men’s thoughts, which are meant by the word heart;

and their delights, which are understood by the word reins? For the delight in things temporal and earthly is rightly ascribed to the reins; for that it is both the lower part of man, and that region where the pleasure of carnal generation dwells, through which man’s nature is transferred into this life of care, and deceiving joy, by the succession of the race. God then, searching our heart, and perceiving that it is there where our treasure is, that is, in heaven; searching also the reins, and perceiving that we do not assent to flesh and blood, but delight ourselves in the Lord, directs the righteous man in his inward conscience before Him, where no man seeth, but He alone who perceiveth what each man thinketh, and what delighteth each. For delight is the end of care; because to this end does each man strive by care and thought, that he may attain to his delight. He therefore seeth our cares, who searcheth the heart. He seeth too the ends of cares, that is delights, who narrowly searcheth the reins; that when He shall find that our cares incline neither to the lust of the flesh, nor to the lust of the eyes, nor to the pride of life, all which pass away as a shadow, but that they are raised upward to the joys of things eternal, which are spoilt by no change, He may direct the righteous, even He, the God who searcheth the hearts and reins.

For our works, which we do in deeds and words, may be known unto men; but with what mind they are done, and to what end we would attain by means of them, He alone knoweth, the God who searcheth the hearts and reins.

10. ”My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart” (ver. 10). The offices of medicine are twofold, on the curing infirmity, the other the preserving health. According to the first it was said in the preceding Psalm, ”Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; according to the second it is said in this Psalm, ”If there be iniquity in my hands, if I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. For there the weak prays that he may be delivered, here one already whole that he may not change for the worse. According to the one it is there said, ”Make me whole for Thy mercy’s sake;”according to this other it is here said, ”Judge me,O Lord, according to my righteousness. For there he asks for a remedy to escape from disease; but here for protection from falling into disease. According to the former it is said, ”Make me whole, O Lord, according to Thymercy: according to the latter it is said, ”My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. Both the one and the other maketh men whole; but the former removes them from sickness into health, the latter preserves them in this health. Therefore there the help is merciful, because the sinner hath no desert, who as

yet longeth to be justified, "believing on Him who justifieth the ungodly; but here the help is righteous, because it is given to one already righteous.

Let the sinner then who said, "I am weak," say in the first place, "Make me whole, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; and here let the righteous man, who said, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil," say, "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. For if he sets forth the medicine, by which we may be healed when weak, how much more that by which we may be kept in health. For if "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, how much more being now justified shall we be kept whole from wrath through Him."

11. "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. God, who searcheth the hearts and reins, directeth the righteous; but with righteous help maketh He whole the upright in heart. He doth not as He searcheth the hearts and reins, so make whole the upright in heart and reins; for the thoughts are both bad in a depraved heart, and good in an upright heart; but delights which are not good belong to the reins, for they are more low and earthly; but those that are good not to the reins, but to the heart itself. Wherefore men cannot be so called upright in reins, as they are called upright in heart, since where the thought is, there at once the delight is too; which cannot be, unless when things divine and eternal are thought of. "Thou hast given," he says, "joy in my heart," when he had said, "The light of Thy countenance has been stamped on us, O Lord. For although the phantoms of things temporal, which the mind falsely pictures to itself, when tossed by vain and mortal hope, to vain imagination oftentimes bring a delirious and maddened joy; yet this delight must be attributed not to the heart, but to the reins; for all these imaginations have been drawn from lower, that is, earthly and carnal things.

Hence it comes, that God, who searcheth he hearts and reins, and perceiveth in the heart upright thoughts, in the reins no delights, affordeth righteous help to the upright in heart, where heavenly delights are coupled with clean thoughts. And therefore when in another Psalm he had said, "Moreover even to-night my reins have chided me; he went on to say as touching help, "I foresaw the Lord alway in my sight, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Where he shows that he suffered suggestions only from the reins, not delights as well; for he had suffered these, then he would of course be moved. But he said, "The Lord is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; and then he adds, "Wherefore was my heart delighted; that the reins should have been able to chide, not delight him. The delight accordingly was produced not in the reins, but there, where against the chiding of the reins God was foreseen to be on the right hand, that is, in the heart.

12. "God the righteous judge, strong (in endurance) and long-suffering" (ver. 11). What God is judge, but the Lord, who judgeth the people? He is righteous; who "shall render to every man according to his works." He is strong (in endurance); who, being most powerful, for our salvation bore even with ungodly persecutors. He is long-suffering; who did not immediately, after His resurrection, hurry away to punishment, even those that persecuted Him, but bore with them, that they might at length turn from that ungodliness to salva-

tion: and still He beareth with them, reserving the last penalty for the last judgment, and up to this present time inviting sinners to repentance. "Not bringing in anger every day." Perhaps "bringing in anger" is a more significant expression than being angry (and so we find it in the Greek copies); that the anger, whereby He punisheth, should not be in Him, but in the minds of those ministers who obey the commandments of truth through whom orders are given even to the lower ministries, who are called angels of wrath, to punish sin: whom even now the punishment of men delights not for justice' sake, in which they have no pleasure, but for malice' sake. God then doth not "bring in anger every day," that is, He doth not collect His ministers for vengeance every day. For now the patience of God inviteth to repentance: but in the last time, when men "through their hardness and impenitent heart shall have treasured up for themselves anger in the day of anger, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, then He will brandish His sword."

13. "Unless ye be converted," He says, "He will brandish His sword" (ver. 12). The Lord Man Himself may be taken to be God's double-edged sword, that is, His spear, which at His first coming He will not brandish, but hideth as it were in the sheath of humiliation: but He will brandish it, when at the second coming to judge the quick and dead, in the manifest splendour of His glory, He shall flash light on His righteous ones, and terror on the ungodly. For in other copies, instead of, "He shall brandish His sword," it has been written, "He shall make bright His spear:" by which word I think the last coming of the Lord's glory most appropriately signified: seeing that is understood of His person, which another Psalm has, "Deliver, O Lord, my soul from the ungodly, Thy spear from the enemies of Thine hand. He hath bent His bow, and made it ready." The tenses of the words must not be altogether overlooked, how he has spoken of "the sword" in the future, "He will brandish;" of "the bow" in the past, "He hath bent:" and these words of the past tense follow after.

14. "And in it He hath prepared the instruments of death: He hath wrought His arrows for the burning" (ver. 13). That bow then I would readily take to be the Holy Scripture, in which by the strength of the New Testament, as by a sort of string, the hardness of the Old has been bent and subdued. From thence the Apostles are sent forth like arrows, or divine preachings are shot. Which arrows "He has wrought for the burning," arrows, that is, whereby being stricken they might be inflamed with heavenly love. For by what other arrows was she stricken, who saith, "Bring me into the house of wine, place me among perfumes, crowd me among honey, for I have been wounded with love"? By what other arrows is he kindled, who, desirous of returning to God, and coming back from wandering, asketh for help against crafty tongues, and to whom it is said, "What shall be given thee, or what added to thee against the crafty tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with devastating coals: that is, coals, whereby, when thou art stricken and set on fire, thou mayest burn with so great love of the kingdom of heaven, as to despise the tongues of all that resist thee, and would recall thee from thy purpose, and to deride their persecutions, saying, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

For I am persuaded," he says, "that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, not things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus for the burning hath He wrought His arrows. For in the Greek copies it is found thus, "He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. But most of the Latin copies have "burning arrows. But whether the arrows themselves burn, or make others burn, which of course they cannot do unless they burn themselves, the sense is complete.

15. But since he has said that the Lord has prepared not arrows only, but "instruments of death" too, in the bow, it may be asked, what are "instruments of death"? Are they, peradventure, heretics? For they too, out of the same bow, that is, out of the same Scriptures, light upon souls not to be inflamed with love but destroyed with poison: which does not happen but after their deserts: wherefore even this dispensation is to be assigned to the Divine Providence, not that it makes men sinners, but that it orders them after they have sinned. For through sin reaching them with an ill purpose, they are forced to understand them ill, that this should be itself the punishment of sin: by whose death, nevertheless, the sons of the Catholic Church are, as it were by certain thorns, so to say, aroused from slumber, and make progress toward the understanding of the holy Scriptures. "For there must be also heresies, that they which are approved," he says, "may be made manifest among you:" that is, among men, seeing they are manifest to God. Or has He haply ordained the same arrows to be at once instruments of death for the destruction of unbelievers, and wrought them burning, or for the burning, for the exercising of the faithful? For that is not false that the Apostle says, "To the one we are the savour of life unto life, to the other the savour of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things?" It is no wonder then if the same Apostles be both instruments of death in those from whom they suffered persecution, and fiery arrows to inflame the hearts of believers.

16. Now after this dispensation righteous judgment will come: of which the Psalmist so speaks, as that we may understand that each man's punishment is wrought out of his own sin, and his iniquity turned into vengeance: that we may not suppose that that tranquillity and ineffable light of God brings forth from Itself the means of punishing sin; but that it so ordereth sins, that what have been delights to man in sinning, should be instruments to the Lord avenging. "Behold," he says, "he hath travailed with injustice." Now what had he conceived, that he should travail with injustice? "He hath conceived," he says, "toil." Hence then comes that, "In toil shall thou eat thy bread." Hence too that, "Come unto Me all ye that toil and are heavy laden; for My yoke is easy, and My burden light." For toil will never cease, except one love that which cannot be taken away against his will. For when those things are loved which we can lose against our wilt, we must needs toil for them most miserably; and to obtain them, amid the straitnesses of earthly cares, whilst each desires to snatch them for himself, and to be beforehand with another, or to wrest it from him, must scheme injustice. Duly then, and quite in order, hath he travailed with injustice, who has conceived toil. Now he bringeth forth what, save that with which he hath travailed, although he has not travailed with that which he conceived? For that is not born, which is not conceived;

but seed is conceived, that which is formed from the seed is born. Toil is then the seed of iniquity, but sin the conception of toil, that is, that first sin, to "depart from God." He then hath travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. "And he hath brought forth iniquity." "Iniquity" is the same as "injustice:" he hath brought forth then that with which he travailed. What follows next?

17. "He hath opened a ditch, and digged it" (ver. 15). To open a ditch is, in earthly matters, that is, as it were in the earth, to prepare deceit, that another fall therein, whom the unrighteous man wishes to deceive. Now this ditch is opened when consent is given to the evil suggestion of earthly lusts: but it is digged when after consent we press on to actual work of deceit. But how can it be, that iniquity should rather hurt the righteous man against whom it proceeds, than the unrighteous heart whence it proceeds? Accordingly, the stealer of money, for instance, while he desires to inflict painful harm upon another, is himself maimed by the wound of avarice. Now who, even out of his right mind, sees not how great is the difference between these men, when one suffers the loss of money, the other of innocence? "He will fall" then "into the pit which he hath made." As it is said in another Psalm, "The Lord is known in executing judgments; the sinner is caught in the works of his own hands."

18. "His toil shall be turned on his head, and his iniquity shall descend on his pate" (ver. 16). For he had no mind to escape sin: but was brought under sin as a slave, so to say, as the Lord saith, "Whosoever sinneth is a slave." His iniquity then will be upon him, when he is subject to his iniquity; for he could not say to the Lord, what the innocent and upright say, "My glory, and the lifter up of my head." He then will be in such wise below, as that his iniquity may be above, and descend on him; for that it weigheth him down and burdens him, and suffers him not to fly back to the rest of the saints. This occurs, when in an ill regulated man reason is a slave, and lust hath dominion.

19. "I will confess to the Lord according to His justice" (ver. 17). This is not the sinner's confession: for he says this, who said above most truly, "If there be iniquity in my hands: but it is a confession of God's justice, in which we speak thus, Verily, O Lord, Thou art just, in that Thou both so protectest the just, that Thou enlightenest them by Thyself; and so orderest sinners, that they be punished not by Thine, but by their own malice. This confession so praises the Lord, that the blasphemies of the ungodly can avail nothing, who, willing to excuse their evil deeds, are unwilling to attribute to their own fault that they sin, that is, are unwilling to attribute their fault to their fault. Accordingly they find either fortune or fate to accuse, or the devil, to whom He who made us hath willed that it should be in our power to refuse consent: or they bring in another nature, which is not of God: wretched waverers, and erring, rather than confessing to God, that He should pardon them. For it is not fit that any be pardoned, except he says, I have sinned. He, then, that sees the deserts of souls so ordered by God, that while each has his own given him, the fair beauty of the universe is in no part violated, in all things praises God: and this is not the confession of sinners, but of the righteous.

For it is not the sinner's confession when the Lord says, "I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes. Likewise in Ecclesiasticus it is said, "Confess to the Lord in all His works: and in confession ye shall say this, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Which can be seen in this Psalm, if any one with a pious mind, by the Lord's help, distinguish between the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the sinners, how that in these two the whole creation, which God made and rules, is adorned with a beauty wondrous and known to few. Thus then he says, "I will confess to the Lord according to His justice," as one who saw that darkness was not made by God, but ordered nevertheless. For God said, "Let light be made, and light was made. He did not say, Let darkness be made, and darkness was made: and yet He ordered it. And therefore it is said, "God divided between the light, and the darkness: and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. This is the distinction, He made the one and ordered it: but the other He made not, but yet He ordered this too. But now that sins are signified by darkness, so is it seen in the Prophet, who says, "And thy darkness shall be as the noon day:

and in the Apostle, who says, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness: and above all that text, "Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Not that there is any nature of darkness. For all nature, in so far as it is nature, is compelled to be. Now being belongs to light: not being to darkness. He then that leaves Him by whom he was made, and inclines to that whence he was made, that is, to nothing, is in this sin endarkened: and yet he does not utterly perish, but he is ordered among the lowest things. Therefore after the Psalmist said, "I will confess unto the Lord: that we might not understand it of confession of sins, he adds lastly, "And I will sing to the name of the Lord most high. Now singing has relation to joy, but repentance of sins to sadness.

20. This Psalm can also be taken in the person of the Lord Man: if only that which is there spoken in humiliation be referred to our weakness, which He bore.

Psalm 8

TO The End, For The Wine-Presses, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. He seems to say nothing of wine-presses in the text of the Psalm of which this is the title. By which it appears, that one and the same thing is often signified in Scripture by many and various similitudes. We may then take wine-presses to be Churches, on the same principle by which we understand also by a threshing-floor the Church. For whether in the threshing-floor, or in the wine-press, there is nothing else done but the clearing the produce of its covering; which is necessary, both for its first growth and increase, and arrival at the maturity either of the harvest or the vintage. Of these coverings or supporters then; that is, of chaff, on the threshing-floor, the corn; and of husks, in the presses, the wine is stripped: as in the Churches, from the multitude of worldly men, which is collected together with the good, for whose birth and adaptating to the divine word that multitude was necessary, this is effected, that by spiritual love they be separated through the operation of God's ministers. For now so it is that the good are, for a time, separated from the bad, not in space, but in affection: although they have converse together in the Churches, as far as respects bodily presence. But another time will come, the corn will be stored up apart in the granaries, and the wine in the cellars. "The wheat," saith he, "He will lay up in garners; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." The same thing may be thus understood in another similitude: the wine He will lay up in cellars, but the husks He will cast forth to cattle: so that by the bellies of the cattle we may be allowed by way of similitude to understand the pains of hell.

2. There is another interpretation concerning the wine-presses, yet still keeping to the meaning of Churches. For even the Divine Word may be understood by the grape: for the Lord even has been called a Cluster of grapes; which they that were sent before by the people of Israel brought from the land of promise hanging on a staff, crucified as it were. Accordingly, when the Divine Word maketh use of, by the necessity of declaring Himself, the sound of the voice, whereby to convey Himself to the ears of the hearers; in the same sound of the voice, as it were in husks, knowledge, like the wine, is enclosed: and so this grape comes into the ears, as into the pressing machines of the wine-pressers. For there the separation is made, that the sound may reach as far as the ear; but knowledge be received in the memory of those that hear, as it were in a sort of vat; whence it passes into discipline of the conversation and habit of mind, as from the vat into the cellar: where if it do not

through negligence grow sour, it will acquire soundness by age. For it grew sour among the Jews, and this sour vinegar they gave the Lord to drink. For that wine, which from the produce of the vine of the New Testament the Lord is to drink with His saints in the kingdom of His Father. must needs be most sweet and most sound.

3. "Wine-presses" are also usually taken for martyrdoms, as if when they who have confessed the name of Christ have been trodden down by the blows of persecution, their mortal remains as husks remained on earth, but their souls flowed forth into the rest of a heavenly habitation. Nor yet by this interpretation do we depart from the fruitfulness of the Churches. It is sung then, "for the wine-presses," for the Church's establishment; when our Lord after His resurrection ascended into heaven. For then He sent the Holy Ghost: by whom the disciples being fulfilled preached with confidence the Word of God, that Churches might be collected. 4. Accordingly it is said, "O Lord, our Lord, how admirarble is Thy Name in all the earth!" (ver. 1). I ask, how is His Name wonderful in all the earth? The answer is, "For Thy glory has been raised above the heavens." So that the meaning is this, O Lord, who art our Lord, how do all that inhabit the earth admire Thee! for Thy glory hath been raised from earthly humiliation above the heavens. For hence it appeared who Thou wast that descendedst, when it was by some seen, and by the rest believed, whither it was that Thou ascendedst.

5. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies" (ver. 2). I cannot take babes and sucklings to be any other than those to whom the Apostle says, "As unto babes in Christ I have given you milk to drink, not meat." Who were meant by those who went before the Lord praising Him, of whom the Lord Himself used this testimony, when He answered the Jews who bade Him rebuke them, "Have ye not read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise?" Now with good reason He says not, Thou hast made, but, "Thou hast made perfect praise." For there are in the Churches also those who now no more drink milk, but eat meat: whom the same Apostle points out, saying, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;" but not by those only are the Churches perfected; for if there were only these, little consideration would be had of the human race. But consideration is had, when they too, who are not as yet capable of the knowledge of things spiritual and eternal, are nourished by the faith of the temporal history, which for our salvation after the Patriarchs and Prophets was administered by the most excellent Power and Wisdom of God, even in the Sacrament of the assumed Manhood, in which there is salvation for every one that believeth; to the end that moved by Its authority each one may obey Its precepts, whereby being purified and "rooted and grounded in love," he may be able to run with Saints, no more now a child in milk, but a young man in meat, "to comprehend the breadth, the length, the height, and depth, to know also the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ."

6. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. By enemies to this dispensation, which has been wrought through Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we ought generally to understand all who forbid belief in things unknown,

and promise certain knowledge: as all heretics do, and they who in the superstition of the Gentiles are called philosophers. Not that the promise of knowledge is to be blamed; but because they deem the most healthful and necessary step of faith is to be neglected, by which we must needs ascend to something certain, which nothing but that which is eternal can be. Hence it appears that they do not possess even this knowledge, which in contempt of faith they promise; seeing that they know not so useful and necessary a step thereof. "Out of the mouth," then "of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise," Thou, our Lord, declaring first by the Apostle, "Except ye believe, ye shall not understand; and saying by His own mouth, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and shall believe. "Because of the enemies: against whom too that is said, "I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them unto babes. "From the wise," he saith, not the really wise, but those who deem themselves such. "That Thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender. Whom but the heretic?

For he is both an enemy and a defender, who when he would assault the Christian faith, seems to defend it. Although the philosophers too of this world may be well taken as the enemies and defenders: forasmuch as the Son of God is the Power and Wisdom of God by which every one is enlightened who is made wise by the truth: of which they profess themselves to be lovers, whence too their name of philosophers; and therefore they seem to defend it, while they are its enemies, since they cease not to recommend noxious superstitions, that the elements of this world should be worshipped and revered.

7. "For I shall see Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers" (ver. 3). We read that the law was written with the finger of God, and given through Moses, His holy servant: by which finger of God many understand the Holy Ghost. Wherefore if, by the fingers of God, we are right in understanding these same ministers filled with the Holy Ghost, by reason of this same Spirit which worketh in them, since by them all holy Scripture has been completed for us; we understand consistently with this, that, in this place, the books of both Testaments are called "the heavens." Now it is said too of Moses himself, by the magicians of king Pharaoh, when they were conquered by him, "This is the finger of God." And what is written, "The heavens shall be rolled up as a book." Although it be said of this aethereal heaven, yet naturally, according to the same image, the heavens of books are named by allegory. "For I shall see," he says, "the heavens, the works of Thy fingers:" that is, I shall discern and understand the Scriptures, which Thou, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast written by Thy ministers.

8. Accordingly the heavens named above also may be interpreted as the same books, where he says, "For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens: so that the complete meaning should be this, "For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens; for Thy glory hath exceeded the declarations of all the Scriptures: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise," that they should begin by belief in the Scriptures, who would arrive at the knowledge of Thy glory: which hath been raised above the Scriptures, in that it passeth by and transcends the announcements of all words and languages. Therefore hath

God lowered the Scriptures even to the capacity of babes and sucklings, as it is sung in another Psalm, "And He lowered the heaven, and came down: and this did He because of the enemies, who through pride of talkativeness, being enemies of the cross of Christ, even when they do speak some truth, still cannot profit babes and sucklings. So is the enemy and defender destroyed, who, whether he seem to defend wisdom, or even the name of Christ, still, from the step of this faith, assaults that truth, which he so readily makes promise of. Whereby too he is convicted of not possessing it; since by assaulting the step thereof, namely faith, he knows not how one should mount up thereto.

Hence then is the rash and blind promiser of truth, who is the enemy and defender, destroyed, when the heavens, the works of God's fingers, are seen, that is, when the Scriptures, brought down even to the slowness of babes, are understood; and by means of the lowness of the faith of the history, which was transacted in time, they raise them, well nurtured and strengthened, unto the grand height of the understanding of things eternal, up to those things which they establish. For these heavens, that is, these books, are the works of God's fingers; for by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Saints they were completed. For they that have regarded their own glory rather than man's salvation, have spoken without the Holy Ghost, in whom are the bowel: of the mercy of God.

9. "For I shall see the heavens, the works of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained." The moon and stars are ordained in the heavens; since both the Church universal, to signify which the moon is often put, and Churches in the several places particularly, which I imagine to be intimated by the name of stars, are established in the same Scriptures, which we believe to be expressed by the word heavens. But why the moon justly signifies the Church, will be more seasonably considered in another Psalm, where it is said, "The sinners have bent their bow, that they may shoot in the obscure moon the upright in heart."

10. "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? (ver. 4). It may be asked, what distinction there is between man and son of man. For if there were none, it would not be expressed thus, "man, or son of man," disjunctively. For if it were written thus, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and son of man, that Thou visitest him? it might appear to be a repetition of the word "man. But now when the expression is, "man or son of-man," a distinction is more clearly intimated. This is certainly to be remembered, that every son of man is a man; although every man cannot be taken to be a son of man. Adam, for instance, was a man, but not a son of man. Wherefore we may from hence consider and distinguish what is the difference in this place between man and son of man; namely, that they who bear the image of the earthy man, who is not a son of man, should be signified by the name of men; but that they who bear the image of the heavenly Man should be rather called sons of men; for the former again is called the old man and the latter the new; but the new is born of the old, since spiritual regeneration is begun by a change of an earthy, and worldly life; and therefore the latter is called son of man.

”Man” then in this place is earthy, but ”son of man” heavenly; and the former is far removed from God, but the latter present with God; and therefore is He mindful of the former, as in far distance from Him; but the latter He visiteth, with whom being present He enlighteneth him with His countenance. For ”salvation is far from sinners; and, ”The light of Thy countenance hath been stamped upon us, O Lord. So in another Psalm he saith, that men in conjunction with beasts are made whole together with these beasts, not by any present inward illumination, but by the multiplication of the mercy of God, whereby His goodness reacheth even to the lowest things; for the wholeness of carnal men is carnal, as of the beasts; but separating the sons of men from those whom being men he joined with cattle, he proclaims that they are made blessed, after a far more exalted method, by the enlightening of the truth itself, and by a certain inundation of the fountain of life. For he speaketh thus: ”Men and beasts Thou wilt make whole, O Lord, as Thy mercy hath been multiplied, O God. But the sons of men shall put their trust in the covering of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house, and of the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shall make them drink. For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light. Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee.

Through the multiplication of mercy then He is mindful of man, as of beasts; for that multiplied mercy reacheth even to them that are afar off; but He visiteth the son of man, over whom, placed under the covering of His wings, He extendeth mercy, and in His light giveth light, and maketh him drink of His pleasures, and inebriateth him with the richness of His house, to forget the sorrows and the wanderings of his former conversation. This son of man, that is, the new man, the repentance of the old man begets with pain and tears. He, though new, is nevertheless called yet carnal, whilst he is fed with milk; ”I would not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal,” says the Apostle. And to show that they were already regenerate, he says, ”As unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, not meat. And when he relapses, as often happens, to the old life, he hears in reproof that he is a man; ”Are ye not men,” he says, ”and walk as men?”

11. Therefore was the son of man first visited in the person of the very Lord Man, born of the Virgin Mary. Of whom, by reason of the very weakness of the flesh, which the Wisdom of God vouchsafed to bear, and the humiliation of the Passion, it is justly said, ”Thou hast lowered Him a little lower than the Angels” (ver. 5). But that glorifying is added, in which He rose and ascended up into heaven; ”With glory,” he says, ”and with honour hast Thou crowned Him; and hast set Him over the works of Thine hands” (ver. 6). Since even Angels are the works of God’s hands, even over Angels we understand the Only-begotten Son to have been set; whom we hear and believe, by the humiliation of the carnal generation and passion, to have been lowered a little lower than the Angels.

12. ”Thou hast put,” he says, ”all things in subjection under His feet. When he says, ”all things,” he excepts nothing. And that he might not be allowed to understand it otherwise, the Apostle enjoins it to be believed thus, when he says, ”He being excepted which put all things under Him. And to the Hebrews he uses this very testimony from this Psalm, when

he would have it to be understood that all things are in such sort put under our Lord Jesus Christ, as that nothing should be excepted. And yet he does not seem, as it were, to subjoin any great thing, when he says, "All sheep and oxen, yea, moreover, the beasts of the field, birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea" (ver. 7). For, leaving the heavenly excellencies and powers, and all the hosts of Angels, leaving even man himself, he seems to have put under Him the beasts merely; unless by sheep and oxen we understand holy souls, either yielding the fruit of innocence, or even working that the earth may bear fruit, that is, that earthly men may be regenerated unto spiritual richness. By these holy souls then we ought to understand not those of men only, but of all Angels too, if we would gather from hence that all things are put under our Lord Jesus Christ.

For there will be no creature that will not be put under Him, under whom the pre-eminent spirits, that I may so speak, are put. But whence shall we prove that sheep can be interpreted even, not of men, but of the blessed spirits of the angelical creatures on high? May we from the Lord's saying that He had left ninety and nine sheep in the mountains, that is, in the higher regions, and had come down for one? For if we take the one lost sheep to be the human soul in Adam, since Eve even was made out of his side, for the spiritual handling and consideration of all which things this is not the time, it remains that, by the ninety and nine left in the mountains, spirits not human, but angelical, should be meant. For as regards the oxen, this sentence is easily despatched; since men themselves are for no other reason called oxen, but because by preaching the Gospel of the word of God they imitate Angels, as where it is said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. How much more easily then do we take the Angels themselves, the messengers of truth, to be oxen, when Evangelists by the participation of their title are called oxen? "Thou hast put under" therefore, he says, "all sheep and oxen," that is, all the holy spiritual creation;

in which we include that of holy men, who are in the Church, in those wine-presses to wit, which are intimated under the other similitude of the moon and stars.

13. "Yea moreover," saith he, "the beasts of the field. The addition of "moreover" is by no means idle. First, because by beasts of the plain may be understood both sheep and oxen: so that, if goats are the beasts of rocky and mountainous regions, sheep may be well taken to be the beasts of the field. Accordingly had it been written even thus, "all sheep and oxen and beasts of the field; it might be reasonably asked what beasts of the plain meant, since even sheep and oxen could be taken as such. But the addition of "moreover" besides, obliges us, beyond question, to recognise some difference or another. But under this word, "moreover," not only "beasts of the field," but also "birds of the air, and fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea" (ver. 8), are to be taken in. What is then this distinction? Call to mind the "wine-presses," holding husks and wine; and the threshing-floor, containing chaff and corn; and the nets, in which were enclosed good fish and bad; and the ark of Noah, in which were both unclean and clean animals: and you will see that the Churches for a while, now in this time, unto the last time of judgment, contain not only sheep and oxen, that is, holy

laymen and holy ministers, but ”moreover beasts of the field, birds of the air, and birds of the sea, that walk through the paths of the sea.

For the beasts of the field were very fitly understood, as men rejoicing in the pleasure of the flesh where they mount up to nothing high, nothing laborious. For the field is also ”the broad way, that leadeth to destruction: and in a field is Abel slain. Wherefore there is cause to fear, test one coming down from the mountains of God’s righteousness (”for thy righteousness,” he says, ”is as the mountains of God”) making choice of the broad and easy paths of carnal pleasure, be slain by the devil. See now too ”the birds of heaven,” the proud, of whom it is said, ”They have set their mouth against the heaven. See how they are carried on high by the wind, ”who say, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is our Lord? Behold too the fish of the sea, that is, the curious; who walk through the paths of the sea, that is, search in the deep after the temporal things of this world: which, like: paths in the sea, vanish and perish, as quickly as the water comes together again after it has given room, in their passage, to ships, or to whatsoever walketh or swimmeth. For he said not merely, who walk the paths of the sea; but ”walk through,” he said; showing the very determined earnestness of those who seek after vain and fleeting things. Now these three kinds of vice, namely, the pleasure of the flesh, and pride, and curiosity, include all sins.

And they appear to me to be enumerated by the Apostle John, when he says, ”Love not the world; for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For through the eyes especially prevails curiosity. To what the rest indeed belong is clear. And that temptation of the Lord Man was threefold: by food, that is, by the lust of the flesh, where it is suggested, ”command these stones that they be made bread: by vain boasting, where, when stationed on a mountain, all the kingdoms of this earth are shown Him, and promised if He would worship: by curiosity, where, from the pinnacle of the temple, He is advised to cast Himself down, for the sake of trying whether He would be borne up by Angels. And accordingly after that the enemy could prevail with Him by none of these temptations, this is said of him, ”When the devil had ended all his temptation. With a reference then to the meaning of the wine-presses, not only the wine, but the husks too are put under His feet; to wit, not only sheep and oxen, that is, the holy souls of believers, either in the laity, or in the ministry; but moreover both beasts of pleasure, and birds of pride, and fish of curiosity. All which classes of sinners we see mingled now in the Churches with the good and holy. May He work then in His Churches, and separate the wine from the husks:

let us give heed, that we be wine, and sheep or oxen; not husks, or beasts of the field, or birds of heaven, or fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. Not that these names can be understood and explained in this way only, but the explanation of them must be according to the place where they are found. For elsewhere they have other meanings. And this rule must be kept to in every allegory, that what is expressed by the similitude should be considered agreeably to the meaning of the particular place: for this is the manner of the Lord’s and the Apostles’ teaching. Let us repeat then the last verse, which is also put at

the beginning of the Psalm, and let us praise God, saying, ”O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name in all the earth! For fitly, after the matter of the discourse, is the return made to the heading, whither all that discourse must be referred.

Psalm 9

1. The inscription of this Psalm is, "To the end for the hidden things of the Son, a Psalm of David himself. As to the hidden things of the Son there may be a question: but since he has not added whose, the very only-begotten Son of God should be understood. For where a Psalm has been inscribed of the son of David, "When," he says, "he fled from the face of Absalom his son; although his name even was mentioned, and therefore there could be no obscurity as to whom it was spoken of: yet it is not merely said, from the face of son Absalom; but "his" is added. But here both because "his" is not added, and much is said of the Gentiles, it cannot properly be taken of Absalom. For the war which that abandoned one waged with his father, no way relates to the Gentiles, since there the people of Israel only were divided against themselves. This Psalm is then sung for the hidden things of the only-begotten Son of God. For the Lord Himself too, when, without addition, He uses the word Son, would have Himself, the Only-begotten to be understood; as where He says, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. For He said not, the Son of God; but in saying merely, Son, He gives us to understand whose Son it is.

Which form of expression nothing admits of, save His excellency of whom we so speak, that, though we name Him not, He can be understood. For so we say, it rains, clears up, thunders, and such like expressions; and we do not add who does it all; for that the excellency of the doer spontaneously presents itself to all men's minds, and does not want words. What then are the hidden things of the Son? By which expression we must first understand that there are some things of the Son manifest, from which those are distinguished which are called hidden. Wherefore since we believe two advents of the Lord, one past, which the Jews understood not: the other future, which we both hope for; and since the one which the Jews understood not, profited the Gentiles; "For the hidden things of the Son" is not unsuitably understood to be spoken of this advent, in which "blindness in part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in."

For notice of two judgments is conveyed to us throughout the Scriptures, if any one will give heed to them, one hidden, the other manifest. The hidden one is passing now, of which the Apostle Peter says, "The time is come that judgment should begin from the house of the Lord." The hidden judgment accordingly is the pain, by which now each man is either exercised to purification, or warned to conversion, or if he despise the calling and discipline

of God, is blinded unto damnation. But the manifest judgment is that in which the Lord, at His coming, will judge the quick and the dead, all men confessing that it is He by whom both rewards shall be assigned to the good, and punishments to the evil. But then that confession will avail, not to the remedy of evils, but to the accumulation of damnation. Of these two judgments, the one hidden, the other manifest, the Lord seems to me to have spoken, where He says, "Whoso believeth on Me hath passed from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment;" into the manifest judgment, that is. For that which passes from death unto life by means of some affliction, whereby "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," is the hidden judgment. "But whoso believeth not," saith He, "hath been judged already:" that is, by this hidden judgment hath been already prepared for that manifest one. These two judgments we read of also in Wisdom, whence it is written, "Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, Thou didst give a judgment to mock them; But they that have not been corrected by this judgment have felt a judgment worthy of God." Whoso then are not corrected by this hidden judgment of God, shall most worthily be punished by that manifest one. ...

2. "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart" (ver. 1). He doth not, with a whole heart, confess unto God, who doubteth of His Providence in any particular: but he who sees already the hidden things of the wisdom of God, how great is Iris invisible reward, who saith, "We rejoice in tribulations;" and how all torments, which are inflicted on the body, are either for the exercising of those that are converted to God, or for warning that they be converted, or for just preparation of the obdurate unto their last damnation: and so now all things are referred to the governance of Divine Providence, which fools think done as it were by chance and at random, and without any Divine ordering. "I will tell all Thy marvels." He tells all God's marvels, who sees them performed not only openly on the body, but invisibly indeed too in the soul, but far more sublimely and excellently. For men earthly, and led wholly by the eye, marvel more that the dead Lazarus rose again in the body, than that Paul the persecutor rose again in soul. But since the visible miracle calleth the soul to the light, but the invisible enlighteneth the soul that comes when called, he tells all God's marvels, who, by believing the visible, passes on to the understanding of the invisible.

3. "I will be glad and exult in Thee" (ver. 2). Not any more in this world, not in pleasure of bodily dalliance, not in relish of palate and tongue, not in sweetness of perfumes, not in joyousness of passing sounds, not in the variously coloured forms of figure, not in vanities of men's praise, not in wedlock and perishable offspring, not in superfluity of temporal wealth, not in this world's getting, whether it extend over place and space, or be prolonged in time's succession: but, "I will be glad and exult in Thee," namely, in the hidden things of the Son, where "the light of Thy countenance hath been stamped on us, O Lord:" for, "Thou wilt hide them," saith he, "in the hiding place of Thy countenance." He then will be glad and exult in Thee, who tells all Thy marvels. And He will tell all Thy marvels (since it is now spoken of prophetically), "who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him."

4. For now the Person of the Lord begins to appear speaking in this Psalm. For it follows, "I will sing to Thy Name, O Most High, in turning mine enemy behind." His enemy then, where was he turned back? Was it when it was said to him, "Get thee behind, Satan"? For then he who by tempting desired to put himself before, was turned behind, by failing in deceiving Him who was tempted, and by availing nothing against Him. For earthly men are behind: but the heavenly man is preferred before, although he came after. For "the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is from heaven, heavenly." But from this stock he came by whom it was said, "He who cometh after me is preferred before me." And the Apostle forgets "those things that are behind, and reaches forth unto those things that are before." The enemy, therefore, was turned behind, after that he could not deceive the heavenly Man being tempted; and he turned himself to earthy men, where he can have dominion. ...For in truth the devil is turned behind, even in the persecution of the righteous, and he, much more to their advantage, is a persecutor, than if he went before as a leader and a prince. We midst sing then to the Name of the Most High in turning the enemy behind: since we ought to choose rather to fly from him as a persecutor, than to follow him as a leader. For we have whither we may fly and hide ourselves in the hidden things of the Son; seeing that "the Lord hath been made a refuge for us."

5. "They will be weakened, and perish from Thy face" (ver. 3). Who will be weakened and perish, but the unrighteous and ungodly? "They will be weakened," while they shall avail nothing; "and they shall perish," because theungodly will not be; "from the face" of God, that is, from the knowledge of God, as he perished who said, "But now I live not, but Christ liveth in me." But why will the ungodly "be weakened and perish from thy face?" "Because," he saith, "Thou hast made my judgment, and my cause:" that is, the judgment in which I seemed to be judged, Thou hast made mine; and the cause in which men condemned me just and innocent, Thou hast made mine. For such things served Him for our deliverance: as sailors too call the wind theirs, which they take advantage of for prosperous sailing.

6. "Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity" (ver. 4). Whether the Son say this to the Father, who said also, "Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above," referring this very thing, that the Judge of men was judged for men's advantage, to the Father's equity and His own hidden things: or whether man say to God, "Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity," giving the name of God's throne to his soul, so that his body may peradventure be the earth, which is called God's "footstool:" for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself:" or whether the soul of the Church, perfect now and without spot and wrinkle, worthy, that is, of the hidden things of the Son, in that "the King hath brought her into His chamber," say to her spouse, "Thou satest upon the throne Who judgest equity," in that Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and sittest at the right hand of the Father: whichsoever, I say, of those opinions, whereunto this verse may be referred, is preferred, it transgresses not the rule of faith.

7. "Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly hath perished" (ver. 5). We take this to be more suitably said to the Lord Jesus Christ, than said by Him. For who else hath rebuked

the heathen, and the ungodly perished, save He, who after that He ascended up into heaven, sent the Holy Ghost, that, filled by Him, the Apostles should preach the word of God with boldness, and freely reprove men's sins? At which rebuke the ungodly perished; because the ungodly was justified and was made godly. "Thou hast effaced their name for the world, and for the world's world. The name of the ungodly hath been effaced. For they are not called ungodly who believe in the true God. Now their name is effaced "for the world," that is, as long as the course of the temporal world endures. "And for the world's world. What is "the world's world," but that whose image and shadow, as it were, this world possesses? For the change of seasons succeeding one another, whilst the moon is on the wane, and again on the increase, whilst the sun each year returns to his quarter, whilst spring, or summer, or autumn, or winter passes away only to return, is in some sort an imitation of eternity. But this world's world is that which abides in immutable eternity. As a verse in the mind, and a verse in the voice, the former is understood, the latter heard; and the former fashions the latter;

and hence the former works in art and abides, the latter sounds in the air and passes away. So the fashion of this changeable world is defined by that world unchangeable which is called the world's world. And hence the one abides in the art, that is, in the Wisdom and Power of God: but the other is made to pass in the governance of creation. If after all it be not a repetition, so that after it was said "for the world," lest it should be understood of this world that passeth away, it were added "for the world's world. For in the Greek copies it is thus, eid ton aiwna, kai eij ton aipna ton aipnoj Which the Latins have for the most rendered, not, "for the world, and for the world's world; but, "for ever, and for the world's world," that in the words "for the world's world," the, words "for ever," should be explained. "The name," then, "of the ungodly Thou hast effaced for ever," for from henceforth the ungodly shall never be. And if their name be not prolonged unto this world, much less unto the world's world.

8. "The swords of the enemy have failed at the end" (ver. 6). Not enemies in the plural, but this enemy in the singular. Now what enemy's swords have failed but the devil's? Now these are understood to be divers erroneous opinions, whereby as with swords he destroys souls, In overcoming these swords, and in bringing them to failure, that sword is employed, of which it is said in the seventh Psalm, "If ye be not converted, He will brandish His sword. And peradventure this is the end, against which the swords of the enemy fail; since up to it they are of some avail. Now it worketh secretly, but in the last judgment it will be brandished openly. By it the cities are destroyed. For so it follows, "The swords of the enemy have failed at the end: and Thou hast destroyed the cities. Cities indeed wherein the devil rules, where crafty and deceitful counsels hold, as it were, the place of a court, on which supremacy attend as officers and ministers the services of all the members, the eyes for curiosity, the ears for lasciviousness,or for whatsoever else is gladly listened to that bears on evil, the hands for rapine or any other violence or pollution soever, and all the other members after this manner serving the tyrannical supremacy, that is, perverse counsels. Of this city the commonalty, as it were, are all soft affections and disturbing emotions of the mind, stirring up daily seditions in a man.

So then where a king, where a court, where ministers, where commonalty are found, there is a city. Now again would such things be in bad cities, unless they were first in individual men, who are, as it were, the elements and seeds of cities. These cities He destroys, when on the prince being shut out thence, of whom it was said, "The prince of this world" has been "cast out," these kingdoms are wasted by the word of truth, evil counsels are laid to sleep, vile affections tamed, the ministries of the members and senses taken captive, and transferred to the service of righteousness and good works: that as the Apostle says, "Sin should no more reign in" our "mortal body," and so forth. Then is the soul at peace, and the man is disposed to receive rest and blessedness. "Their memorial has perished with uproar: with the uproar, that is, of the ungodly. But it is said, "with uproar," either because when ungodliness is overturned, there is uproar made: for none passeth to the highest place, where there is the deepest silence, but he who with much uproar shall first have warred with his own vices: or "with uproar," is said, that the memory of the ungodly should perish in the perishing even of the very uproar, in which ungodliness riots.

9. "And the Lord abideth for ever" (ver. 7). "Wherefore" then "have the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His anointed:" for "the Lord abideth for ever. He hath prepared His seat in judgment, and He shall judge the world in equity." He prepared His seat when He was judged. For by that patience Man purchased heaven, and God in Man profited believers. And this is the Son's hidden judgment. But seeing He is also to come openly and in the sight of all to judge the quick arid the dead, He hath prepared His seat in the hidden judgment: and He shall also openly "jUdge the world in equity:" that is, He shall distribute gifts proportioned to desert, setting the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. "He shall judge the people with justice"(ver. 8). This is the same as was said above, "He shall judge the world in equity." Not as men judge who see not the heart, by whom very often worse men are acquitted than are condemned: but "in equity" and "with justice" shall the Lord judge, "conscience bearing witness, and thoughts accusing, or else excusing."

10. "And the Lord hath become a refuge to the poor" (ver. 9). Whatsoever be the persecutions of that enemy, who hath been turned behind, what harm shall he do to them whose refuge the Lord hath become? But this will be, if in this world, in which that one has an office of power, they shall choose to be poor, by loving nothing which either here leaves a man while he lives and loves, or is left by him when he dies. For to such a poor man hath the Lord become a refuge, "an Helper in due season, in tribulation." Lo, He maketh poor, for "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." For what "an Helper in due season" is, he explained by adding "in tribulation." For the soul is not turned to God, save when it is turned away from this world: nor is it more seasonably turned away from this world, except toils and pains be mingled with its trifling and hurtful and destructive pleasures.

11. "And let them who know Thy Name, hope in Thee" (ver. 10), when they shall have ceased hoping in wealth, and in the other enticements of this world. For the soul indeed that seeketh where to fix her hope, when she is torn away from this world, the knowledge

of God's Name seasonably receives. For the mere Name of God hath now been published everywhere: but the knowledge of the name is, when He is known whose name it is. For the name is not a name for its own sake, but for that which it signifies. Now it has been said, "The Lord is His Name." Wherefore whoso willingly submits himself to God as His servant, hath known this name. "And let them who know Thy Name hope in Thee" (ver. 10), Again, the Lord saith to Moses, "I am That I am; and Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I Am, hath sent me." "Let them" then "who know Thy Name, hope in Thee;" that they may not hope in those things which flow by in time's quick revolution, having nothing but "will be" and "has been." For what in them is future, when it arrives, straightway becomes the past; it is awaited with eagerness, it is lost with pain. But in the nature of God nothing will be, as if it were not yet; or hath been, as if it were no longer: but there is only that which is, and this is eternity. Let them cease then to hope in and love things temporal, and let them apply themselves to hope eternal, who know His name who said, "I am That I am;" and of whom it was said, "I Am hath sent me." "For Thou hast not forsaken them that seek Thee, O Lord." Whoso seek Him, seek no more things transient and perishable; "For no man can serve two masters."

12. "Sing to the Lord, who dwelleth in Sion" (ver. 11), is said to them, whom the Lord forsakes not asthey seek Him. He dwelleth in Sion, which is interpreted watching, and which beareth the likeness of theChurch that now is; as Jerusalem beareth the likeness of the Church that is to come, that is, the city of Saints already enjoying life angelical; for Jerusalem is by interpretation the vision of peace. Now watching goes before vision, as this Church goes before that one which is promised, the city immortal and eternal. But in time it goes before, not in dignity: because more honourable is that whither we are striving to arrive, than what we practise, that we may attain to arrive; now we practise watching, that we may arrive at vision. But again this same Church which now is, unless the Lord inhabit her, the most earnest watching might run into any sort of error. And to this Church it was said, "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are:" again, "that Christ may dwell in the inner man in your hearts by faith." It is enjoined us then, that we sing to the Lord who dwelleth in Sion, that with one accord we praise the Lord, the Inhabitant of the Church. "Show forth His wonders among the heathen." It has both been done, and will not cease to be done.

13. "For requiring their blood He hath remembered" (ver. 12). As if they, who were sent to preach the Gospel, should make answer to that injunction which has been mentioned, "Show forth His wonders among the heathen," and should say, "O Lord, who hath believed our report?" and again, "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long ;" the Psalmist suitably goes on to say, That Christians not without great reward of eternity will die in persecution, "for requiring their blood He hath remembered." But why did he choose to say, "their blood"? Was it, as if one of imperfect knowledge and less faith should ask, How will they "show them forth," seeing that the infidelity of the heathen will rage against them; and he should be answered, "For requiring their blood He hath remembered," that is, the last judgment will come, in which both the glory of the slain and the punishment of the slayers shall be

made manifest? But let no one suppose "He hath remembered"to be so used, as though forgetfulness can attach to God; but since the judgment will be after a long interval, it is used in accordance with the feeling of weak men, who think God hath forgotten, because He doth not act so speedily as they wish. To such is said what follows also, "He hath not forgotten the cry of the poor:" that is, He hath not, as you suppose, forgotten. As if they should on hearing, "He hath remembered," say, Then He had forgotten; No, "He hath not forgotten," says the Psalmist, "the cry of the poor."

14. But I ask, what is that cry of the poor, which God forgetteth not? Is it that cry, the words whereof are these, "Pity me, O Lord, see my humiliation at the hands of my enemies "? (ver. 13). Why then did he not say, Pity "us" O Lord, see our humiliation at the hands of "our" enemies, as if many poor were crying; but as if one, Pity "me," O Lord? Is it because One intercedeth for the Saints, "who" first "for our sakes became poor, though He was rich;" and it is He who saith, "Who exaltest me from the gates of death (ver. 14), that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Sion"? For man is exalted in Him, not that Man only which He beareth, which is the Head of the Church; but whichsoever one of us also is among the other members, and is exalted from all depraved desires; which are the gates of death, for that through them is the road to death. But the joy in the fruition is at once death itself, when one gains what he hath in abandoned wilfulness coveted: for "coveting is the root of all evil:" and therefore is the gate of death, for "the widow that liveth in pleasures is dead." At which pleasures we arrive through desires as it were through the gates of death. But all highest purposes are the gates of the daughter of Sion, through which we come to the vision of peace in the Holy Church. ...Or haply are the gates of death the bodily senses and eyes, which were opened when the man tasted of the forbidden tree, ... and are the gates of the daughter of Sion the sacraments and beginnings of faith, which are opened to them that knock, that they may arrive at the hidden things of the Son? ..

15. Then follows, "I will exult for Thy salvation: that is, with blessedness shall I be holden by Thy salvation, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God. Therefore says the Church, which is here in affliction and is saved by hope, as long as the hidden judgment of the Son is, in hope she says, "I will exult for Thy salvation: for now she is worn down either by the roar of violence around her, or by the errors of the heathen. "The heathen are fixed in the corruption, which they made" (ver. 15). Consider ye how punishment is reserved for the sinner, out of his own works; and how they that have wished to persecute the Church, have been fixed in that corruption, which they thought to inflict. For they were desiring to kill the body, whilst they themselves were dying in soul. "In that snare which they hid, has their foot been taken. The hidden snare is crafty devising. The foot of the soul is well understood to be its love: which, when depraved, is called coveting or lust; but when upright, love or charity. ...And the Apostle says, "That being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to take in. The foot then of sinners, that is, their love, is taken in the snare, which they hide: for when delight shall have followed on to deceitful dealing, when God shall have delivered them over to the lust of their heart;

that delight at once binds them, that they dare not tear away their love thence and apply it to profitable objects; for when they shall make the attempt, they will be pained in heart, as if desiring to free their foot from a fetter: and giving way trader this pain they refuse to withdrawfrom pernicious delights. ”In the snare” then ”which they have hid,” that is, in deceitful counsel, ”their foot hath been taken,” that is, their love, which through deceit attains to that vain joy whereby pain is purchased.

16. ”The Lord is known executing judgments” (ver. 16). These are God’s judgments. Not from that tranquillity of His blessedness, nor from the secret places of wisdom, wherein blessed souls are received, is the sword, or fire, or wild beast, or any such thing brought forth, whereby sinners maybe tormented: but how are they tormented, and how does the Lord do judgment? ”In the works,” he says, ”of his own hands hath the sinner been caught.” 17. Here is interposed, ”The song of the diapsalma” (ver. 16): as it were the hidden joy, as far as we can imagine, of the separation which is now made, not in place, but in the affections of the heart, between sinners and the righteous, as of the corn from the chaff, as yet on the floor. And then follows, ”Let the sinners be turned into hell” (ver. 17): that is, let them be given into their own hands, when they are spared, and let them be ensnared in deadly delight. ”All the nations that forget God.” Because ”when they did not think good to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.”

18. ”For there shall not be forgetfulness of the poor man to the end” (ver. 18); who now seems to be in forgetfulness, when sinners are thought to flourish in this world’s happiness, and the righteous to be in travail: but ”the patience,” saith He, ”of the poor shall not perish for ever.” Wherefore there is need of patience now to bear with the evil, who are already separated in will, till they be also separated at the last judgment. 19. ”Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail” (ver. 19). The future judgment is prayed for: but before it come, ”Let the heathen,” saith he, ”be judged in Thy sight:” that is, in secret; which is called in God’s sight, with the knowledge of a few holy and righteous ones. ”Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord.” (ver. 20). He seems to me to point out Antichrist: of whom the Apostle says, ”When the man of sin shall be revealed.” ”Let the heathen know that they are men.” That they who will be set free by the Son of God, and belong to the Son of Man, and be sons of men, that is, new men, may serve man, that is, the old man the sinner, ”for that they are men.”

20. And because it is believed that he is to arrive at so great a pitch of empty glory, and he will be permitted to do so great things, both against all men and against the Saints of God, that then some weak ones shall indeed think that God cares not for human affairs, the Psalmist interposing a diapsalma, adds as it were the voice of men groaning and asking why judgment is deferred.

Psalm 10

”Why, O Lord,” saith he, ”hast Thou withdrawn afar off?” (ver. 1). Then he who thus inquired, as if all on a sudden he understood, or as if he asked, though he knew, that he might teach, adds, ”Thou despisest in due seasons, in tribulations:” that is, Thou despisest seasonably, and causest tribulations to inflame men’s minds with longing for Thy coming. For that fountain of life is sweeter to them that have much thirst. Therefore he hints the reason of the delay, saying, ”Whilst the ungodly vaunteth himself, the poor man is inflamed” (ver. 2). Wondrous it is and true with what earnestness of good hope the little ones are inflamed unto an upright living by comparison with sinners. In which mystery it comes to pass, that even heresies are permitted to exist; not that heretics themselves wish this, but because Divine Providence worketh this result from their sins, which both maketh and ordaineth the light; but ordereth only the darkness, that by comparison therewith the light may be more pleasant, as by comparison with heretics the discovery of truth is more sweet. For so, by this comparison, the approved, who are known to God, are made manifest among men.

1. ”They are taken in their thoughts, which they think:” that is, their evil thoughts become chains to them. But how become they chains? ”For the sinner is praised,” saith he, ”in the desires of his soul” (ver. 3). The tongues of flatterers bind souls in sin. For there is pleasure in doing those things, in which not only is no reprover feared, but even an approver heard. ”And he that does unrighteous deeds is blessed.” Hence ”are they taken in their thoughts, which they think.” 2. ”The sinner hath angered the Lord” (ver. 4). Let no one congratulate the man that prospers in his way, to whose sins no avenger is nigh, and an approver is by. This is the greater anger of the Lord. For the sinner hath angered the Lord, that he should suffer these things, that is, should not suffer the scourging of correction. ”The sinner hath angered the Lord: according to the multitude of His anger He will not search it out.” Great is His anger, when He searcheth not out, when He as it were forgetteth and marketh not sin, and by fraud and wickednessman attains to riches and honours: which will especially be the case in that Antichrist, who will seem to man blessed to that degree, that he will even be thought God. But how great this anger of God is, we are taught by what follows.

3. ”God is not in his sight, his ways are polluted in all time” (ver. 5). He that knows what in the soul gives joy and gladness, knows how great an ill it is to be abandoned by the light of

truth: since a great ill do men reckon the blindness of their bodily eyes, whereby this light is withdrawn. How great then the punishment he endures, who through the prosperous issue of his sins is brought to that pass, that God is not in his sight, and that his ways are polluted in all time, that is, his thoughts and counsels are unclean! "Thy judgments are taken away from his face." For the mind conscious of evil, whilst it seems to itself to suffer no punishment, believes that God cloth not judge, and so are God's judgments taken away from its face; while this very thing is great condemnation. "And he shall have dominion over all his enemies." For so is it delivered, that he will overcome all kings, and alone obtain the kingdom; since too according to the Apostle, who preaches concerning him, "He shall sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above all that is worshipped and that is called God."

4. And seeing that being delivered over to the lust of his own heart, and predestinated to extreme condemnation, he is to come, by wicked arts, to that vain and empty height and rule; therefore it follows, "For he hath said in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil" (ver. 6): that is, my fame and my name will not pass from this generation to the generation of posterity, unless by evil arts I acquire so lofty a principality, that posterity cannot be silent concerning it. For a mind abandoned and void of good arts, and estranged from the light of righteousness, by bad arts devises a passage for itself to a fame so lasting, as is celebrated even in posterity. And they that cannot be known for good, desire that men should speak of them even for ill, provided that their name spread far and wide. And this I think is here meant, "I shall not move from generation to generation without evil." There is too another interpretation, if a mind vain and full of error supposes that it cannot come from the mortal generation to the generation of eternity, but by bad arts: which indeed was also reported of Simon, when he thought that he would gain heaven by wicked arts, and pass from the human generation to the generation divine by magic. Where then is the wonder, if that man of sin too, who is to fill up all the wickedness and ungodliness, which all false prophets have begun, and to do such "great signs; that, if it were possible, he should deceive the very elect," shall say in his heart, "I shall not move from generation to generation without evil"?

5. "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness and deceit" (ver. 7). For it is a great curse to seek heaven by such abominable arts, and to get together such earnings for acquiring the eternal seat. But of this cursing his mouth is full. For this desire shall not take effect, but within his mouth only will avail to destroy him, who dared promise himself such things with bitterness and deceit, that is, with anger and insidiousness, whereby he is to bring over the multitude to his side. "Under his tongue is toil and grief." Nothing is more toilsome than unrighteousness and ungodliness: upon which toil follows grief; for that the toil is not only without fruit, but even unto destruction. Which toil and grief refer to that which he hath said in his heart, "I shall not be moved from generation to generation without evil." And therefore, "under his tongue," not on his tongue, because he will devise these things in silence, and to men will speak other things, that he may appear good and just, and a son of God.

6. ”He lieth in ambush with the rich” (ver. 8). What rich, but those whom he will load with this world’s gifts? And he is therefore said tolie in ambush with them, because he will display their false happiness to deceive men; who,when with a perverted will they desire to be such as they, and seek not the good things eternal, will fall into his snares. ”That in the dark he may kill the innocent.” ”In the dark,” I suppose, is said, where it is not easily understood what should be sought, or what avoided. Now to kill the innocent, is of an innocent to make one guilty.

7. ”His eyes look against the poor,” for he is chiefly to persecute the righteous, of whom it is said, ”Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (ver. 9). ”He lieth in wait in a secret place, as a lion in his den.” By a lion in a den, he means one in whom both violence and deceit will work. For the first persecution of the Church was violent, when by proscriptions, by torments, by murders, the Christians were compelled to sacrifice: another persecution is crafty, which is now conducted by heretics of any kind and false brethren: there remains a third, which is to come by Antichrist, than which there is nothing more perilous; for it will be at once violent and crafty. Violence he will exert in empire, craft in miracles. To the violence, the word ”lion” refers; to craft, the words ”in his den.” And these are again repeated with a change of order. ”He lieth in wait,” he says, ”that he may catch the poor;” this hath reference to craft: but what follows, ”To catch the poor whilst he draweth him,” is put to the score of violence. For ”draweth” means, he bringeth him to himself by violence, by whatever tortures he can.

8. Again, the two which follow are the same ”In his snare he will humble him,” is craft (ver. 10). ”He shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor,” is violence. For a ”snare” naturally points to ”lying in wait:” but domination most openly conveys the idea of terror. And well does he say, ”He will humble him in his snare.” For when he shall begin to do those signs, the more wonderful they shall appear to men, the more those Saints that shall be then will be despised, and, as it were, set at nought: he, whom they shall resist by righteousness and innocence, shall seem to overcome by the marvels that he does. But ”he shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor;” that is, whilst he shall inflict whatsoever punishments he will upon the servants of God that resist him.

9. But how shall he decline, and fall? ”For he hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He turneth away His face, that He see not unto the end” (ver. 11). This is declining, and the most wretched fall, while the mind of a man prospers as it were in its iniquities, and thinks that it is spared; when it is being blinded, and kept for an extreme and timely vengeance: of which the Psalmist now speaks: ”Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted” (ver. 12): that is, let Thy power be made manifest. Now he had said above, ”Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail, let the heathen be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret, where God alone seeth. This comes to pass when the ungodly have arrived at what seems great happiness to men: over whom is placed a lawgiver, such as they had deserved to have, of whom it is said, ”Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord, let the heathen know that they are men. But now after that hidden punishment and vengeance it is said, ”Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted;

not of course in secret, but now in glory most manifest. ”That Thou forget not the poor unto the end; that is, as the ungodly think, who say, ”God hath forgotten, He turneth away His face, that He should not see unto the end.

Now they deny that God seeth unto the end, who say that He careth not for things human and earthly, for the earth is as it were the end of things; in that it is the last element, in which men labour in most orderly sort, but they cannot see the order of their labours, which specially belongs to the hidden things of the Son. The Church then labouring in such times, like a ship in great waves and tempests, awaketh the Lord as if He were sleeping, that He should command the winds, and calm should be restored. He says therefore, ”Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted, that Thou forget not the poor unto the end.”

10. Accordingly understanding now the manifest judgment, and in exultation at it, they say, ”Wherefore hath the ungodly angered God?” (ver. 13); that is, what hath it profiled him to do so great evil? ”For he said in his heart, He will not require it.” Then follows, ”For Thou seest toil and considerest anger, to deliver them into Thine hands” (ver. 14). This sentence looks for distinct explanation, wherein if there shall be error it becomes obscure. For thus has the ungodly said in his heart, God will not require it, as though God regarded toil and anger, to deliver them into His hands; that is, as though He feared toil and anger, and for this reason would spare them, lest their punishment be too burdensome to Him, or lest He should be disturbed by the storm of anger: as men generally act, excusing themselves of vengeance, to avoid toil or anger.

11. ”The poor hath been left unto Thee.” For therefore is he poor, that is, hath despised all the temporal goods of this world, that Thou only mayest be his hope. ”Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan,” that is, to him to whom his father this world, by whom he was born after the flesh, dies, and who can already say, ”The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” For of such orphans God becomes the Father. The Lord teaches us in truth that His disciplesdo become orphans, to whom He saith, ”Call no man father on earth.” Of which He first Himself gave an example in saying, ”Who is my mother, and who my brethren?” Whence some most mischievous heretics would assert that He had no mother; and they do not see that it follows from this, if they pay attention to these words, that neither had His disciples fathers. For as He said, ”Who is my mother?” so He taught them, when He said, ”Call no man your father on earth.”

12. ”Break the arm of the sinner and of the malicious” (ver. 15); of him, namely, of whom it was said above, ”He shall have dominion over all his enemies.” He called his power then, his arm; to which Christ’s power is opposed, of which it is said, ”Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted. His fault shall be required, and he shall not be found because of it;” that is he shall be judged for his sins, and himself shall perish because of his sin. After this, what wonder if there follow, ”The Lord shall reign for ever and world without end; ye heathen shall perish out of His earth”? (ver. 16). He uses heathen for sinners and ungodly. 13. ”The Lord hath heard the longing of the poor”(ver. 17): that longing wherewith they were burning, when in the straits and tribulations of this world they desired the day of the Lord.

"Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart." This is the preparation of the heart, of which it is sung in another Psalm, "My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared:" of which the Apostle says, "But if we hope for what we see not, we do with patience wait for it." Now, by the ear of God, we ought, according to a general rule of interpretation, to understand not a bodily member, but the power whereby He heareth; and so (not to repeat this often) by whatever members of His are mentioned, which in us are visible and bodily, must be understood powers of operation. For we must not suppose it anything bodily, in that the Lord God hears not the sound of the voice, but the preparation of the heart.

14. "To judge for the orphan and the humble" (ver. 18): that is, not for him who is conformed to this world, nor for the proud. For it is one thing to judge the orphan, another to judge for the orphan. He judges the orphan even, who condemns him; but he judges for the orphan, who delivers sentence for him. "That man add not further to magnify himself uponearth." For they are men, of whom it wassaid, "Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord: let the heathen know that they are men." But he too, who in this same passage is understood to be placed over them, will be man, of whom it is now said, "That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth:" namely, when the Son of Man shall come to judge for the orphan, who hath put off from himself the old man, and thus, as it were, buried his father.

15. After the hidden things then of the Son, of which, in this Psalm, many things have been said, will come the manifest things of the Son, of which a little has been now said at the end of the same Psalm. But the title is given from the former, which here occupy the larger portion. Indeed, the very day of the Lord's advent may be rightly numbered among the hidden things of the Son, although the very presence of the Lord itself will be manifest. For of that day it is said, that no man knoweth it, neither angels, nor powers, nor the Son of man. What then so hidden, as that which is said to be hidden even to the Judge Himself, not as regards knowledge, but disclosure? But concerning the hidden things of the Son, even if any one would not wish to understand the Son of God, but of David himself, to whose name the whole Psalter is attributed, for the Psalms we know are called the Psalms of David, let him give ear to those words in which it is said to the Lord, "Have mercy on us, O Son of David: and so even in this manner let him understand the same Lord Christ, concerning whose hidden things is the inscription of this Psalm. For so likewise is it said by the Angel: "God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

Nor to this understanding of it is the sentence opposed in which the same Lord asks of the Jews, "If Christ be the Son of David, how then doth he in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I put Thine enemies under Thy feet. For it was said to the unskilled, who although they looked for Christ's coming, yet expected Him as man, not as the Power and Wisdom of God. He teacheth then, in that place, the most true and pure faith, that He is both the Lord of king David, in that He is the Word in the beginning, God with God, by which all things were made; and Son, in that He was made to him of the seed of David according to the flesh. For He doth not say, Christ is not David's Son, but if ye already hold that He is his Son, learn how He is his Lord: and do

not hold in respect of Christ that He is the Son of Man, for so is He David's Son; and leave out that He is the Son of God, for so is He David's Lord.

Psalm 11

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. This title does not require a fresh consideration: for the meaning of, "to the end," has already been sufficiently handled. Let us then look to the text itself of the Psalm, which to me appears to be sung against the heretics, who, by rehearsing and exaggerating the sins of many in the Church, as if either all or the majority among themselves were righteous, strive to turn and snatch us away from the breasts of the one True Mother Church: affirming that Christ is with them, and warning us as if with piety and earnestness, that by passing over to them we may go over to Christ, whom they falsely declare they have. Now it is known that in prophecy Christ, among the many names in which notice of Him is conveyed in allegory, is also called a mountain. We must accordingly answer these people, and say, "I trust in the Lord: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?" (ver. 1). I keep to one mountain wherein I trust, how say ye that I should pass over to you, as if there were many Christs? Or if through pride you say that you are mountains, I had indeed need to be a sparrow winged with the powers and commandments of God: but these very things hinder my flying to these mountains, and placing my trust in proud men. I have a house where I may rest, in that I trust in the Lord. For even "the sparrow hath found her a house," and, "The Lord hath become a refuge to the poor." Let us say then with all confidence, lest while we seek Christ among heretics we lose Him, "In the Lord I trust: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?"

2. "For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart" (ver. 2). These be the terrors of those who threaten us as touching sinners, that we may pass over to them as the righteous. "Lo," they say, "the sinners have bent the bow:" the Scriptures, I suppose, by carnal interpretation of which they emit envenomed sentencesfrom them. "They have prepared their arrows in the quiver:" the same words, that is, which they will shoot out on the authority of Scripture, they have prepared in the secret place of the heart. "That they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart:" that when they see, from the Church's light being obscured by the multitude of the unlearned and the carnal, that they cannot be convicted, they may corrupt good manners by evil communications. But against all these terrors we must say, "In the Lord I trust."

3. Now I remember that I promised to consider in this Psalm with what suitableness the moon signifies the Church. There are two probable opinions concerning the moon: but of these which is the true, I suppose it either impossible or very difficult for a man to decide. For when we ask whence the moon has her light, some say that it is her own, but that of her globe half is bright, and half dark: and when she revolves in her own orbit, that part wherein she is bright gradually turns towards the earth, so as that it may be seen by us; and that therefore at first her appearance is as if she were horned. ...According to this opinion the moon in allegory signifies the Church, because in its spiritual part the Church is bright, but in its carnal part is dark: and sometimes the spiritual part is seen by good works, but sometimes it lies hid in the conscience, and is known to God alone, since in the body alone is it seen by men. ...But according to the other opinion also the moon is understood to be the Church, because she has no light of her own, but is lighted by the only-begotten Son of God, who in many places of holy Scripture is allegoricallycalled the Sun.

Whom certain heretics being ignorant of, and not able to discern Him, endeavour to turn away the minds of the simple to this corporeal and visible sun, which is the common light of the flesh of men and flies, and some they do pervert, who as long as they cannot behold with the mind the inner light of truth, will not be content with the simple Catholic faith; which is the only safety to babes, and by which milk alone they can arrive in assured strength at the firm support of more solid food. Whichever then of these two opinions be the true, the moon in allegory is fitly understood as the Church. Or if in such difficulties as these, troublesome rather than edifying, there be either no satisfaction or no leisure to exercise the mind, or if the mind itself be not capable of it, it is sufficient to regard the moon with ordinary eyes, and not to seek out obscure causes, but with all men to perceive her increasings and fulnesses and wanings; and if she wanes to the end that she may be renewed, even to this rude multitude she sets forth the image of the Church, in which the resurrection of the dead is believed.

4. Next we must enquire, what in this Psalm is meant by "the obscure moon," in which sinners have prepared to shoot at the upright in heart? For not in one way only may the moon be said to be obscure: for when her monthly course is finished, and when her brightness is interrupted by a cloud, and when she is eclipsed at the full, the moon may be called obscure. It may then be understood first of the persecutors of the Martyrs, for that they wished in the obscure moon to shoot at the upright in heart; whether it be yet in the time of the Church's youth, because she had not yet shone forth in greatness on the earth, and conquered the darkness of heathen superstitions; or by the tongues of blasphemers and such as defame the Christian name, when the earth was as it were beclouded, the moon, that is, the Church, could not be clearly seen; or when by the slaughter of the Martyrs themselves and so great effusion of blood, as by that eclipse and obscuration, wherein the moon seems to exhibit a bloody face, the weak were deterred from the Christian name; in which terror sinners shot out words crafty and sacrilegious to pervert even the upright in heart.

And secondly, it can be understood of these sinners, whom the Church contains, because at that time, taking the opportunity of this moon's obscurity, they committed many crimes, which are now tauntingly objected to us by the heretics, whereas their founders are said to have been guilty of them. But howsoever that be which was done in the obscure moon, now that the Catholic name is spread and celebrated throughout the whole world, what concern of mine is it to be disturbed by things unknown? For "in the Lord I trust; nor do I listen to them that say to my soul, "Remove into the mountains as a sparrow. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. Or if the moon seem even now obscure to them, because they would make it uncertain which is the Catholic Church, and they strive to convict her by the sins of those many carnal men whom she contains; what concern is this to him, who says in truth, "In the Lord I trust"? By which word every one shows that he is himself wheat, and endures the chaff with patience unto the time of winnowing.

5. "In the Lord," therefore, "I trust." Let them fear who trust in man, and cannot deny that they are of man's party, by whose grey hairs they swear; and when in conversation it is demanded of them, of what communion they are, unless they say that they are of his party, they cannot be recognised. ...Or perhaps you will say that it is written, "Ye shall know them by their works"? I see indeed marvellous works the daily violences of the Circumcelliones, with the bishops and presbyters for their leaders, flying about in every direction, and calling their terrible clubs "Israels;" which men now living daily see and feel. But for the times of Macarius, respecting which they raise an invidious cry, most men have not seen them, and no one sees them now: and any Catholic who saw them could say, if he wished to be a servant of God, "In the Lord I trust." ...

6. Let the Catholic soul then say, "In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For, lo, the sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: and from them let her turn her speech to the Lord and say, "For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected" (ver. 3). And this let her say not against these only, but against all heretics. For they have all, as far as in them lies, destroyed the praise which God hath perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, when they disturb the little ones with vain and I scrupulous questions, and suffer them not to be nourished with the milk of faith. As if then itwere said to this soul, why do they say to you, "Remove into the mountains as a sparrow; why do they frighten you with sinners, who "have bent the bow, to shoot in the obscure moon at the upright in heart"? She answers, Therefore it is they frighten me, "because they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. Where but in their conventicles, where they nourish not with milk, but kill with poison the babes and ignorant of the interior light. "Butwhat hath the Just done? If Macarius, ifCaecilianus, offend you, what hath Christ done to you, who said, "My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you; which ye with your abominable dissensions have violated?

What hath Christ done to you? who with such exceeding patience endured His betrayer, as to give to him, as to the other Apostles, the first Eucharist consecrated with His own hands, and blessed with His own mouth. What hath Christ done to you? who sent this same betrayer, whom He called a devil, who before betraying the Lord could not show good faith even to the Lord's purse, with the other disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven; that He might show that the gifts of God come to those that with faith receive them, though he, through whom they receive them, be such as Judas was.

7. "The Lord is in His holy temple" (ver. 4), yea in such wise as the Apostle saith, "For the temple of God is holy, which" temple "ye are." "Now if any man shall violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy." He violateth the temple of God, who violateth unity: for he "holdeth not the head, from which the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the working after the measure of every part maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love." The Lord is in this His holy temple; which consisteth of His many members, fulfilling each his own separate duties, by love built up into one building. Which temple he violateth, who for the sake of his own pre-eminence separateth himself from the Catholic society. "The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven." If you take heaven to be the just man, as you take the earth to be the sinner, to whom it was said, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go;" the words, "The Lord is in His holy temple" you will understand to be repeated, whilst it is said, "The Lord, His seat is in heaven."

8. "His eyes look upon the poor." His to Whom the poor man hath been left, and Who hath been made a refuge to the poor. And therefore all the seditions and tumults within these nets, until they be drawn to shore, concerning which heretics upbraid us to their own ruin and our correction, are caused by those men, who will not be Christ's poor. But do they turn away God's eyes from such as would be so? "For His eyes look upon the poor." Is it to be feared lest, in the crowd of the rich, He may not be able to see the few poor, whom He brings up in safe keeping in the bosom of the Catholic Church? "His eyelids question the sons of men." Here by that rule I would wish to take "the sons of men" of those that from old men have been regenerated by faith. For these, by certain obscure passages of Scripture, as it were the closed eyes of God, are exercised that they may seek: and again, by certain clear passages, as it were the open eyes of God, are enlightened that they may rejoice. And this frequent closing and opening in the holy Books are as it were the eyelids of God; which question, that is, which try the "sons of men;" who are neither wearied with the obscurity of the matter, but exercised; nor puffed up by knowledge, but confirmed.

9. "The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly" (ver. 5). Why then do we fear lest the ungodly should be any hurt to us, if so be they do with insincere heart share the sacraments with us, seeing that He "questioneth the righteous and the ungodly." "But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul:" that is, not him who believeth God, and putteth not his hope in man, but only his own soul doth the lover of iniquity hurt.

10. "He shall rain snares upon the sinners" (ver. 6). If by clouds are understood prophets generally, whether good or bad, who are also called false prophets: false prophets are so ordered by the Lord God, that by them He may rain snares upon sinners. For no one, but the sinner, falls into a following of them, whether by way of preparation for the last punishment, if he shall choose to persevere in sin; or to dissuade from pride, if in time he shall come to seek God with a more sincere intent. But if by clouds are understood good and true prophets only; by these too it is clear that God raineth snares upon sinners, although by them He watereth also the godly unto fruitfulness. "To some," saith the Apostle, "we are the savour of life unto life; to some the savour of death unto death. For not prophets only, but all who with the word of God water souls, may be called clouds. Who when they are understood amiss, God raineth snares upon sinners; but when they are understood aright, He maketh the hearts of the godly and believing fruitful. As, for instance, the passage, "and they two shall be in one flesh," if one interpret it with an eye to lust, He raineth a snare upon the sinner. But if you understand it, as he who says, "But I speak concerning Christ and the Church," He raineth a shower on the fertile soil. Now both are effected by the same cloud, that is, holy Scripture.

Again the Lord says, "Not that which goeth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out. The sinner hears this, and makes ready his palate for gluttony: the righteous hears it, and is guarded against the superstitious distinction in meats. Here then also out of the same cloud of Scripture, according to the several desert of each, upon the sinner the rain of snares, upon the righteous the rain of fruitfulness, is poured.

11. "Fire and brimstone and the blast of the tempest is the portion of their cup." This is their punishment and end, by whom the name of God is blaspbemed; that first they should be wasted by the fire of their own lusts, then by the ill savour of their evil deeds cast off from the company of the blessed, at last carried away and overwhelmed suffer penalties unspeakable. For this is the portion of their cup: as of the righteous, "Thy cup inebriating how excellent is it! for they shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house." Now I suppose a cup is mentioned for this reason, that we should not suppose that anything is done by God's providence, even in the very punishments of sinners, beyond moderation and measure. And therefore as if he were giving a reason why this should be, he added, "For the Lord is righteous, and hath loved righteousnesses" (ver. 7). The plural not without meaning, but only because he speaks of men, is as that righteousnesses be understood to be used for righteous men. Forin many righteous men there seem, so to say, to be righteousnesses, whereas there is one only righteousness of God whereof they all participate. Like as when one face looks upon many mirrors, what in it is one only, is by those many mirrors reflected manifoldly. Wherefore he recurs to the singular, saying, "His face hath seen equity." Perhaps, "His face hath seen equity," is as if it were said, Equity hath been seen in His face, that is, in knowledge of Him. For God's face is the power by which He is made known to them that are worthy. Or at least, "His face hath seen equity," because He doth not allow Himself to be known by the evil, but by the good; and this is equity.

12. But if any one would understand the moon of the synagogue, let him refer the Psalm to the Lord's passion, and of the Jews say, "For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected;" and of the Lord Himself, "But what hath the Just done?" whom they accused as the destroyer of the Law: whose precepts, by their corrupt living, and by despising them, and by setting up their own, they had destroyed, so that the Lord Himself may speak as Man, as He is wont, saying, "In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?" by reason, that is, of the fear of those who desire to apprehend and crucify Him. Since the interpretation is not unreasonable of sinners wishing to "shoot at the upright in heart," that is, those who believed in Christ, "in the obscure moon," that is, the Synagogue filled with sinners. To this too the words, "The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is inheaven," are suitable; that is, the Word in Man, or the very Son of Man who is in heaven. "His eyes look upon the poor;" either on to Him whom He assumed as God, or for whomHe suffered as Man. "His eyelids question the sons of men." The closing and opening of the d eyes, which is probably meant by the word eyelids, we may take to be His death and resurrection, whereby He tried the sons of men His disciples, terrified at His passion, and gladdened by the resurrection. "The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly," even now from out of Heaven governing the Church. "But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul." Why it is so, what follows teaches us. For "He shall rain snares upon the sinners:" which is to be taken according to the exposition above given, and so on with all the rest to the end of the Psalm.

Psalm 12

TO The End, For The Eighth, A Psalm OF David. 1. It has been said on the sixth Psalm, that "the eighth" may be taken as the day of judgment. "For the eighth" may also be taken "for the eternal age;" for that after the time present, which is a cycle of seven days, it shall be givento the Saints. 2. "Save me, O Lord, for the holy hath failed;" that is, is not found: as we speak when we say, Corn fails, or, Money fails. "For the truths have been minished from among the sons of men" (ver. 1). The truth is one, whereby holy souls are enlightened: but forasmuch as there are many souls, there may be said in them to be many truths: as in mirrors there are seen many reflections from one face. 3. "He hath talked vanity each man to his neighbour" (ver. 2). By neighbour we must understand every man: for that there is no one with whom we should work evil; "and the love of our neighbour worketh no evil." "Deceitful lips, with a heart and a heart they have spoken evil things." The repetition, "with a heart and a heart," signifies a double heart.

4. "May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips" (ver. 3). He says "all," that no one may suppose himself excepted: as the Apostle says, "Upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and of the Greek." "The tongue speaking great things:" the proud tongue. 5. "Who have said, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" (ver. 4). Proud hypocrites are meant, putting confidence in their speech to deceive men, and not submitting themselves to God. 6. "Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the sighing of the poor, now I will arise, saith the Lord" (ver. 5). For so the Lord Himself in the Gospel pitied His people, because they had no ruler, when they could well obey. Whence too it is said in the Gospel, "The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few." But this must be taken as spoken in the person of God the Father, who, because of the needy and the poor, that is, who in need and poverty were lacking spiritual good things, vouchsafed to send His own Son. From thence begins His sermon on the mount to Matthew, where He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "I will place in salvation." He does not say what He would place: but, "in salvation," must be understood as, in Christ; according to that, "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." And hence He is understood to have placed in Him what appertains to the taking away the wretchedness of the needy, and the comforting the sighing of the poor. "I will deal confidently in Him:" according to that in the Gospel, "For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

7. "The words of the Lord" are "pure words" (ver. 6). This is in the person of the Prophet himself, "The words of the Lord" are "pure words." He says "pure," without the alloy of pretence. For many preach the truth impurely; for they sell it for the bribe of the advantages of this life. Of such the Apostle says, that they declared Christ not purely. "Silver tried by the fire for the earth." These words of the Lord by means of tribulations approved to sinners. "Purified seven times:" by the fear of God, by godliness, by knowledge, by might, by counsel, by understanding, by wisdom. For seven steps also of beatitude there are, which the Lord goes over, according to Matthew, in the same sermon which He spake on the Mount, "Blessed" are "the poor in spirit, blessed the meek, blessed they that mourn, blessed they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed the merciful, blessed the pure in heart, blessed the peacemakers." Of which seven sentences, it may be observed how all that long sermon was spoken. For the eighth where it is said, "Blessed" are "they which suffer persecution for righteousness' sake," denotes the fire itself, whereby the silver is proved seven times. And at the termination of this sermon it is said, "For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Which refers to that which is said in this Psalm, "I deal confidently in Him."

8. "Thou, O Lord, shalt preserve us, and keep us from this generation to eternity" (ver. 7): here as needy and poor, there as wealthy and rich. 9. "The ungodly walk in a circle round about" (ver. 8): that is, in the desire of things temporal, which revolves as a wheel in a repeated circle of seven days; and therefore they do not arrive at the eighth, that is, at eternity, for which this Psalm is entitled. So too it is said by Solomon, "For the wise king is the winnower of the ungodly, and he bringeth on them the wheel of the wicked.- After Thine height Thou hast multiplied the sons of men." For there is in temporal things too a multiplication, which turns away from the unity of God. Hence "the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." But the righteous are multiplied "after the height of God," when "they shall go from strength to strength."

Psalm 13

Unto The End, A Psalm OF David. 1. ”For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth.” ”How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me unto the end?” (ver. 1) that is, put me off as to spiritually understanding Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, and the true end of all the aim of the soul. ”How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me?” As God doth not forget, so neither doth He turn His face away: but Scripture speaks after our manner. Now God is said to turn away His face, when He doth not give to the soul, which as yet hath not the pure eye of the mind, the knowledge of Himself. 2. ”How long shall I place counsel in my soul?” (ver. 2). There is no need of counsel but in adversity. Therefore ”How long shall I place counsel in my soul?” is as if it were said, How long shall I be in adversity? Or at least it is an answer, so that the meaning is this, So long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me to the end, and so long turn away Thy face from me, until I shall place counsel in mine own soul: so that except a man place counsel in his own soul to work mercy perfectly, God will not direct him to the end, nor give him that full knowledge of Himself, which is ”face to face.” ”Sorrow in my heart through the day?” How long shall I have, is understood. And ”through the day” signifies continuance, so that day is taken for time: from which as each one longs to be free, he has sorrow in his heart, making entreaty to rise to things eternal, and not endure man’s day.

3. ”How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?” either the devil, or carnal habit. 4. ”Look on me, and hear me, O Lord my God” (ver. 3). ”Look on me,” refers to what was said, ”How long” dost ”Thou turn away Thy face from me.” ”Hear,” refers to what was said,” How long wilt Thou forget me to the end? Lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death.” The eyes of the heart must be understood, that they be not closed by the pleasurable eclipse of sin. 5. ”Lest at any time mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him” (ver. 4). The devil’s mockery is to be feared. ”They that trouble me will exult, if I be moved;” the devil and his angels; who exulted not over that righteous man, Job, when they troubled him; because he was not moved, that is, did not draw back from the stedfastness of his faith.

6. ”But I have hoped in Thy mercy” (ver. 5). Because this very thing, that a man be not moved, and that he abide fixed in the Lord, he should not attribute to self: lest when he glories that he hath not been moved, he be moved by this very pride. ”My heart shall exult in Thy salvation;” in Christ, in the Wisdom of God. ”I will sing to the Lord who hath given

me good things;" spiritual good things, not belonging to man's day. "And I will chant to the name of the Lord most high" (ver. 6); that is, I give thanks with joy, and in most due order employ my body, which is the song of the spiritual soul. But if any distinction is to be marked here, "I will sing" with the heart, "I will chant" with my works; "to the Lord," that which He alone seeth, but "to the name of the Lord," that which is known among men, which is serviceable not for Him, but for us.

Psalm 14

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. What "to the end" means, must not be too often repeated. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" as the Apostle saith. We believe on Him, when we begin to enter on the good road: we shall see Him, when we shall get to the end. And therefore is He the end. 2. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (ver. 1). For not even have certain sacrilegious and abominable philosophers, who entertain perverse and false notions of God, dared to say, "There is no God." Therefore it is, hath said "in his heart;" for that no one dares to say it, even if he has dared to think it. "They are corrupt, and become abominable in their affections:" that is, whilst they love this world and love not God; these are the affections which corrupt the soul, and so blind it, that the fool can even say, "in his heart, There is no God. For as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." "There is none that doeth goodness, no not up to one." "Up to one," can be understood either with that one, so that no man be understood: or besides one, that the Lord Christ may be excepted. As we say, This field is up to the sea; we do not of course reckon the sea together with the field. And this is the better interpretation, so that none be understood to have done goodness up to Christ; for that no man can do goodness, except He shall have shown it. And that is true; for until a man know the one God, he cannot do goodness.

3. "The Lord from heaven looked out upon the sons of men, to see if there be one understanding, or seeking after God" (ver. 2). It may be interpreted, upon the Jews; as he may have given them the more honourable name of the sons of men, by reason of their worship of the One God, in comparison with the Gentiles; of whom I suppose it was said above, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," etc. Now the Lord looks out, that He may see, by His holy souls: which is the meaning of, "from heaven." For by Himself nothing is hid from Him.

4. "All have gone out of the way, they have together become useless:" that is, the Jews have become as the Gentiles, who were spoken of above. "There is none that doeth good, no not up to one" (ver. 3), must be interpreted as above. "Their throat is an open sepulchre." Either the voracity of the ever open palate is signified: or allegorically those who slay, and as it were devour those they have slain, into whom they instil the disorder of their own conversation. Like to which with the contrary meaning is that which was said to Peter, "Kill and eat; " that

he should convert the Gentiles to his own faith and good conversation. "With their tongues they have dealt craftily." Flattery is the companion of the greedy and of all bad men. "The poison of asps is under their lips." By "poison," he means deceit; and "of asps," because they will not hear the precepts of the law, as asps "will not hear the voice of the charmer;" which is said more clearly in another Psalm. "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:" this is, "the poison of asps." "Their feet are Swift to shed blood." He here shows forth the habit of ill doing. "Destruction and unhappiness" are "in their ways." For all the ways of evil men are full of toil and misery. Hence the Lord cries out, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. For My yoke is easy and My burden light." "And the way of peace have they not known:" that way, namely, which the Lord, as I said, mentions, in the easy yoke and light burden. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." These do not say, "There is no God;" but yet they do not fear God.

5. "Shall not all, who work iniquity, know?" (ver. 4). He threatens the judgment. "Who devour My people as the food of bread:" that is, daily. For the food of bread is daily food. Now they devour the people, who serve their own ends out of them, not referring their ministry to the glory of God, and the salvation of those over whom they are. 6. "They have not called upon the Lord." For he doth not really call upon Him, who longs for such things as are displeasing to Him. "There they trembled for fear, where no fear was" (ver. 5): that is, for the loss of things temporal. For they said, "If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation." They feared to lose an earthly kingdom, where no fear was; and they lost the kingdom of heaven, which they ought to have feared. And this must be understood of all temporal goods, the loss of which when men fear, they come not to things eternal.

7. "For God is in the just generation." It refers to what went before, so that the sense is, "shall not all they that work iniquity know that the Lord is in the just generation;" that is, He is not in them who love the world. For it is unjust to leave the Maker of the worlds, and "serve the creature more than the Creator." Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, for the Lord is his hope" (ver. 6): that is, ye have despised the humble coming of the Son of God, because ye saw not in Him the pomp of the world: that they, whom he was calling, should put their hope in God alone, not in the things that pass away. 8. "Who will give salvation to Israel out of Sion?" (ver. 7). Who but He whose humiliation ye have despised? is understood. For He will come in glory to the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the kingdom of the just: that, forasmuch as in that humble coming "blindness hath happened in part unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in," in that other should happen what follows, "and so all Israel should be saved." For the Apostle too takes that testimony of Isaiah, where it is said, "There shall come out of Sion He who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" for the Jews, as it is here, "Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion?" "When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." It is a repetition, as is usual: for I suppose, "Israel shall be glad," is the same as, "Jacob shall rejoice."

Psalm 15

A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. Touching this title there is no question. ”O Lord who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle?” (ver. 1). Although tabernacle be sometimes used even for an everlasting habitation: yet when tabernacle is taken in its proper meaning, it is a thing of war. Hence soldiers are called tent-fellows, as having their tents together. This sense is assisted by the words, ”Who shall sojourn?” For we war with the devil for a time, and then we need a tabernacle wherein we may refresh ourselves. Which specially points out the faith of the temporal Dispensation, which was wrought for us in time through the Incarnation of the Lord. ”And who shall rest in Thy holy mountain?” Here perhaps he signifies at once the eternal habitation itself, that we should understand by ”mountain” the supereminence of the love of Christ in life eternal. 2. ”He who walketh without stain, and worketh righteousness” (ver. 2). Here he has laid down the proposition; in what follows he sets it forth in detail.

3. ”Who speaketh the truth in his heart.” For some have truth on their lips, and not in their heart. As if one should deceitfully point out a road, knowing that there were robbers there, and should say, If you go this way, you will be safe from robbers; and it should turn out that in fact there were no robbers found there: he has spoken the truth, but not in his heart. For he supposed it to be otherwise, and spoke the truth in ignorance. Therefore it is not enough to speak the truth, unless it be so also in heart. ”Who hath practised no deceit in his tongue” (ver. 3). Deceit is practised with the tongue, when one thing is professed with the mouth, another concealed in the breast. ”Nor done evil to his neighhour.” It is well known that by ”neighbour,” every man should be understood. ”And hath not entertained slander against his neighbour,” that is, hath not readily or rashly given credence to an accuser.

4. ”The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight” (ver. 4). This is perfection, that the malicious one have no force against a man; and that this be ”in his sight;” that is, that he know most surely that the malicious is not, save when the mind turns itself away from the eternal and immutable form of her own Creator to the form of the creature, which was made out of nothing. ”But those that fear the Lord, He glorifieth:” the Lord Himself, that is. Now ”the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” As then the things above belong to the perfect, so what he is now going to say belongs to beginners.

5. ”Who sweareth unto his neighbour, and deceiveth him not.” ”Who hath not given his money upon usury, and hath not taken rewards against the innocent” (ver. 5). These are no

great things: but he who is not able to do even this, much less able is he to speak the truth in his heart, and to practise no deceit in his tongue, but as the truth is in the heart, so to profess and have it in his mouth, ”yea, yea; nay, nay;” and to do no evil to his neighbour, that is, to any man; and to entertain no slander against his neighbour: all which are the virtues of the perfect, in whose sight the malicious one hath been brought to nought. Yet he concludes even these lesser things thus, ”Whoso doeth these things shall not be moved for ever:” that is, he shall attain unto those greater things, wherein is great and unshaken stability. For even the very tenses are, perhaps not without cause, so varied, as that in the conclusion above the past tense should be used, but in this the future. For there it was said, ”The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight:”but here, ”shall not be moved for ever.”

Psalm 16

The Inscription OF The Title, OF David Himself. 1. Our King in this Psalm speaks in the character of the human nature He assumed, of whom the royal title at the time of His passion was eminently set forth. 2. Now He saith as follows; "Preserve me, O Lord, for in Thee have I hoped" (ver. 1): "I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou requirest not my goods" (ver. 2): for with my goods Thou dost not look to be made blessed. 3. "To the saints who are on His earth" (ver. 3): to the saints who have placed their hope in the land of the living, the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose spiritual conversation is, by the anchor of hope, fixed in that country, which is rightly called God's earth; although as yet in this earth too they be conversant in the flesh. "He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in them." To those saints then He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in their advancement, whereby they have perceived, how both the humanity of My divinity hath profited them that I might die, and the divinity of the humanity that I might rise again.

4. "Their infirmities have been multiplied" (ver. 4): their infirmities have been multiplied not for their destruction, but that they might long for the Physician. "Afterwards they made haste." Accordingly after infirmities multiplied they made haste, that they might be healed. "I will not gather together their assemblies by blood." For their assemblies shall not be carnal, nor will I gather them together as one propitiated by the blood of cattle. "Nor will I be mindful of their names within My lips." But by a spiritual change what they have been shall be forgotten; nor by Me shall they be any more called either sinners, or enemies, or men; but righteous, and My brethren, and sons of God through My peace. 5. "The Lord is the portion of Mine inheritance, and of My cup" (ver. 5). For together with Me they shall possess the inheritance, the Lord Himself. Let others choose for themselves portions, earthly and temporal, to enjoy: the portion of the Saints is the Lord eternal. Let others drink of deadly pleasures, the portion of My cup is the Lord. In that I say, "Mine," I include the Church: for where the Head is, there is the body also. For into the inheritance will I gather together their assemblies, and by the inebriation of the cup I will forget their old names. "Thou art He who will restore to Me My inheritance:" that to these too, whom I free, may be known "the glory wherein I was with Thee before the world was made." For Thou wilt not restore to Me that which I never lost, but Thou wilt restore to these, who have lost it, the knowledge of that glory: in whom because I am, Thou wilt restore to Me.

6. ”The lines have fallen to me in glorious places” (ver. 6). The boundaries of my possession have fallen in Thy glory as it were by lot, like as God is the possession of the Priests and Levites. ”For Mine inheritance is glorious to Me.” ”For Mine inheritance is glorious,” not to all, but to them that see; in whom because I am, ”it is to Me.” 7. ”I will bless the Lord, who hath given Me understanding” (ver. 7): whereby this inheritance may be seen and possessed. ”Yea moreover too even unto night my reins have chastened Me.” Yea besides understanding, even unto death, My inferior part, the assumption of flesh, hath instructed Me, that I might experience the darkness of mortality, which that understanding hath not. 8. ”I foresaw the Lord in My sight always” (ver. 8). But coming into things that pass away, I removed not Mine eye from Him who abideth ever, foreseeing this, that to Him I should return after passing through the things temporal. ”For He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved.” For He favoureth Me, that I should abide fixedly in Him.

9. ”Wherefore My heart was glad, and My tongue exulted” (ver. 9). Wherefore both in My thoughts is gladness, and in my words exultation. ”Moreover too My flesh shall rest in hope.” Moreover too My flesh shall not fail unto destruction, but shall sleep in hope of the resurrection. 10. ”For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell” (ver. 10). For Thou wilt neither give My soul for a possession to those parts below. ”Neither wilt Thou grant Thine Holy One to see corruption.” Neither wilt Thou suffer that sanctified body, whereby others are to be also sanctified, to see corruption. ”Thou hast made known to Me the paths of life” (ver. 11). Thou hast made known through Me the paths of humiliation, that men might return to life, from whence they fell through pride; in whom because I am, ”Thou hast made known to Me.” ”Thou wilt fill Me with joy with Thy countenance.” Thou wilt fill them with joy, that they should seek nothing further, when they shall see Thee ”face to face;” in whom because I am, ”Thou wilt fill Me.” ”Pleasure is at Thy right hand even to the end.” Pleasure is in Thy favour and mercy in this life’s journey, leading on even to the end of the glory of Thy countenance.

Psalm 17

A Prayer OF David Himself. 1. This prayer must be assigned to the Person of the Lord, with the addition of the Church, which is His body. 2. "Hear My righteousness, O God, consider My supplication" (ver. 1). "Hearken unto My prayer, not in deceitful lips:" not going forth to Thee in deceitful lips. "Let My judgment from Thy countenance go forth" (ver. 2). From the enlightening of the knowledge of Thee, let Me judge truth. Or at least, let My judgment go forth, not in deceitful lips, from Thy countenance, that is, that I may not in judging utter aught else than I understand in Thee. "Let Mine eyes see equity:" the eyes, of course, of the heart. 3. "Thou hast proved and visited Mine heart in the night- season" (ver. 3). For this Mine heart hath been proved by the visitation of tribulation. "Thou hast examined Me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in Me." Now not night only, in that it is wont to disturb, but fire also, in that it burns, is this tribulation to be called; whereby when I was examined I was found righteous.

4. "That My mouth may not speak the works of men" (ver. 4). That nothing may proceed out of My mouth, but what relates to Thy glory and praise; not to the works of men, which they do beside Thy will. "Because of the words of Thy lips." Because of the words of Thy peace, or of Thy prophets. "I have kept hard ways." I have kept the toilsome ways of human mortality and suffering. 5. "To perfect My steps in Thy paths" (ver. 5). That the love of the Church might be perfected in the strait ways, whereby she arrives at Thy rest. "That My footsteps be not moved." That the signs of My way, which, like footsteps, have been imprinted on the Sacraments and Apostolical writings, be not moved, that they may mark them who would follow Me. Or at least, that I may still abide fixedly in eternity, after that I have accomplished the hard ways, and have finished My steps in the straits of Thy paths.

6. "I have cried out, for Thou hast heard Me, O God" (ver. 6). With a free and strong effort have I directed My prayers unto Thee: for that I might have this power, Thou hast heard Me when praying more weakly. "Incline Thine ear to Me, and hear My words." Let not Thy hearing forsake My humiliation. 7. "Make Thy mercies marvellous" (ver. 7). Let not Thy mercies be disesteemed, lest they be loved too little. 8. "Who savest them that hope in Thee from such as resist Thy right hand:" from such as resist the favour, whereby Thou favourest Me. "Keep Me, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye" (ver. 8): which seems very little and minute: yet by it is the sight of the eye directed, whereby the light is distinguished from the

darkness; as by Christ's humanity, the divinity of the Judgment distinguishing between the righteous and sinners. "In the covering of Thy wings protect Me." In the defence of Thy love and mercy protect Me. "From the face of the ungodly who have troubled Me" (ver. 9).

9. "Mine enemies have compassed about My soul;" "they have shut up their own fat" (ver.10). They have been covered with their own gross joy, after that their desire hath been satiated with wickedness. "Their mouth hath spoken pride." And therefore their mouth spoke pride, in saying, "Hail, King of the Jews," and other like words. 10. "Casting Me forth they have now compassed Me about" (ver. 11). Casting Me forth outside the city, they have now compassed Me about on the Cross. "Their eyes they have determined to turn down on the earth." The bent of their heart they have determined to turn down on these earthly things: deeming Him, who was slain, to endure a mighty evil, and themselves, that slew Him, none. 11. "As a lion ready for prey, have they taken Me" (ver. 12). They have taken Me, like that adversary who "walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." "And as a lion's whelp dwelling in secret places." And as his whelp, the people to whom it was said, "Ye are of your father the devil:" meditating on the snares, whereby they might circumvent and destroy the just One.

12. "Arise, O Lord, prevent them, and cast them down" (ver. 13). Arise, O Lord, Thou whom they suppose to be asleep, and regardless of men's iniquities; be they blinded before by their own malice, that vengeance may prevent their deed; and so cast them down. 13. "Deliver My soul from the ungodly." Deliver My soul, by restoring Me after the death, which the ungodly have inflicted on Me. "Thy weapon: from the enemies of Thine hand" (ver. 14). For My soul is Thy weapon, which Thy hand, that is, Thy eternal Power, hath taken to subdue thereby the kingdoms of iniquity, anddivide the righteous from the ungodly. This weapon then "deliver from the enemies of Thine hand," that is of Thy Power that is from Mine enemies. "Destroy them, O Lord, from off the earth, scatter them in their life." O Lord, destroy them from off the earth, which they inhabit, scatter them throughout the world in this life, which only they think their life, who despair of life eternal. "And by Thy hidden things their belly hath been filled." Now not only this visible punishment shall overtake them, but also their memory hath been filled with sins, which as darkness are hidden from the light of Thy truth, that they should forget God. "They have been filled with swine's flesh." They have been filled with uncleanness, treading under foot the pearls of God's words. "And they have left the rest to their babes:" crying out, "This sin be upon us and upon our children."

14. "But I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight" (ver. 15). But I, Who have not appeared to them that, with their filthy and darkened heart, cannot see the light of wisdom, "I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight." "I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested." And when they have been satiated with their uncleanness, that they could not know Me, I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested, in them that know Me. In that verse indeed where it is said, "filled with swine's flesh," some copies have, "filled with children:" for from the ambiguity of the Greek a double interpretation has resulted. Now by "children" we understand works; and as by good children, good works, so by evil, evil.

Psalm 18

TO The End, For The Servant OF The Lord, David Himself. 1. That is, for the strong of hand, Christ in His Manhood. "The words of this song which he spoke to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, and of the hand of Saul; and he said, On the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies and of the hand of Saul:" namely, the king of the Jews, whom they had demanded for themselves. For as "David" is said to be by interpretation, strong of hand; so "Saul" is said to be demanding. Now it is well known, how that People demanded for themselves a king, and received him for their king, not according to the will of God, but according to their own will. 2. Christ, then, and the Church, that is, whole Christ, the Head and the Body, saith here, "I will love Thee, O Lord, My strength" (ver. 1). I will love Thee, O Lord, by whom I am strong.

3. "O Lord, My stay, and My refuge, and My deliverer" (ver. 2). O Lord, who hast stayed Me, because I sought refuge with Thee: and I sought refuge, because Thou hast delivered Me. "My God is My helper; and I will hope in Him." My God, who hast first afforded me the help of Thy call, that I might be able to hope in Thee. "My defender, and the horn of My salvation, and My redeemer." My defender, because I have not leant upon Myself, lifting up as it were the horn of pride against Thee; but have found Thee a horn indeed, that is, the sure height of salvation: and that I might find it, Thou redeemedst Me. 4. "With praise will I call upon the Lord, and I shall be safe from Mine enemies" (ver. 3). Seeking not My own but the Lord's glory, I will call upon Him, and there shall be no means whereby the errors of ungodliness can hurt Me.

5. "The pains of death," that is, of the flesh, have "compassed Me about. And the overflowings of ungodliness have troubled Me" (ver. 4). Ungodly troubles stirred up for a time, like torrents of rain which will soon subside, have come on to trouble Me. 6. "The pains of hell compassed Me about" (ver. 5). Among those that compassed Me about to destroy Me, were pains of envy, which work death, and lead on to the hell of sin. "The snares of death prevented Me." They prevented Me, so that they wished to hurt Me first, which shall afterwards be recompensed unto them. Now they seize unto destruction such men as they have evilly persuaded by the boast of righteousness: in the name but not in the reality of which they glory against the Gentiles. 7. "And in Mine oppression I called upon the Lord, and cried unto My God. And He heard My voice from His holy temple" (ver. 6). He heard

from My heart, wherein He dwelleth, My voice. ”And My cry in His sight entered into His ears;” and My cry, which I utter, not in the ears of men, but inwardly before Him Himself, ”entered into His ears.”

8. ”And the earth was moved and trembled” (ver. 7). When the Son of Man was thus glorified, sinners were moved and trembled. ”And the foundations of the mountains were troubled.” And the hopes of the proud, which were in this life, were troubled. ”And were moved, for God was wroth with them.” That is, that the hope of temporal goods might have now no more establishment in the hearts of men. 9. ”There went up smoke in His wrath” (ver. 8). The tearful supplication of penitents went up, when they came to know God’s threatenings against the ungodly. ”And fire burneth from His face.” And the ardour of love after repentance burns by the knowledge of Him. ”Coals were kindled from Him.” They, who were already dead, abandoned by the fire of good desire and the light of righteousness, and who remained in coldness and darkness, re-enkindled and enlightened, have come to life again.

10. ”And He bowed the heaven, and came down” (ver. 9). And He humbled the just One, that He might descend to men’s infirmity. ”And darkness under His feet.” And the ungodly, who savour of things earthly, in the darkness of their own malice, knew not Him: for the earth under His feet is as it were His footstool. 11. ”And He mounted above the cherubim, and did fly” (ver. 10). And He was exalted above the fulness of knowledge, that no man should come to Him but by love: for ”love is the fulfilling of the law.” And full soon He showed to His lovers that He is incomprehensible, lest they should suppose that He is comprehended by corporeal imaginations. ”He flew above the wings of the winds.” But that swiftness, whereby He showed Himself to be incomprehensible, is above the powers of souls, whereon as upon wings they raise themselves from earthly fears into the air of liberty.

12. ”And hath made darkness His hiding place” (ver. 11). And hath settled the obscurity of the Sacraments, and the hidden hope in the heart of believers, where He may lie hid, and not abandon them. In this darkness too, wherein ”we yet walk by faith, and not by sight,” as long as ”we hope for what we see not, and with patience wait for it.” Round about Him is His tabernacle.” Yet they that believe Him turn to Him and encircle Him; for that He is in the midst of them, since He is equally the friend of all, in whom as in a tabernacle He at this time dwells. ”Dark water in clouds of air.” Nor let any one on this account, if he understand the Scripture, imagine that he is already in that light, which will be when we shall have come out of faith into sight: for in the prophets and in all the preachers of the word of God there is obscure teaching.

13. ”In respect of the brightness in His sight” (ver. 12): in comparison with the brightness, which is in the sight of His manifestation. ”His clouds have passed over.” The preachers of His word are not now bounded by the confines of Judaea, but have passed over to the Gentiles. ”Hail and coals of fire.” Reproofs are figured, whereby, as by hail, the hard hearts are bruised: but if a cultivated and genial soil, that is, a godly mind, receive them, the hail’s hardness dissolves into water, that is, the terror of the lightning-charged, and as it

were frozen, reproof dissolves into satisfying doctrine; and hearts kindled by the fire of love revive. All these things in His clouds have passed over to the Gentiles. 14. "And the Lord hath thundered from heaven" (ver. 13). And in confidence of the Gospel the Lord hath sounded forth from the heart of the just One. "And the Highest gave His voice;" that we might entertain it, and in the depth of human things, might hear things heavenly.

15. "And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them" (ver. 14). And He sent out Evangelists traversing straight paths on the wings of strength, not in their own power, but His by whom they were sent. And "He scattered them," to whom they were sent, that to some of them they should be "the savour of life unto life, to others the savour of death unto death." "And He multiplied lightnings, and troubled them." And He multiplied miracles, and troubled them. 16. "And the fountains of water were seen. And the fountains of water springing up into everlasting life," which were made in the preachers, were seen. "And the foundations of the round world were revealed" (ver. 15). And the Prophets, who were not understood, and upon whom was to be built the world of believers in the Lord, were revealed. "At Thy chiding, O Lord:" crying out, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." "At the blasting of the breath of Thy displeasure;" saying, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

17. "He hath sent down from on high, and hath fetched Me (ver. 16): by calling out of the Gentiles for an inheritance "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle." "He hath taken Me out of the multitude of waters." He hath taken Me out of the multitude of peoples. 18. "He hath delivered Me from My strongest enemies" (ver. 17). He hath delivered Me from Mine enemies, who prevailed to the afflicting and overturning of this temporal life of Mine. "And from them which hate Me; for they are too strong for Me:" as long as I am under them knowing not God. 19. "They have prevented Me in the day of My affliction" (ver. 18). They have first injured Me, in the time when I am bearing a mortal and toilsome body. "And the Lord hath become My stay." And since the stay of earthly pleasure was disturbed and torn up by the bitterness of misery, the Lord hath become My stay.

20. "And hath brought Me forth into a broad place" (ver. 19). And since I was enduring the straits of the flesh, He brought Me forth into the spiritual breadth of faith. "He hath delivered Me, because He desired Me." Before that I desired Him, He delivered Me from My most powerful enemies (who were envious of Me when I once desired Him), and from them that hated Me, because I do desire Him. 21. "And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness" (ver. 20). And the Lord shall reward Me according to the righteousness of My good will, who first showed mercy, before that I had the good will. "And according to the cleanness of My hands He will recompense Me." And according to the cleanness of My deeds He will recompense Me, who hath given Me to do well by bringing Me forth into the broad place of faith.

22. "Because I have kept the ways of the Lord" (ver. 21). That the breadth of good works, that are by faith, and the long-suffering of perseverance should follow after. 23. "Nor have I walked impiously apart from My God." "For all His judgments are in My sight" (ver. 22). "For" with persevering contemplation I weigh "all His judgments," that is, the rewards of

the righteous, and the punishments of the ungodly, and the scourges of such as are to be chastened, and the trials of such as are to be proved. "And I have not cast out His righteousness from Me:" as they do that faint under their burden of them, and return to their own vomit. 24. "And I shall be undefiled with Him, and I shall keep Myself from Mine iniquity" (ver. 23). 25. "And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness (ver. 24). Accordingly not only for the breadth of faith, which worketh by love; but also for the length of perseverance, will the Lord reward Me according to My righteousness. "And according to the cleanness of My hands in the sight of His eyes." Not as men see, but "in the sight of His eyes." For "the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal:" whereto the height of hope appertains.

26. "With the holy Thou shalt be holy" (ver. 25). There is a hidden depth also, wherein Thou art known to be holy with the holy, for that Thou makest holy. "And with the harmless Thou shalt be harmless." For Thou harmest no man, but each one is bound by the bands of his own sins. 27. "And with the chosen Thou shalt be chosen." (ver. 26). And by him whom Thou choosest, Thou art chosen. "And with the froward Thou shalt be froward." And with the froward Thou seemest froward: for they say, "The way of the Lord is not right: " and their way is not right. 28. "For Thou wilt make whole the humble people" (ver. 27). Now this seems froward to the froward, that Thou wilt make them whole that confess their sins. "And Thou wilt humble the eyes of the proud." But them that are "ignorant of God's righteousness, and seek to establish their own," Thou wilt humble.

29. "For thou wilt light My candle, O Lord" (ver. 28). For our light is not from ourselves; but "Thou wilt light my candle, O Lord. O my God, Thou wilt enlighten my darkness." For we through our sins are darkness; but "Thou, O my God, wilt enlighten my darkness." 30. "For by Thee shall I be delivered from temptation" (ver. 29). For not by myself, but by Thee, shall I be delivered from temptation. "And in my God shall I leap over the wall." And not in myself, but in my God shall I leap over the wall, which sin has raised between men and the heavenly Jerusalem. 31. "My God, His way is undefiled "(ver. 30). My God cometh not unto men, except they shall have purified the way of faith, whereby He may come to them; for that" His way is undefiled." "The words of the Lord have been proved by fire." The words of the Lord are tried by the fire of tribulation. "He is the Protector of them that hope in Him." And all that hope not in themselves, but in Him, are not consumed by that same tribulation. For hope followeth faith.

32. "For who is God, but the Lord?" (ver. 31) whom we serve. "And who God, but our God?" And who is God, but the Lord? whom after good service we sons shall possess as the hoped-for inheritance. 33. "God, who hath girded me with strength" (ver. 32). God, who hath girded me that I might be strong, lest the loosely flowing folds of desire hinder my deeds and steps. "And hath made my way undefiled." And hath made the way of love, whereby I may come to Him, undefiled, as the way of faith is undefiled, whereby He comes to me. 34. "Who hath made my feet perfect like harts' feet" (ver. 33). Who hath made my love perfect to surmount the thorny and dark entanglements of this world. "And will set me up on high."

And will fix my aim on the heavenly habitation, that "I may be filled with all the fulness of God."

35. "Who teacheth my hands for battle" (ver. 34). Who teacheth me to work for the overthrow of mine enemies, who strive to shut the kingdom of heaven against us. "And Thou hast made mine arms as a bow of steel." And Thou hast made my earnest striving after good works unwearied. 36. "And Thou hast given me the defence of my salvation, and Thy right hand hath held me up" (ver. 35). And the favour of Thy grace hath held me up. "And Thy discipline hath directed me to the end." And Thy correction, not suffering me to wander from the way, hath directed me that whatsoever I do, I refer to that end, whereby I may cleave to Thee. "And this Thy discipline, it shall teach me." And that same correction of Thine shall teach me to attain to that, whereunto it hath directed me. 37. "Thou hast enlarged my steps under me" (ver. 36). Nor shall the straits of the flesh hinder me; for Thou hast enlarged my love, working in gladness even with these mortal things and members which are under me. "And my footsteps have not been weakened." And either my goings, or the marks which I have imprinted for the imitation of those that follow, have not been weakened.

38. "I will follow up mine enemies, and seize them" (ver. 37). I will follow up my carnal affections, and will not be seized by them, but will seize them, so that they may be consumed. "And I will not turn, till they fail." And from this purpose I will not turn myself to rest, till they fail who make a tumult about me. 39. "I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand" (ver. 38): and they shall not hold out against me. "They shall fall under my feet." When they are cast down, I will place before me the loves whereby I walk for evermore. 40. "And Thou hast girded me with strength to the war" (ver. 39). And the loose desires of my flesh hast Thou bound up with strength, that in such a fight I may not be encumbered. "Thou hast supplanted under me them that rose up against me." Thou hast caused them to be deceived, who followed upon me, that they should be brought under me, who desired to be over me.

41. "And thou hast given mine enemies the back to me" (ver. 40). And thou hast turned mine enemies, and hast made them to be a back to me, that is, to follow me. "And Thou hast destroyed them that hate me." But such other of them as have persisted in hatred, Thou hast destroyed. 42. "They have cried out, and there was none to save them" (ver. 41). For who can save them, whom Thou wouldest not save? "To the Lord, and He did not hear them." Nor did they cry out to any chance one, but to the Lord: and He did not judge them worthy of being heard, who depart not from their wickedness. 43. "And I will beat them as small as dust before the face of the wind" (ver. 42). And I will beat them small; for dry they are, receiving not the shower of God's mercy; that borne aloft and puffed up with pride they may be hurried along from firm and unshaken hope, and as it were from the earth's solidity and stability. "As the clay of the streets I will destroy them." In their wanton and loose course along the broad ways of perdition, which many walk, will I destroy them.

44. "Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of the people" (ver. 43). Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of them who said, "If we send Him away, all the world will go

after Him." 45. "Thou shalt make Me the head of the Gentiles. A people whom I have not known have served Me." The people of the Gentiles, whom in bodily presence I have not visited, have served Me. "At the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me" (ver. 44). They have not seen Me with the eye: but, receiving my preachers, at the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me. 46. "The strange children have lied unto Me." Children, not to be called Mine, but rather strange children, to whom it is rightly said, "Ye are of your father the devil," have lied unto Me. "The strange children have waxen old" (ver. 45). The strange children, to whom for their renovation I brought the new Testament, have remained in the old man. "And they have halted from their own paths." And like those that are weak in one foot, for holding the old they have rejected the new Testament, they have become halt, even in their old Law, rather following their own traditions, than God's. For they brought frivolous charges of unwashen hands, because such were the paths, which themselves had made and worn by long use, in wandering from the ways of God's commands.

47. "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my God." "But to be carnally minded is death:" for "the Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. And let the God of my salvation be exalted" (ver. 46). And let me not think after an earthly fashion of the God of my salvation; nor look from Him for this earthly salvation, but that on high. 48. "O God, who givest Me vengeance, and subduest the people under Me" (ver. 47). O God, who avengest Me by subduing the people under Me. "My Deliverer from My angry enemies:" the Jews crying out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him." 49. "From them that rise up against Me Thou wilt exalt Me" (ver. 48). From the Jews that rise up against Me in My passion, Thou wilt exalt Me in My resurrection. "From the unjust man Thou wilt deliver Me."From their unjust rule Thou wilt deliver Me.

50. "For this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, O Lord" (ver. 49). For this cause shall the Gentiles confess to Thee through Me, O Lord. "And I will sing unto Thy Name." And Thou shall be more widely known by My good deeds. 51. "Magnifying the salvation of His King" (ver. 50). God, who magnifieth, so as to make wonderful, the salvation, which His Son giveth to believers. "And showing mercy to His Christ:" God, who showeth mercy to His Christ: "To David and to His seed for evermore:" to the Deliverer Himself strong of hand, who hath overcome this world; and to them whom, as believers in the Gospel, He hath begotten for evermore. What things soever are spoken in this Psalm which cannot apply to the Lord Himself personally, that is to the Head of the Church, must be referred to the Church. For whole Christ speaks here, in whom are all His members.

Psalm 19

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. It is a well-known title; nor does the Lord Jesus Christ say what follows, but it is said of Him. 2. "The heavens tell out the glory of God" (ver. 1). The righteous Evangelists, in whom, as in the heavens, God dwelleth, set forth the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the glory wherewith the Son glorified the Father upon earth. "And the firmament showeth forth the works of His hands." And the firmament showeth forth the deeds of the Lord's power, that now made heaven by the assurance of the Holy Ghost, which before was earth by fear. 3. "Day unto day uttereth word" (ver. 2). To the spiritual the Spirit giveth out the fulness of the unchangeable Wisdom of God, the Word which in the beginning is God with God. "And night unto night announceth knowledge." And to the fleshly, as to those afar off, the mortality of the flesh, by conveying faith, announceth future knowledge.

4. "There is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard" (ver. 3). In which the voices of the Evangelists have not been heard, seeing that the Gospel was preached in every tongue. 5. "Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world" (ver. 4). 6. "In the sun hath He set His tabernacle." Now that He might war against the powers of temporal error, the Lord, being about to send not peace but a sword on earth, in time, or in manifestation, set so to say His military dwelling, that is, the dispensation of His incarnation. "And He as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber" (ver. 5). And He, coming forth out of the Virgin's womb, where God was united to man's nature as a bridegroom to a bride. "Rejoiced as a giant to run His way." Rejoiced as One exceeding strong, and surpassing all other men in power incomparable, not to inhabit, but to run His way. For, "He stood not in the way of sinners. "

7. "His going forth is from the highest heaven" (ver. 6). From the Father is His going forth, not that in time, but from everlasting, whereby He was born of the Father. "And His meeting is even to the height of heaven." And in the fulness of the Godhead He meets even to an equality with the Father. "And there is none that may hide himself from His heat." But whereas, "the Word was even made flesh, and dwelt in us," assuming our mortality, He permitted no man to excuse himself from the shadow of death; for the heat of the Word penetrated even it. 8. "The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls" (ver. 7). The law of the Lord, therefore, is Himself who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it; an undefiled

law, ”Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth,” not oppressing souls with the yoke of bondage, but converting them to imitate Him in liberty. ”The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes.” ”The testimony of the Lord is sure;” for, ”no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him,” which things have been hidden from the wise and revealed to babes; for, ”God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.”

9. ”The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart” (ver. 8). All the statutes of the Lord are right in Him who taught not what He did not; that they who should imitate Him might rejoice in heart, in those things which they should do freely with love, not slavishly with fear. ”The commandment of the Lord is lucid, enlightening the eyes.” ”The commandment of the Lord is lucid,” with no veil of carnal observances, enlightening the sight of the inner man. 10. ”The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever” (ver. 9). ”The fear of the Lord;” not that distressing fear under the law, dreading exceedingly the withdrawal of temporal goods, by the love of which the soul commits fornication; but that chaste fear wherewith the Church, the more ardently she loves her Spouse, the more carefully does she take heed of offending Him, and therefore, ”perfect love casteth” not ”out” this” fear,” but it endureth for ever.

11. ”The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together.” The judgments of Him, who ”judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” are justified in truth unchangeably. For neither in His threatenings nor His promises doth God deceive any man, nor can any withdraw either from the ungodly His punishment, or from the godly His reward. ”To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone” (ver. 10). Whether it be ”gold and stone itself much,” or ”much precious,” or ”much to be desired;” still, the judgments of God are to be desired more than the pomp of this world; by desire of which it is brought to pass that the judgments of God are not desired, but feared, or despised, or not believed. But if any be himself gold and precious stone, that he may not be consumed by fire, but received into the treasury of God, more than himself does he desire the judgments of God, whose will he preferreth to his own. ”And sweeter than honey and the honey comb.” And whether one be even now honey, who, disenthralled already from the chains of this life, is awaiting the day when he may come up to God’s feast; or whether he be yet as the honey comb, wrapped about with this life as it were with wax, not mixed and become one with it, but filling it, needing some pressure of God’s hand, not oppressing but expressing it, whereby from life temporal it may be strained out into life eternal: to such an one the judgments of God are sweeter than he himself is to himself, for that they are ”sweeter than honey and the honey comb.”

12. ”For Thy servant keepeth them ”(ver. 11). For to him who keepeth them not the day of the Lord is bitter. ”In keeping them there is great reward.” Not in any external benefit, but in the thing itself, that God’s judgments are kept, is there great reward; great because one rejoiceth therein. 13. ”Who understandeth sins?” (ver. 12) But what sort of sweetness can there be in sins, where there is no understanding? For who can understand sins, which

close the very eye, to which truth is pleasant, to which the judgments of God are desirable and sweet? yea, as darkness closes the eye, so do sins the mind, and suffer it not to see either the light, or itself.

14. "Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults." From the lusts which lie hid in me, cleanse me, O Lord. "And from the" faults "of others preserve Thy servant" (ver. 13). Let me not be led astray by others. For he is not a prey to the faults of others, who is cleansed from his own. Preserve therefore from the lusts of others, not the proud man, and him who would be his own master, but, Thy servant. "If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled." If neither my own secret sins, nor those of others, get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. For there is no third source of sin, but one's own secret sin, by which the devil fell, and another's sin, by which man is seduced, so as by consenting to make it his own. "And I shall be cleansed from the great offence." What but pride? for there is none greater than apostasy from God, which is "the beginning of the pride of man." And he shall indeed be undefiled, who is free from this offence also; for this is the last to them who are returning to God, which was the first as they departed from Him.

15. "And the words of my mouth shall be pleasing, and the meditation of my heart is always in Thy sight" (ver. 14). The meditation of my heart is not after the vain glory of pleasing men, for now there is pride no more, but in Thy sight alway, who regardest a pure conscience "O Lord, my Helper, and my Redeemer" (ver. 15). O Lord, my Helper, in my approach to Thee; for Thou art my Redeemer, that I might set out unto Thee: lest any attributing to his own wisdom his conversion to Thee, or to his own strength his attaining to Thee, should be rather driven back by Thee, who resistest the proud; for he is not cleansed from the great offence, nor pleasing in Thy sight, who redeemest us that we may be converted, and helpest us that we may attain unto Thee.

Psalm 20

TO The End, A Psalm OF David. 1. This is a well-known title; and it is not Christ who speaks; but the prophet speaks to Christ, under the form of wishing, foretelling things to come. 2. "The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble" (ver. 1). The Lord hear Thee in the day in which Thou saidst, "Father glorify Thy Son." "The name of the God of Jacob protect Thee." For to Thee belongeth the younger people. Since "the elder shall serve the younger." 3. "Send Thee help from the Holy, and from Sion defend Thee" (ver. 2). Making for Thee a sanctified Body, the Church, from watching safe, which waiteth when Thou shalt come from the wedding. 4. "Be mindful of all Thy sacrifice" (ver. 3). Make us mindful of all Thy injuries and despiteful treatment, which Thou hast borne for us. "And be Thy whole burnt offering made fat." And turn the cross, whereon Thou wast wholly offered up to God, into the joy of the resurrection.

5. "Diapsalma." The Lord render to Thee according to Thine Heart" (ver. 4). The Lord render to Thee, not according to their heart, who thought by persecution they could destroy Thee; but according to Thine Heart, wherein Thou knewest what profit Thy passion would have. "And fulfil all Thy counsel." "And fulfil all Thy counsel," not only that whereby Thou didst lay down Thy life for Thy friends, that the corrupted grain might rise again to more abundance; but that also whereby "blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so an Israel might be saved." 6. "We will exult in Thy salvation" (ver. 5). We will exult in that death will in no wise hurt Thee; for so Thou wilt also show that it cannot hurt us either. "And in the name of the Lord our God will we be magnified." And the confession of Thy name shall not only not destroy us, but shall even magnify us.

7. "The Lord fulfil all Thy petitions." The Lord fulfil not only the petitions which Thou madest on earth, but those also whereby Thou intercedest for us in heaven. "Now have I known that the Lord hath saved his Christ" (ver. 6). Now hath it been shown to me in prophecy, that the Lord will raise up His Christ again. "He will hear Him from His holy heaven." He will hear Him not from earth only, where He prayed to be glorified; but from heaven also, where interceding for us at the Right Hand of the Father, He hath from thence shed abroad the Holy Spirit on them that believe on Him. "In strength is the safety of His right hand." Our strength is in the safety of His favour, when even out of tribulation He

giveth help, that "when we are weak, then we may be strong." "For vain is "that "safety of man," which comes not of His right hand but of His left: for thereby are they lifted up to great pride, whosoever in their sins have secured a temporal safety.

8. "Some in chariots, and some in horses" (ver. 7). Some are drawn away by the ever moving succession of temporal goods; and some are preferred to proud honours, and in them exult: "But we will exult in the name of the Lord our God." But we, fixing our hope on things eternal, and not seeking our own glory, will exult in the name of the Lord our God. 9. "They have been bound, and fallen" (ver. 8). And therefore were they bound by the lust of temporal things, fearing to spare the Lord, lest they should lose their place by "the Romans:" and rushing violently on the stone of offence and rock of stumbling, they fell from the heavenly hope: to whom the blindness in part of Israel hath happened, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own. "But we are risen, and stand upright." But we, that the Gentile people might enter in, out of the stones raised up as children to Abraham, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to it, and are risen; and not by our own strength, but being justified by faith, we stand upright.

10. "O Lord, save the King:" that He, who in His Passion hath shown us an example of conflict, should also offer up our sacrifices, the Priest raised from the dead, and established in heaven. "And hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee" (ver. 9). And as He now offereth for us, "hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee."

Psalm 21

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. The title is a familiar one; the Psalm is of Christ. 2. "O Lord, the King shall rejoice in Thy strength" (ver. 1). O Lord, in Thy strength, whereby the Word was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus shall rejoice. "And shall exult exceedingly in Thy salvation." And in that, whereby Thou quickenest all things, shall exult exceedingly. 3. "Thou hast given Him the desire of His soul" (ver. 2). He desired to eat the Passover, and to lay down His life when He would, and again when He would to take it; and Thou hast given it to Him. "And hast not deprived Him of the good pleasure of His lips." "My peace," saith He, "I leave with you:" and it was done. 4. "For Thou hast presented Him with the blessings of sweetness" (ver. 3). Because He had first quaffed the blessing of Thy sweetness, the gall of our sins did not hurt Him. "Diapsalma. Thou hast set a crown of precious stone on His Head." At the beginning of His discoursing precious stones were brought, and compassed Him about; His disciples, from whom the commencement of His preaching should be made.

5. "He asked life; and Thou gavest Him:" He asked a resurrection, saying, "Father, glorify Thy Son;" and Thou gavest it Him, "Length of days for ever and ever" (ver. 4). The prolonged ages of this world which the Church was to have, and after them an eternity, world without end. 6. "His glory is great in Thy salvation" (ver. 5). Great indeed is His glory in the salvation, whereby Thou hast raised Him up again. "Glory and great honour shalt Thou lay upon Him." But Thou shalt yet add unto Him glory and great honour, when Thou shall place Him in heaven at Thy right hand. 7. "For Thou shalt give Him blessing for ever and ever." This is the blessing which Thou shalt give Him for ever and ever: "Thou shall make Him glad in joy together with Thy countenance" (ver. 6). According to His manhood, Thou shall make Him glad together with Thy countenance, which He lifted up to Thee.

8. "For the King hopeth in the Lord." For the King is not proud, but humble in heart, he hopeth in the Lord. "And in the mercy of the Most Highest He shall not be moved" (ver. 7). And in the mercy of the Most Highest His obedience even unto the death of the Cross shall not disturb His humility. 9. "Let Thy hand be found by all Thine enemies." Be Thy power, O King, when Thou comest to judgment, found by all Thine enemies; who in Thy humiliation discerned it not. "Let Thy right hand find out all that hate Thee" (ver. 8). Let the glory, wherein Thou reignest at the right hand of the Father, find out for punishment in the day

of judgment all that hate Thee ; for that now they have not found it. 10. "Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven:" Thou shalt make them on fire within, by the consciousness of their ungodliness: "In the time of Thy countenance:" in the time of Thy manifestation. "The Lord shall trouble them in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them" (ver. 9). And then, being troubled by the vengeance of the Lord, after the accusation of their conscience, they shall be given up to eternal fire, to be devoured.

11. "Their fruit shalt Thou destroy out of the earth." Their fruit, because it is earthly, shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. "And their seed from the sons of men" (ver. 10). And their works; or, whomsoever they have seduced, Thou shalt not reckon among the sons of men, whom Thou hast called into the everlasting inheritance. 12. "Because they turned evils against Thee." Now this punishment shall be recompensed to them, because the evils which they supposed to hang over them by Thy reign, they turned against Thee to Thy death. "They imagined a device, which they were not able to establish" (ver. 11). They imagined a device, saying, "It is expedient that one die for all:" which they were not able to establish, not knowing what they said. 13. "For Thou shalt set them low." For Thou shalt rank them among those from whom in degradation and contempt Thou wilt turn away. "In Thy leavings Thou shalt make ready their countenance" (ver. 12). And in these things that Thou leavest, that is, in the desires of an earthly kingdom, Thou shalt make ready their shamelessness for Thy passion.

14. "Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength" (ver. 13). Be Thou, Lord, whom in humiliation they did not discern, exalted in Thy strength, which they thought weakness. "We will sing and praise Thy power." In heart and in deed we will celebrate and make known Thy marvels.

Psalm 22

TO The End, For The Taking UP OF The Morning, A Psalm OF David. 1. ”To the end,” for His own resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaketh. For in the morning on the first day of the week was His resurrection, whereby He was taken up, into eternal life, ”Over whom death shall have no more dominion.” Now what follows is spoken in the person of The Crucified. For from the head of this Psalm are the words, which He cried out, whilst hanging on the Cross, sustaining also the person of the old man, whose mortality He bare. For our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross. 2. ”O God, my God, look upon me, why hast Thou forsaken me far from my salvation?” (ver. 1). Far removed from my salvation: for” salvation is far from sinners.” ”The words of my sins.” For these are not the words of righteousness, but of my sins. For it is the old man nailed to the Cross that speaks, ignorant even of the reason why God hath forsaken him: or else it may be thus, The words of my sins are far from my salvation.

3. ”My God, I will cry unto Thee in the daytime, and Thou wilt not hear (ver. 2). My God, I will cry unto Thee in the prosperous circumstances of this life, that they be not changed; and Thou wilt not hear, because I shall cry unto Thee in the words of my sins. ”And in the night-season, and not to my folly.” And so in the adversities of this life will I cry to Thee for prosperity; and in like manner Thou wilt not hear. And this Thou doest not to my folly, but rather that I may have wisdom to know what Thou wouldest have me cry for, not with the words of sins out of longing for life temporal, but with the words of turning to Thee for life eternal. 4. ”But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel” (ver. 3). But Thou dwellest in the holy place, and therefore wilt not hear the unclean words of sins. The ”praise” of him that seeth Thee; not of him who hath sought his own praise in tasting of the forbidden fruit, that on the opening of his bodily eyes he should endeavour to hide himself from Thy sight.

5. ”Our Fathers hoped in Thee.” All the righteous, namely, who sought not their own praise, but Thine. ”They hoped in Thee, and Thou deliveredst them” (ver. 4). 6. ”They cried unto Thee, and were saved.” They cried unto Thee, not in the words of sins, from which salvation is far; and therefore were they saved. ”They hoped in Thee, and were not confounded” (ver. 5). ”They hoped in Thee,” and their hope did not deceive them. For they placed it not in themselves. 7. ”But I am a worm, and no man” (ver. 6). But I, speaking now not in the

person of Adam, but I in My own person, Jesus Christ, was born without human generation in the flesh, that I might be as man beyond men; that so at least human pride might deign to imitate My humility. "The scorn of men, and outcast of the people." In which humility I was made the scorn of men, so as that it should be said, as a reproachful railing, "Be thou His disciple: " and that the people despise Me.

8. "All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn" (ver. 7). All that saw Me derided Me. "And spake with the lips, and shook the head." And they spoke, not with the heart, but with the lips. 9. For they shook their head in derision, saying, "He trusted in the Lord let Him deliver Him: " let Him save Him, since He desireth Him" (ver. 8).These were their words; but they were spoken "with the lips." 10. "Since Thou art He who drew Me out of the womb" (ver. 9). Since Thou art He who drew Me, not only out of that Virgin womb (for this is the law of all men's birth, that they be drawn out of the womb), but also out of the womb of the Jewish nation; by the darkness whereof he is covered, and not yet born into the light of Christ, whosoever places his salvation in the carnal observance of the Sabbath, and of circumcision, and the like. "My hope from My mother's breasts." "My hope," O God, not from the time when I began to be fed by the milk of the Virgin's breasts; for it was even before; but from the breasts of the Synagogue, as I have said, out of the womb, Thou hast drawn Me, that I should not suck in the customs of the flesh.

11. "I have been strengthened in Thee from the womb" (ver. 10). It is the womb of the Synagogue, which did not carry Me, but threw Me out: but I fell not, for Thou heldest me. "From My mother's womb Thou art My God." "From My mother's womb: My mother's womb did not cause that, as a babe, I should be forgetful of Thee. 12. "Thou art My God," "depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand" (ver. 11). Thou art, therefore, My God, depart not from Me; for trouble is nigh unto Me; for it is in My body. "For there is none to help." For who helpeth, if Thou helpest not? 13. "Many calves came about Me." The multitude of the wanton populace came about Me. "Fat bulls closed Me in" (ver. 12). And their leaders, glad at My oppression, "closed Me in." 14. "They opened their mouth upon Me" (ver. 13). They opened their mouth upon Me, not out of Thy Scripture, but of their own lusts. "As a ravening and roaring lion." As a lion, whose ravening is, that I was taken and led; and whose roaring, "Crucify, Crucify." .

15. "I was poured out like water, and all My bones were scattered" (ver. 14). "I was poured out like water," when My persecutors fell: and through fear, the stays of My body, that is, the Church, My disciples were scattered from Me. "My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of my belly."My wisdom, which was written of Me in the sacred books, was, as if hard and shut up, not understood: but after that the fire of My Passion was applied, it was, as if melted, manifested, and entertained in the memory of My Church. 16. "My strength dried up as a potsherd" (ver. 15). My strength dried up by My Passion; not as hay, but a potsherd, which is made stronger by fire. "And My tongue cleaved to My jaws." And they, through whom I was soon to speak, kept My precepts in their hearts. "And Thou broughtest Me

down to the dust of death." And to the ungodly appointed to death, whom the wind casteth forth as dust from the face of the earth, Thou broughtest Me down.

17. "For many dogs came about Me" (ver. 16). For many came about Me barking, not for truth, but for custom. "The council of the malignant came about Me." The council of the malignant besieged Me. "They pierced My hands and feet." They pierced with nails My hands and feet. 18. "They numbered distinctly all My bones" (ver. 17). They numbered distinctly all My bones, while extended on the wood of the Cross. "Yea, these same regarded, and beheld Me." Yea, these same, that is, unchanged, regarded and beheld Me. 19. "They divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture" (ver. 18). 20. "But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me" (ver. 19). But Thou, O Lord, raise Me up again, not as the rest of men, at the end of the world, but immediately. "Look to My defence." "Look," that they in no wise hurt Me.

21. "Deliver My soul from the sword." "Deliver My soul" from the tongue of dissension. "And My only One from the hand of the dog" (ver. 20). And from the power of the people, barking after their custom, deliver My Church. 22. "Save Me from the lion's mouth:" save Me from the mouth of the kingdom of this world: "and my humility from the horns of the unicorns " (ver. 21). And from the loftiness of the proud, exalting themselves to special pre-eminence, and enduring no partakers, save My humility. 23. "I will declare Thy name to My brethren" (ver. 22). I will declare Thy name to the humble, and to My Brethren that love one another as they have been beloved by Me. "In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee." In the midst of the Church will I with rejoicing preach Thee. 24. "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him." "Ye that fear the Lord," seek not your own praise, but "praise Him." "All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him" (ver. 23). All ye seed of him whom the elder shall serve, magnify Him.

25. "Let all the seed of Israel fear Him." Let all who have been born to a new life, and restored to the vision of God "fear Him." "Since He hath not despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor man" (ver. 24). Since He hath not despised the prayer, not of him who, crying unto God in the words of sins was loath to overpass a vain life, but the prayer of the poor man, not swollen up with transitory pomps. "Nor hath He turned away His face from Me." As from him who said, I will cry unto Thee, but Thou wilt not hear. "And when I cried unto Him He heard Me." 26. "With Thee is My praise" (ver. 25). For I seek not Mine own praise, for Thou art My praise, who dwellest in the holy place; and, praise of Israel, Thou hearest The Holy One now beseeching Thee. "In the great Church I will confess Thee." In the Church of the whole world" I will confess Thee." "I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him." I will offer the sacraments of My Body and Blood in the sight of them that fear Him.

27. "The poor shall eat, and be filled" (ver. 26). The humble and the despisers of the world shall eat, and imitate Me. For so they will neither desire this world's abundance, nor fear its want. "And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him." For the praise of the Lord is the pouring out of that fulness. "Their hearts shall live for ever and ever." For that food is the food of the heart. 28. "All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be

turned to the Lord" (ver. 27). They shall remember themselves: for, by the Gentiles, born in death and bent on outward things, God had been forgotten; and then shall all the borders of the earth be turned to the Lord. "And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight." And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in their own consciences.

29. "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations" (ver. 28). For the kingdom is the Lord's, not proud men's: and He shall rule over the nations. 30. "All the rich of the earth have eaten, and worshipped" (ver. 29). The rich of the earth too have eaten the Body of their Lord's humiliation, and though they have not, as the poor, been filled even to imitation, yet they have worshipped. "In His sight shall fall all that descend to earth." For He alone seeth how all they fall, who abandoning a heavenly conversation, make choice, on earth, to appear happy to men, who see not their fall. 31. "And My Soul shall live to Him." And My Soul, which in the contempt of this world seems to men as it were to die, shall live, not to itself, but to Him. "And My seed shall serve Him" (ver. 30). And My deeds, or they who through Me believe on Him, shall serve Him.

32. "The generation to come shall be declared to the Lord" (ver. 31). The generation of the New Testament shall be declared to the honour of the Lord. "And the heavens shall declare His righteousness." And the Evangelists shall declare His righteousness. "To a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made." To a people that shall be born to the Lord through faith.

Psalm 23

A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. The Church speaks to Christ: "The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing" (ver. 1). The Lord Jesus Christ is my Shepherd, "and I shall lack nothing." 2. "In a place of pasture there hath He placed me" (ver. 2). In a place of fresh pasture, leading me to faith, there hath He placed me to be nourished. "By the water of refreshing hath He brought me up." By the water of baptism, whereby they are refreshed who have lost health and strength, hath He brought me up. 3. "He hath converted my soul: He hath led me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name's sake" (ver. 3). He hath brought me forth in the narrow ways, wherein few walk, of His righteousness; not for my merit's sake, but for His Name's sake. 4. "Yea, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death" (ver. 4). Yea, though I walk in the midst of this life, which is the shadow of death. "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." I will fear no evil, for Thou dwellest in my heart by faith: and Thou art now with me, that after the shadow of death I too may be with Thee. "Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me." Thy discipline, like a rod for a flock of sheep, and like a staff for children of some size, and growing out of the natural into spiritual life, they have not been grievous to me; rather have they comforted me: because Thou art mindful of me.

5. "Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, against them that trouble me" (ver. 5). Now after the rod, whereby, whilst a little one, and living the natural life, I was brought up among the flock in the pastures; after that rod, I say, when I began to be under the staff, Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, that I should no more be fed as a babe with milk, but being older should take meat, strengthened against them that trouble me. "Thou hast fattened my head with oil." Thou hast gladdened my mind with spiritual joy. "And Thy inebriating cup, how excellent is it!" And Thy cup yielding forgetfulness of former vain delights, how excellent is it! 6. "And Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:" that is, as long as I live in this mortal life, not Thine, but mine. "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days" (ver. 6). Now Thy mercy shall follow me not here only, but also that I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 24

A Psalm OF David Himself, ON The First Day OF The Week. 1. A Psalm of David himself, touching the glorifying and resurrection of the Lord, which took place catty in the morning on the first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's Day. 2. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world, and all they that dwell therein" (ver. 1); when the Lord, being glorified, is announced for the believing of all nations; and the whole compass of the world becomes His Church. "He hath founded it above the seas." He hath most firmly established it above all the waves of this world, that they should be subdued by it, and should not hurt it. "And hath prepared it above the rivers" (ver. 2). The rivers flow into the sea, and men of lust lapse into the world: these also the Church, which, when worldly lusts have been conquered by the grace of God, hath been prepared by love for the reception of immortality, subdues.

3. "Who shall ascend into the mount of the Lord?" Who shall ascend to the height of the righteousness of the Lord? "Or who shall stand in His holy place?" (ver. 3). Or who shall abide in that place, whither He shall ascend, founded above the seas, and prepared above the rivers? 4. "The innocent of hand, and the pure in heart" (ver. 4). Who then shall ascend thither, and abide there, but the guiltless in deed, and pure in thought? "Who hath not received his soul in vain." Who hath not reckoned his soul among things that pass away, but feeling it to be immortal, hath longed for an eternity stedfast and unchangeable. "And hath not sworn in deceit to his neighbour." And therefore without deceit, as things eternal are simple and undeceiving, hath so behaved himself to his neighbour. 5. "This man shall receive blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation" (ver. 5).

6. "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord" (ver. 6). For thus are they born that seek Him. "Of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Diapsalma." Now they seek the face of God, who gave the pre-eminence to the younger born. 7. "Take away your gates, ye princes" (ver. 7). All ye, that seek rule among men, remove, that they hinder not, the entrances which ye have made, of desire and fear. "And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates." And be ye lift up, ye entrances of eternal life, of renunciation of the world, and conversion to God. "And the King of glory shall come in." And the King, in whom we may glory without pride, shall come in: who having overcome the gates of death, and having opened for Himself

the heavenly places, fulfilled that which He said, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

8. "Who is this King of glory?" Mortal nature is awe-struck in wonder, and asks, "Who is this King of glory?" "The Lord strong and mighty." He whom thou didst deem weak and overwhelmed. "The Lord mighty in battle" (ver. 8). Handle the scars, and thou wilt find them made whole, and human weakness restored to immortality. The glorifying of the Lord, which was owing to earth, where It warred with death, hath been paid. 9. "Take away your gates, ye princes." Let us go hence straightway into heaven. Again, let the Prophet's trumpet cry aloud, "Take away too, ye princes of the air, the gates, which ye have in the minds of men who 'worship the host of heaven.'" "And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates." And be ye lift up, ye doors of everlasting righteousness, of love, and chastity, through which the soul loveth the One True God, and goeth not a-whoring with the many that are called gods. "And the King of glory shall come in" (ver. 9). "And the King of glory shall come in," that He may at the right hand of the Father intercede for us.

10. "Who is this King of glory?" What! dost thou too, prince of the power of this air, marvel and ask, "Who is this King of glory?" "The Lord of powers, He is the King of glory" (ver. 10). Yea, His Body now quickened, He who was tempted marches above thee; He who was tempted by the angel, the deceiver, goes above all angels. Let none of you put himself before us and stop our way, that he may be worshipped as a god by us: neither principality, nor angel, nor power, separateth us from the love of Christ. It is good to trust in the Lord, rather than to trust in a prince; that he who glorieth, should glory in the Lord. These indeed are powers in the administration of this world, but "the Lord of powers, He is the King of glory."

Psalm 25

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. Christ speaks, but in the person of the Church: for what is said has reference rather to the Christian People turned unto God. 2. ”Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul” (ver. 1): with spiritual longing have I lift up the soul, that was trodden down on the earth with carnal longings. ”O my God, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed” (ver. 2). O my God, from trusting in myself I was brought even to this weakness of the flesh; and I who on abandoning God wished to be as God, fearing death from the smallest insect, was in derision ashamed for my pride; now, therefore, ”in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed.” 3. ”And let not my enemies mock me.” And let them not mock me, who by ensnaring me with serpent-like and secret suggestions, and prompting me with ”Well done, well done,” have brought me down to this. ”For all that wait upon Thee shall not be confounded” (ver. 3).

4. ”Let them be confounded who do vain things unrighteously.” Let them be confounded who act unrighteously for the acquiring things that pass away. ”Make Thy ways, O Lord, known to me, and teach me Thy paths” (ver. 4): not those which are broad, and lead the many to destruction; but Thy paths, narrow, and known to few, teach Thou me. 5. ”In Thy truth guide me:” avoiding error. ”And teach me:” for by myself I know nothing, but falsehood. ”For Thou art the God of my salvation; and for Thee have I waited all the day” (ver. 5). For dismissed by Thee from Paradise, and having taken my journey into a far country? I cannot by myself return, unless Thou meetest the wanderer: for my return hath throughout the whole tract of this world’s time waited for Thy mercy. 6. ”Remember Thy compassions, O Lord” (ver. 6). Remember the works of Thy mercy, O Lord; for men deem of Thee as though Thou hadst forgotten. ”And that Thy mercies are from eternity.” And remember this, that Thy mercies are from eternity. For Thou never wast without them, who hast subjected even sinful man to vanity indeed, but in hope; and not deprived him of so many and great consolations of Thy creation.

7. ”Remember not the offences of my youth and of my ignorance” (ver. 7). The offences of my presumptuous boldness and of my ignorance reserve not for vengeance, but let them be as if forgotten by Thee. ”According to Thy mercy, be mindful of me, O God.” Be mindful indeed of me, not according to the anger of which I am worthy, but according to Thy mercy which is worthy of Thee. ”For Thy goodness, O Lord.” Not for my deservings, but for Thy

goodness, O Lord. 8. "Gracious and upright is the Lord" (ver. 8). The Lord is gracious, since even sinners and the ungodly He so pitied, as to forgive all that is past; but the Lord is upright too, who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment. "Wherefore He will establish a law for them that fail in the way." For He hath first bestowed mercy to bring them into the way.

9. "He will guide the meek in judgment." He will guide the meek, and will not confound in the judgment those that follow His will, and do not, in withstanding It, prefer their own. "The gentle He will teach His ways" (ver. 9). He will teach His ways, not to those that desire to run before, as if they were better able to rule themselves;but to those who do not exalt the neck, nor lift the heel, when the easy yoke and the light burden is laid upon them. 10. "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth" (ver. 10). And what ways will He teach them, but mercy wherein He is placable, and truth wherein He is incorrupt? Whereof He hath exhibited the one in forgiving sins, the other in judging deserts. And therefore "all the ways of the Lord" are the two advents of the Son of God, the one in mercy, the other in judgment. He then attaineth unto Him holding on His ways, who seeing himself freed by no deserts of his own, lays pride aside, and henceforward bewares of the severity of His trial, having experienced the clemency of His help. "To them that seek His testament and His testimonies." For they understand the Lord as merciful at His first advent, and as the Judge at His second, who in meekness and gentleness seek His testament, when with His Own Blood He redeemed us to a new life; and in the Prophets and Evangelists, His testimonies.

11. "For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou wilt be favourable to my sin; for it is manifold" (ver. 11). Thou hast not only forgiven my sins, which I committed before I believed; but also to my sin, which is manifold, since even in the way there is no lack of stumbling, Thou wilt be made favourable by the sacrifice of a troubled spirit. 12. "Who is the man that feareth the Lord?" from which fear he begins to come to wisdom. "He shall establish a law for him in the way, which he hath chosen" (ver. 12). He shall establish a law for him in the way, which in his freedom he has taken, that he may not sin now with impunity. 13. "His soul shall dwell in good, and his seed shall, by inheritance, possess the earth" (ver. 13). And his work shall possess the stable inheritance of a renewed body.

14. "The Lord is the stay of them that fear Him" (ver. 14). Fear seems to belong to the weak, but the Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. And the Name of the Lord, which hath been glorified throughout the whole world, is a stay to them that fear Him. "And His testament, that it may be manifested unto them." And He maketh His testament to be manifested unto them, for the Gentiles and the bounds of the earth are Christ's inheritance. 15. "Mine eyes are ever unto the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare" (ver. 15). Nor would I fear the dangers of earth, while I look not upon the earth: for He upon whom Look, will pluck my feet out of the snare. 16. "Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; for I am single and poor" (ver. 16). For I am a single people, keeping the lowliness of Thy single Church, which no schisms or heresies possess.

17. "The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied" (ver. 17). The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied by the abounding of iniquity and the waxing cold of love. "O bring Thou me out of my necessities." Since I must needs bear this, that by enduring unto the end I may be saved, bring Thou me out of my necessities. 18. "See my humility and my travail" (ver. 18). See my humility, whereby I never, in the boast of righteousness, break off from unity; and my travail, wherein I bear with the unruly ones that are mingled with me. "And forgive all my sins." And, propitiated by these sacrifices, forgive all my sins, not those only of youth and my ignorance before I believed, but those also which, living now by faith, I commit through infirmity, or the darkness of this life. 19. "Consider mine enemies, how they are multiplied" (ver. 19). For not only without, but even within, in the Church's very communion, they are not wanting. "And with an unrighteous hate they hate me." And they hate me who love them.

20. "Keep my soul, and deliver me." Keep my soul, that I turn not aside to imitate them; and draw me out from the confusion wherein they are mingled with me. "Let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee" (ver. 20). Let me not be confounded, if haply they rise up against me: for not in myself, but in Thee have I put my trust. 21. "The innocent and the upright have cleaved to me, for I have waited for Thee, O Lord" (ver. 21). The innocent and the upright, not in bodily presence only, as the evil, are mingled with me, but in the agreement of the heart in the same innocence and uprightness cleave to me: for I have not fallen away to imitate the evil; but I have waited for Thee, expecting the winnowing of Thy last harvest. 22. "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles" (ver. 22). "Redeem Thy people, O God," whom Thou hast prepared to see Thee, out of his troubles, not those only which he bears without, but those also which he bears within.

Psalm 26

OF David Himself. 1. It may be attributed to David himself, not the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, but the whole Church now perfectly established in Christ. 2. "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence" (ver. 1). Judge me, O Lord, for, after the mercy which Thou first showedst me, I have some desert of my innocence, the way whereof I have kept. "And trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved." And yet not even so trusting in myself, but in the Lord, I shall abide in Him. 3. "Prove me, O Lord, and try me" (ver. 2). Lest, however, any of my secret sins should be hid from me, prove me, O Lord, and try me, making me known, not to Thee from whom nothing is hid, but to myself, and to men. "Burn my reins and my heart." Apply a remedial purgation, as it were fire, to my pleasures and thoughts. "For Thy mercy is before mine eyes" (ver. 3). For, that I be not consumed by that fire, not my merits, but Thy mercy, whereby Thou hast brought me on to such a life, is before my eyes. "And I have been pleasing in Thy truth." And since my own falsehood hath been displeasing to me, but Thy truth pleasing, I have myself been pleasing also with it and in it.

4. "I have not sat with the council of vanity" (ver. 4). I have not chosen to give my heart to them who endeavour to provide, what is impossible, how they may be blessed in the enjoyment of things transitory. "And I will not enter in with them that work wickedly." And since this is the very cause of all wickedness, therefore I will not have my conscience hid, with them that work wickedly. 5. "I have hated the congregation of evil doers." But to arrive at this council of vanity, congregations of evil doers are formed, which I have hated. "And I will not sit with the ungodly" (ver. 5). And, therefore, with such a council, with the ungodly, I will not sit, that is, I will not place my consent. "And I will not sit with the ungodly." 6. "I will wash mine hands amid the innocent" (ver. 6). I will make clean my works among the innocent: among the innocent will I wash mine hands, with which I shall embrace Thy glorious gifts. "And I will compass Thy altar, O Lord."

7. "That I may hear the voice of Thy praise." That I may learn how to praise Thee. "And that I may declare all Thy wondrous works" (ver. 7). And after I have learnt, I may set forth all Thy wondrous works. 8. "O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house:" of Thy Church. "And the place of the habitation of Thy glory" (ver. 8): where Thou dwellest, and art glorified. 9. "Destroy not my soul with the ungodly" (ver. 9). Destroy not then, together with them

that hate Thee, my soul, which hath loved the beauty of Thy house. "And my life with the men of blood." And with them that hate their neighbour. For Thy house is beautified with the two commandments. 10. "In whose hands is wickedness." Destroy me not then with the ungodly and the men of blood, whose works are wicked. "Their right hand is full of gifts" (ver. 10). And that which was given them to obtain eternal salvation, they have converted into the receiving this world's gifts, "supposing that godliness is a trade."

11. "But I have walked in mine innocence: deliver me, and have mercy on me" (ver. 11). Let so great a price of my Lord's Blood avail formy complete deliverance: and in the dangers of this life let not Thy mercy leave me. 12. "My foot hath stood in uprightness." My Love hath not withdrawn from Thy righteousness. "In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord" (ver. 12). I will not hide Thy blessing, O Lord, from those whom Thou hast called; for next to the love of Thee I join the love of my neighbour.

Psalm 27

OF David Himself, Before HE Was Anointed. 1. Christ's young soldier speaketh, on his coming to the faith. "The Lord is my light, and my salvation: whom shall I fear?" (ver. 1). The Lord will give me both knowledge of Himself, and salvation: who shall take me from Him? "The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" The Lord will repel all the assaults and snares of mine enemy: of no man shall I be afraid. 2. "Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh" (ver. 2). Whilst the guilty come near to recognise and insult me, that they may exalt themselves above me in my change for the better; that with their reviling tooth they may consume not me, but rather my fleshly desires. "Mine enemies who trouble me." Not they only who trouble me, blaming me with a friendly intent, and wishing to recall me from my purpose, but mine enemies also. "They became weak, and fell." Whilst then they do this with the desire of defending their own opinion, they became weak to believe better things, and began to hate the word of salvation, whereby I do what displeases them.

3. "If camps stand together against me, my heart will not fear." But if the multitude of gain-sayers conspire to stand together against me, my heart will not fear, so as to go over to their side. "If war rise up against me, in this will I trust" (ver. 3). If the persecution of this world arise against me, in this petition, which I am pondering, will I place my hope. 4. "One have I asked of the Lord, this will I require." For one petition have I asked the Lord, this will I require. "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life" (ver. 4). That as long as I am in this life, no adversities may exclude me from the number of them who hold the unity and the truth of the Lord's faith throughout the world. "That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord." With this end, namely, that persevering in the faith, the delightsome vision may appear to me, which I may contemplate face to face. "And I shall be protected, His temple." And death being swallowed up in victory, I shall be clothed with immortality, being made His temple.

5. "For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils" (ver. 5). For He hath hidden me in the dispensation of His Incarnate Word in the time of temptations, to which my mortal life is exposed. "He hath protected me in the secret place of His tabernacle." He hath protected me, with the heart believing unto righteousness. 6. "On a rock hath He exalted me." And that what I believed might be made manifest for salvation, He hath made

my confession to be conspicuous in His own strength. ”And now, lo! He hath exalted mine head above mine enemies” (ver. 6). What doth He reserve for me at the last, when even now the body is dead because of sin, lo! I feel that my mind serves the law of God, and is not led captive under the rebellious law of sin? ”I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the sacrifice of rejoicing.” I have considered the circuit of the world, believing on Christ; and in that for us God was humbled in time, I have praised Him with rejoicing: for with such sacrifice He is well pleased. ”I will sing and give praises to the Lord.” In heart and in deed I will be glad in the Lord.

7. ”Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee” (ver. 7). Hear, Lord, my interior voice, which with a strong intention I have addressed to Thy ears. ”Have mercy upon me, and hear me.” Have mercy upon me, and hear me therein. 8. ”My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance” (ver. 8). For I have not exhibited myself to men; but in secret, where Thou alone hearest, my heart hath said to Thee; I have not sought from Thee aught without Thee as a reward, but Thy countenance. ”Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek.” In thus search will I perseveringly persist: for not aught that is common, but Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek, that I may love Thee freely, since nothing more precious do I find. 9. ”Turn not away Thy face from me” (ver. 9): that I may find what I seek. ”Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant:” lest, while seeking Thee, I fall in with somewhat else. For what is more grevous than this punishment to one who loveth and seeketh the truth of Thy countenance? ”Be Thou my Helper.” How shall I find it, if Thou help me not? ”Leave me not, neither despise me, O God my Saviour.” Scorn not that a mortal dares to seek the Eternal for Thou, God dost heal the wound of my sin.

10. ”For my father and my mother have left me” (ver. 10). For the kingdom of this world and the city of this world, of which I was born in time and mortality, have left me seeking Thee, and despising what they promised, since they could not give what I seek. ”But the Lord took me up.” But the Lord, who can give me Himself, took me up. 11. ”Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way” (ver. 11). For me then who am setting out toward Thee, and commenting so great a profession, of arriving at wisdom, from fear, appoint, O Lord, a law in Thy way, lest in my wandering Thy rule abandon me. ”And direct me in the right path because of mine enemies.” And direct me in the right way of its straits.For it is not enough to begin, since enemies cease not until the end is attained.

12. ”Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me” (ver. 12). Suffer not them that trouble me to be satiated with my evils. ”For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me.” For there have risen up against me they that speak falsely of me, to remove and call me back from Thee, as if I seek glory of men. ”And iniquity hath lied unto itself.” Therefore iniquity hath been pleased with its own lie. For me it hath not moved, to whom because of this there hath been promised a greater reward in heaven. 13. ”I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living” (ver. 13). And since my Lord hath first suffered these things, if I too despise the tongues of the dying (”for the mouth that lieth

slayeth the soul"), I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living, where there is no place for falsity.

14. "Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man: and let thy heart be strong, yea wait on the Lord" (ver. 14). But when shall this be? It is arduous for a mortal, it is flow to a lover: but listen to the voice, that deceiveth not, of him that saith, "Wait on the Lord." Endure the burning of the reins manfully, and the burning of the heart stoutly. Think not that what thou dost not as yet receive is denied thee. That thou faint not in despair, see how it is said, "Wait on the Lord."

Psalm 28

OF David Himself. 1. It is the Voice of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand in the conflict of the Passion. Now what He seems to wish for against His enemies, is not the wish of malevolence, but the declaration of their punishment; as in the Gospel, with the dries, in which though He had performed miracles, yet they had not beloved on Him, He doth not wish in any evil will what He sixth, but predicteth what is impending over them. 2. "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, be not silent from me" (ver. 1). Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, separate not the unity of Thy Word from that which as Man I am. "Lest at any time Thou be silent form me: and I shall be like them that go down into the pit." For from this, that the Eternity of Thy Word ceaseth not to unite Itself to Me, it comes that I am not such a man as the rest of men, who are born into the deep misery of this world: where, as if Thou art silent, Thy Word is not recognised. "Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication, whist I pray unto Thee, whilst I hold up my hands to Thy holy temple" (ver. 2). Whilst I am crucified for their salvation, who on believing become Thy holy temple.

3. "Draw not My Soul away with sinners, and destroy me not with them that work iniquity, withthem that speak peace with their neighbours" (ver. 3). With them that say unto Me, "We know that Thou art a Master come from God." "But evil in their hearts." But they speak evil in their hearts. 4. "Give unto them according to their works" (ver. 4). Give unto them according to their works, for this is just. "And according to the malice of their affections." For aiming at evil, they cannot discover good. "According to the works of their hands give Thou unto them." Although what they have done may avail for salvation to others, yet give Thou unto them according to the works of their wills. "Pay them their recompense." Because, for the truth which they heard, they wished to recompense deceit; let their won deceit deceive them. 5. "For they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord" (ver. 5). And whence is it clear that this hath befallen them? From this forsooth, "for they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord." This very thing, in truth, hath been, even now, their recompense, that in Him whom they tempted with malicious intent as a Man, they should not recognise God, with what design the Father sent Him in the Flesh. "And the works of His hands." Nor be moved by those visible works, which are laid out before their very eyes. "Thou shalt destroy them, and not build them up." Let them do Me no hurt, nay, nor again in their endeavour to raise engines against My Church, let them aught avail.

6. ”Blessed be the Lord, for He hath heard the voice of My prayer” (ver. 6). 7. ”The Lord My Helper and My Protector” (ver. 7). The Lord helping Me in so great sufferings, and protecting Me with immortality in My resurrection. ”In Him hath My Heart trusted, and I have been helped.” ”And My Flesh hath flourished again:” that is, and My Flesh hath risen again. ”And of my will I will confess unto Him.” Wherefore, the fear of death being now destroyed, not by the necessity of fear under the Law, but with a free will with the Law, shall they who believe on Me, confess unto Him; and because I am in them, I will confess. 8. ”The Lord is the strength of His people” (ver. 8). Not that people ”ignorant of the righteousness of God, and willing to establish their own.” For they thought not themselves strong in themselves: for the Lord is the strength of His people, struggling in this life’s difficulties with the devil. ”And the protector of the salvation of His Christ.” That, having saved them by His Christ after the strength of war, He may protect them at the last with the immortality of peace.

9. ”Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance” (ver. 9). I intercede therefore, after My Mesh hath flourished again, because Thou hast said, ”Desire of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance;” ”Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance:” for ”all Mine are Thine.” ”And rule them, and set them up even for even” And rule them in this temporal life, and raise them from hence into life eternal.

Psalm 29

A Psalm OF David Himself, OF The Consummation OF The Tabernacle. 1. A Psalm of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand, of the perfection of the Church in this world, where she wars in time against the devil. 2. The Prophet speaks, "Bring unto the Lord, O ye Sons of God, bring unto the Lord the young of rams" (ver. 1). Bring unto the Lord yourselves, whom the Apostles, the leaders of the flocks, have begotten by the Gospel. "Bring unto the Lord glory and honour" (ver. 2). By your works let the Lord be glorified and honoured. "Bring unto the Lord glory to His name." Let Him be made known gloriously throughout the world. "Worship the Lord in His holy court." Worship the Lord in your heart enlarged and sanctified. For ye are His regal holy habitation. 3. "The Voice of the Lord is upon the waters" (ver. 3). The Voice of Christ is upon the people. "The God of majesty hath thundered." The God of majesty, from the cloud of the flesh, hath awfully preached repentance. "The Lord is upon many waters." The Lord Jesus Himself, after that He sent forth His Voice upon the people, and so.

4. "The Voice of the Lord is in power" (ver. 4). The Voice of the Lord now in them themselves, making them powerful. "The Voice of the Lord is in great might." The Voice of the Lord working great things in them. 5. "The Voice of the Lord breaking the cedars" (ver. 5). The Voice of the Lord humbling the proud in brokenness of heart. "The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus." The Lord by repentance shall break them that are lifted on high by the splendour of earthly nobility, when to confound them He shall have "chosen the base things of this world," in the which to display His Divinity. 6. "And shall bruise them as the calf of Libanus" (ver. 6). And when their proud exaltation hath been cut off, He will lay them low after the imitation of His Own humility, who like a calf was led to slaughter by the nobility of this world. "For the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers agreed together against the Lord, and against His Christ." "And the Beloved is as the young of the unicorns." For even He the Beloved, and the Only One of the Father, "emptied Himself" of His glory; and was made man, like a child of the Jews, that were "ignorant of God's righteousness," and proudly boasting of their own righteousness as peculiarly theirs.

7. "The Voice of the Lord cutting short the flame of fire" (ver. 7). The Voice of the Lord, without any harm to Himself, passing through all the excited ardour of them that persecute Him, or dividing the furious rage of His persecutors, so that some should say, "Is not this

haply the very Christ;" others, "Nay; but He deceiveth the people:" and so cutting short their mad tumult, as to pass some over into His love, and leave others in their malice. 8. "The Voice of the Lord moving the wilderness" (ver. 8). The Voice of the Lord moving to the faith the Gentiles once "without hope, and without God in the world;" where no prophet, no preacher of God's word, as it were, no man had dwelt. "And the Lord will move the desert of Cades." And then the Lord will cause the holy word of His Scriptures to be fully known, which was abandoned by the Jews who understood it not.

9. "The Voice of the Lord perfecting the stags" (ver. 9). For the Voice of the Lord hath first perfected them that overcame and repelled the envonomed tongues. "And will reveal the woods." And then will He reveal to them the darknesses of the Divine books, and the shadowy depths of the mysteries, where they feed with freedom. "And in His temple doth every man speak of His glory." And in His Church all born again to an eternal hope praise God, each for His own gift, which He hath received from the Holy Spirit. 10. "The Lord inhabiteth the deluge" (ver. 10). The Lord therefore first inhabiteth the deluge of this world in His Saints, kept safely in the Church, as in the ark. "And the Lord shall sit a King for ever." And afterward He will sit reigning in them for ever. 11. "The Lord will give strength to His people" (ver. 11). For the Lord will give strength to His people fighting against the storms and whirlwinds of this world, for peace in this world He hath not promised them. "The Lord will bless His people in peace." And the same Lord will bless His people, affording them peace in Himself; for, saith He, "My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you."

Psalm 30

TO The End, The Psalm OF The Canticle OF The Dedication OF The House, OF David Himself. 1. To the end, a Psalm of the joy of the Resurrection, and the change, the renewing of the body to an immortal state, and not only of the Lord, but also of the whole Church. For in the former Psalm the tabernacle was finished, wherein we dwell in the time of war: but now the house is dedicated, which will abide in peace everlasting. 2. It is then whole Christ who speaketh. "I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up" (ver. 1). I will praise Thy high Majesty, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. "Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me." And those, who have so often endeavoured to oppress Me with various persecutions throughout the world, Thou hast not made to rejoice over Me.

3. "O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me" (ver. 2). O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and I no longer hear about a body enfeebled and sick by mortality. 4. "O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell, and Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit" (ver. 3).Thou hast saved Me from the condition of profound darkness, and the lowest slough of corruptible flesh. 5. "Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His." The prophet seeing these future things, rejoiceth, and saith, "Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. And make confession of the remembrance of His holiness" (ver. 4). And make confession to Him, that He hath not forgotten the sanctification, wherewith He hath sanctified you, although all this intermediate period belong to your desires. 6. "For in His indignation is wrath" (ver. 5). For He hath avenged against you the first sin, for which you have paid by death. "And life in His will." And life eternal, whereunto you could not return by any strength of your own, hath He given, because He so would. "In the evening weeping will tarry." Evening began, when the light of wisdom withdrew from sinful man, when he was condemned to death: from this evening weeping will tarry, as long as God's people are, amid labours and temptations, awaiting the day of the Lord. "And exultation in the morning." Even to the morning, when there will be the exultation of the resurrection, which hath shone forth by anticipation in the morning resurrection of the Lord.

7. "But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever" (ver. 6). But I, that people which was speaking from the first, said in mine abundance, suffering now no more any want, "I shall not be moved for ever." 8. "O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty" (ver. 7). But that this my abundance, O Lord, is not of myself, but that in Thy will

Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty, I have learnt from this, "Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled;" for Thou hast sometimes turned away Thy Face from the sinner, and I became troubled, when the illumination of Thy knowledge withdrew from me. 9. "Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray" (ver. 8). And bringing to mind that time of my trouble and misery, and as it were established therein, I hear the voice of Thy First-Begotten, my Head, about to die for me, and saying "Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto My God will I pray."

10. "What profit" is there in the shedding of My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? "Shall dust confess unto Thee?" For if I shall not rise immediately, and My body shall become corrupt, "shall dust confess unto Thee?" that is, the crowd of the ungodly, whom I shall justify by My resurrection? "Or declare Thy truth?" Or for the salvation of the rest declare Thy truth? 11. "The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me, the Lord hath become My helper." Nor did "He suffer His holy One to see corruption" (ver. 10). 12. "Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me" (ver. 11). Whom I, the Church, having received, the First-Begotten from the dead, now in the dedication of Thine house, say, "Thou hast turned my mourning into joy to me. Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." Thou hast torn off the veil of my sins, the sadness of my mortality; and hast girded me with the first robe, with immortal gladness.

13. "That my glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked" (ver. 12). That now, not my humiliation, but my glory should not lament, but should sing unto Thee, for that now out of humiliation Thou hast exalted me; and that I should not be pricked with the consciousness of sin, with the fear of death, with the fear of judgment. "O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever." And this is my glory, O Lord, my God, that I should confess unto Thee for ever, that I have nothing of myself, but that all my good is of Thee, who art "God, All in all."

Psalm 31

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself, AN Ecstasy. 1. To the end a Psalm of David Himself, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions. For the word ecstasy, which is added to the title, signifies a transport of the mind, which is produced either by a panic, or by some revelation. But in this Psalm the panic of the people of God troubled by the persecution of all the heathen, and by the failing of faith throughout the world, is principally seen. But first the Mediator Himself speaks: then the People redeemed by His Blood gives thanks: at last in trouble it speaks at length, which is what belongs to the ecstasy; but the Person of the Prophet himself is twice interposed, near the end, and at the end. 2. "In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me not be put to confusion for ever" (ver. 1). In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me never be confounded, whilst they shall insult Me as one like other men. "In Thy righteousness rescue Me, and deliver Me." And in Thy righteousness rescue Me from the pit of death, and deliver Me out of their company.

3. "Bend down Thine ear unto Me" (ver. 2). Hear Me in My humiliation, nigh at hand unto Me. "Make haste to deliver Me." Defer not to the end of the world, as with all who believe on Me, My separation from sinners. "Be unto Me a God who protecteth Me." Be unto Me God, and Protector. "And a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save Me." And as a house, wherein taking refuge I may be saved. 4. "For Thou art My strength, and My refuge" (ver. 3). For Thou art unto Me My strength to bear My persecutors, and My refuge to escape them. "And for Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be My guide, and shalt nourish Me." And that by Me Thou mayest be known to all the Gentiles. I will in all things follow Thy will; and, by assembling, by degrees, Saints unto Me, Thou shall fulfil My body, and My perfect stature.

5. "Thou shalt bring Me out of this trap, which they have hidden for Me" (ver. 4). Thou shalt bring Me out of these snares, which they have hidden for Me. "For Thou art My Protector." 6. "Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (ver. 5). To Thy power I commend My Spirit, soon to receive It back. "Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth?" Let the people too, redeemed by the Passion of their Lord, and joyful in the glorifying of their Head, say, "Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." 7. "Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly" (ver. 6). Thou hatest them that hold to the false happiness of the world. "But I have trusted in the Lord." 8. "I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy:" which doth not deceive me. "For Thou hast regarded My humiliation:" wherein Thou hast subjected me to

vanity in hope. ”Thou hast saved my soul from necessities” (ver. 7). Thou hast saved my soul from the necessities of fear, that with a free love it may serve Thee.

9. ”And hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy” (ver. 8). And hast not shut me up, that I should have no opening for recovering unto liberty, and be given over for ever into the power of the devil, ensnaring me with the desire of this life, and terrifying me with death. ”Thou hast set my feet in a large room.” The resurrection of my Lord being known, and mine own bring promised me, my love, having been brought out of the straits of fear, walks abroad in continuance, into the expanse of liberty. 10. ”Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled” (ver. 9). But what is this unlooked-for cruelty of the persecutors, striking such dread into me? ”Have mercy on me, O Lord .” For I am now no more alarmed for death, but for torments and tortures. ”Mine eye hath been disordered by anger.” I had mine eye upon Thee, that Thou shouldest not abandon me: Thou art angry, and hast disordered it. ”My soul, and my belly.” By the same anger my soul hath been disturbed, and my memory, whereby I retained what my God hath suffered for me, and what He hath promised me.

11. ”For my life hath failed in pain” (ver 10). For my life is to confess Thee, but it failed in pain, when the enemy had said, Let them be tortured until they deny Him. ”And my years in groanings.” The time that I pass in this world is not taken away from me by death, but abides, and is spent in groanings. ”My strength hath been weakened by want” I want the heath of this body, and racking pains come on me: I want the dissolution of the body, and death forbears to come: and in this want my confidence hath been weakened. ”And my bones have been disturbed.” And my stedfastness hath been disturbed. 12. ”I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies” (ver 11). All the wicked are my enemies; and nevertheless they for their wickednesses are tortured only till they confess: I then have overpassed their reproach, I, whose confession death doth not follow, but racking pains follow upon it. ”And to my neighbours too much.” This hath seemed too much to them, who were already drawing near to know Thee, and to hold the faith that I hold. ”And a fear to mine acquaintance.” And into my very acquaintance I struck fear by the example of my dreadful tribulation. ”They that did see me, fled without from me.” Because they did not understand my inward and invisible hope, they fled from me into things outward and visible.

13. ”I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart” (ver. 12). And they have forgotten me, as if I were dead from their hearts. ”I have become as a lost vessel.” I have seemed to myself to be lost to all the Lord’s service, living in this world, and gaining none, when all were afraid to join themselves unto me. 14. ”For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circuit” (ver. 13). For I have heard many rebuking me, in the pilgrimage of this world near me, following the circuit of time, and refusing to return with me to the eternal country. ”Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul.” That my soul, which should by death easily escape from their power, might consent unto them, they imagined a device, whereby they would not suffer me even to die.

15. "But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God" (ver. 14). For Thou hast not changed, that Thou shouldest not save, Who dost correct 16. "In Thy hands" are "my lots" (ver. 15). In Thy power are my lots. For I see no desert for which out of the universal ungodliness of the human race Thou hast elected me particularly to salvation. And though there be with Thee some just and secret order in my election, yet I, from whom this is hid, have attained by lot unto my Lord's vesture. "Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me," 17. "Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant" (ver. 16). Make it known to men, who do not think that I belong unto Thee, that Thy Face is bent upon me, and that I serve Thee. "Save me in Thy mercy."

18. "O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee" (ver. 17). O Lord, let me not be put to shame by those who insult me, for that I have called upon Thee. "Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell." Let them rather who call upon stones be ashamed, and made to dwell with darkness. 19. "Let the deceitful lips be made dumb" (ver. 18). In making known to the peoples Thy mysteries wrought in me, strike with dumb amazement the lips of them that invent falsehood of me. "Which speak iniquity against the Righteous, in pride and contempt." Which speak iniquity against Christ, in their pride and contempt of Him as a crucified man. 20. "How great" is "the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord" (ver. 19). Here the Prophet exclaims, having sight of all this, and admiring how manifoldly plenteous is Thy sweetness, O Lord. "Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee." Even those, whom Thou correctest, Thou lovest much: but lest they should go on negligently from relaxed security, Thou hidest from them the sweetness of Thy love, for whom it is profitable to fear Thee. "Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee." But Thou hast perfected this sweetness for them that hope in Thee. For Thou dost not withdraw from them what they look for perseveringly even unto the end. "In sight of the sons of men." For it does not escape the notice of the sons of men, who now live no more after Adam, but after the Son of Man. "Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance:" which seat Thou shalt preserve for everlasting in the hidden place of the knowledge of Thee for them that hope in Thee. "From the troubling of men." So that now they suffer no more trouble from men.

21. "Thou writ protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues" (ver. 20). But here meanwhile whilst evil tongues murmur against them, saying, Who hath come thence? Thou wilt protect them in the tabernacle, that of faith in those things, which the Lord wrought and endured for us in time. 22. "Blessed be the Lord; for He hath made His mercy marvellous, in the city of compassing" (ver. 21). Blessed be the Lord, for after the correction of the sharpest persecutions He hath made His mercy marvellous to all throughout the world, in the circuit of human society. 23. "I said in my ecstasy" (ver. 22). Whence that people again speaking saith, I said in my fear, when the heathen were raging horribly against me. "I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine eyes." For if Thou hadst regard to me, Thou wouldest not suffer me to endure these things. "Therefore Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I cried unto Thee." Therefore putting a limit to correction, and

showing that I have part in Thy care, Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I raised it high out of tribulation.

24. "Love the Lord, all ye His saints" (ver. 23). The Prophet again exhorts, having sight of these things, and saith, "Love the Lord, all ye His saints; for the Lord will require truth." Since "if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?" "And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly." And He will repay them who even when conquered are not converted, because they are very proud. 25. "Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened" (ver. 24): working good without fainting, that ye may reap in due season. "All ye who trust in the Lord:" that is, ye who duly fear and worship Him, trust ye in the Lord.

Psalm 32

TO David Himself; For Understanding. 1. To David himself; for understanding; by which it is understood that not by the merits of works, but by the grace of God, man his delivered, confessing his sins. 2. "Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (ver. 1): and whose sins are buried in oblivion. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, nor is there guile in his mouth" (ver. 2): nor has he in his mouth boastings of righteousness, when his conscience is full of sins. 3. "Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old:" because I made not with my mouth "confession unto salvation," all firmness in mehas grown old in infirmity. "Through my roaring all the day long" (ver. 3): when I was ungodly and a blasphemer, crying against God, as though defending and excusing my sins. 4. "Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me:" because, through the continual punishment of Thy scourges, "I was turned in misery, while a thorn was fixed through me" (ver. 4): I was made miserable by knowing my misery, being pricked with an evil conscience.

5. "I acknowledged my sin, and my unrighteousness have I not hid:" that is, my unrighteousuess have I not concealed. "I said, I will confess against myself my unrighteousness to the Lord:" I said, I will confess, not against God (as in my ungodly crying, when I kept silence), but against myself, my unrighteousness to the Lord. "And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart" (ver. 5); hearing the word of confession in the heart, before it was uttered with the voice. 6. "For this shall every one that is holy pray unto Thee in an acceptable time:" for this wickedness of heart shall every one that is righteous pray unto Thee. For not by their own merits will they be holy, but by that acceptable time, that is, at His coming, who redeemed us from sin. "Nevertheless in the flood of great waters they shall not come nigh him" (ver. 6): nevertheless, let none think, when the end has come suddenly, as in the days of Noah, that there remaineth a place of confession, whereby he may draw nigh unto God.

7. "Thou art my refuge from the pressures, which have compassed me about:" Thou art my refuge from the pressure of my sins, which hath compassed my heart. "O Thou, my Rejoicing, deliver me from them that compass me about" (ver. 7): in Thee is my joy: deliver me from the sorrow which my sins bring upon me. 8. Diapsalma. The answer of God: "I will give thee understanding, and will set thee in the way in which thou shalt go;" I will

give thee understanding after cofession, that thou depart not from the way in which thou shouldest go; lest thou wish to be in thine own power. "I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee" (ver. 8); so will make sure upon thee My Love. 9. "Be not ye like unto horse or mule, which have no understanding:" and therefore would govern themselves. But saith the Prophet, "Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle." Do Thou then, O God, unto them "that will not come nigh Thee" (ver. 9), what man doth to horse and mule, that by scourges Thou make them to bear Thy rule.

10. "Many are the scourges of the sinner:" much is he scourged, who, confessing not his sins to God, would be his own ruler. "But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy compasseth him about" (ver. 10); but he that trusteth in the Lord, and submitteth himself to His rule, mercy shall compass him about. 11. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous:" be glad, and rejoice, ye righteous, not in yourselves, but in the Lord. "And glory, all ye that are right in heart" (ver. 11): and glory in Him, all ye who understand that it is right to be subject unto Him, that so ye may be placed above all things beside.

Psalm 33

1. ”Rejoice in the Lord, O ye rigtheous:” rejoice, O ye righteous, not in yourselves, for that is not safe; but in the Lord. ”For praise is comely to the upright” (ver. 1): these praise the Lord, who submit themselves unto the Lord; for else they are distorted and perverse. 2. ”Praise the Lord with harp:” praise the Lord, presenting unto Him your bodies a living sacrifice. ”Sing unto Him with the psaltery for ten strings” (ver. 2): let your members be servants to the love of God, and of your neighbour, in which are kept both the three and the seven commandments. 3. ”Sing unto Him a new song:” sing unto Him a song of the grace of faith. ”Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation” (ver. 3): sing skillfully unto Him with rejoicing. 4. ”For the Word of the Lord is right:” for the Word of the Lord is right, to make you that which of yourselves ye cannot be. ”And all His works are done in faith” (ver. 4): lest any think that by the merit of works he hath arrived at faith, when in faith are done all the works which God Himself loveth.

5. ”He loveth Mercy and Judgment:” for He loveth Mercy, which now He showeth first; and Judgment, wherewithHe exacteth that which He hath first shown. ”The earth is full is full of the Mercy of the Lord” (ver. 5): throughout the whole world are sins forgiven unto men by the Mercy of the Lord. 6. ”By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made firm:” Lord were the righteous made strong. ”And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth” (ver. 6). And all their faith by His Holy Spirit. 7. ”He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle:” He gathered the people of the world together, to confession of mortified sin, lest through pride they flow too freely. ”He layeth up the up the deep in storehouses” (ver. 7): and keepeth in them His secrets for riches. 8. ”Let all the earth fear the Lord:” let every sinner fear, that so he may cease to sin. ”Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him” (ver. 8): not of the terrors of men, or of any creature, but of Him let them stand in awe.

9. ”For He spake, and they were made:” for no other one made those things which are to fear; but He spake, and they were made. ”He commanded, and they were created” (ver. 9): He commanded by His Word, and they were created. 10. ”The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought;” of them that seek not His Kingdom, but kingdoms of their own. ”He maketh the devices of the people of none effect:” of them that covet earthly happiness. ”And reproveth the counsels of princes” (ver. 10): of them that seek to rule over such peoples.

11. "But the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever;" but the counsel of the Lord, whereby He maketh none blessed but him that submitteth unto Himself, standeth for ever. The thoughts of His Heart to all generations" (ver. 11): the thoughts of His Wisdom are not mutable, but endure to all generations.

12. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord:" one nation is blessed, belonging to the heavenly city, which hath not chosen save the Lord for their God: "And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (ver. 12): and which not of itself, but by the gift of God, hath been chosen, that He by possessing it may not suffer it to be uncared for and miserable. 13. "The Lord looketh from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men" (ver. 13). From the souls of the righteous, the Lord looketh mercifully upon all who would rise to newness of life. 14. "From His prepared habitation:" from His habitation of assumed Humanity, which He prepared for Himself. "He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth" (ver. 14): He looketh mercifully upon all who live in the flesh, that He may be over them in ruling them.

15. "He fashioneth their hearts singly:" He giveth spiritually to their hearts their proper gifts, so that neither the whole body may be eye, nor the whole heating; but that one in this manner, another in that manner, may be incorporated with Christ. "He understandeth all their works" (ver. 15). Before Him are all their works understood. 16. "A king shall not be saved by much strength:" he shall not be saved who ruleth his own flesh, if he presume much upon his own strength. "Neither shall a giant be saved by much strength" (ver. 16): nor shall he be saved whoever warreth against the habit of his own lust, or against the devil and his angels, if he trust much to his own might. 17. "A horse is a deceitful thing for safety:" he is deceived, who thinketh either that through men he gaineth salvation received among men, or that by the impetuosity of his own courage he is defended from destruction. "In the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved" (ver. 17).

18. "Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him:" because if thou seek salvation, behold, the love of the Lord is upon them that fear Him. "Upon them that hope in His mercy" (ver. 18): that hope not in their own strength, but in His mercy. 19. "To denver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine" (ver. 19). To give them the nourishment of the Word, and of Everlasting Truth, which they lost while presuming on their own strength, and therefore have not even their own strength, from lack of righteousness. 20. "My soul shall be patient for the Lord:" that hereafter it may be filled with dainties incorruptible, meanwhile, whilst here it remaineth, my soul shall be patient for the Lord. "For He is our Helper and Defender" (ver. 20): our Helper He is, while we endeavour after Him; and our Defender, while we resist the adversary.

21. "For our heart shall rejoice in Him:" for not in ourselves, wherein without Him there is great need; but in Himself shall our heart rejoice. "And we have trusted in His holy Name" (ver. 21); and therefore have we trusted that we shall come to God, because unto us absent hath He sent, through faith, His own Name. 22. "Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee" (ver. 22): let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us; for hope confoundeth not, because we have hoped in Thee.

Psalm 34

A Psalm OF David, When HE Changed His Countenance Before Abimelech, And HE Sent Him Away, And HE Departed.

1. Because there was there a sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and afterwards He of His Own Body and Blood appointed a sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek; He changed then His Countenance in the Priesthood, and sent away the kingdom of the Jews, and came to the Gentiles. What then is, "He affected"? He was full of affection. For what is so full of affection as the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, seeing our infirmity, that He might deliver us from everlasting death, underwent temporal death with such great injury and contumely? "And He drummed:" because a drum is not made, except when a skin is extended on wood; and David drummed, to signify that Christ should be crucified. But, "He drummed upon the doors of the city:" what are "the doors of the city," but our hearts which we had closed against Christ, who by the drum of His Cross hath opened the hearts of mortal men? "And was carried in His Own Hands:" how "carried in His Own Hands"? Because when He commended His Own Body and Blood, He took into His Hands that which the faithful know; and in a manner carried Himself, when He said, "This is My Body." "And He fell down at the doors of the gate;" that is, He humbled Himself. For this it is, to fall down even at the very beginning of our faith. For the door of the gate is the beginning of faith; whence beginneth the Church, and arriveth at last even unto sight: that as it believeth those things which it seeth not, it may deserve to enjoy them, when it shall have begun to see face to face. So is the title of the Psalm; briefly we have heard it; let us now hear the very words of Him that affecteth, and drummeth upon the doors of the city.

2. "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be ever in my mouth" (ver. 1). So speaketh Christ, so also let a Christian speak; for a Christian is in the Body of Christ; and therefore was Christ made Man, that that Christian might be enabled to be an Angel, who saith, "I will bless the Lord at all times." When shall I "bless the Lord"? When He blesseth thee? When the goods of this world abound? When thou hast great abundance of corn, oil, and wine, of gold and silver, of servants and cattle; when this mortal health remaineth unwounded and sound; when all that are born to thee grow up, nothing is withdrawn by immature death, happiness wholly reigneth in thy house, and all things overflow around thee; then shalt thou bless the Lord? No; but "at all times." Therefore both then, and when

according to the time, or according to the scourges of our Lord God, these things are troubled, are taken away, are seldom born to thee, and born pass away. For these things come to pass, and thence followeth penury, need, labour, pain, and temptation. But thou, who hast sung, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall be ever in my mouth," both when He giveth them, bless; and when He taketh them away, bless. For it is He that giveth, it is He that taketh away: but Himself from him that blesseth Him He taketh not away.

3. But who is it that blesseth the Lord at all times, except the humble in heart. For very humility taught our Lord in His Own Body and Blood: because when He commendeth His Own Body and Blood, He commendeth His Humility, in that which is written in this history, in that seeming madness of David, which we have passed by, "And his spittle ran down over his beard." When the Apostle was read, Ye heard the same spittle, but running down over the beard. One saith perhaps, What spittle have we heard? Was it not read but now, where the Apostle saith, "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom?" But now it was read, "But we preach," saith he, "Christ crucified" (for then He drummed), "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Because the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men." For spittle signifieth foolishness; spittle signifieth weakness. But if the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men; let not the spittle as it were offend thee, but observe that it runneth down over the beard: for as by the spittle, weakness; so by the beard, strength is signified. He covered then His Strength by the body of His Weakness, and that which without was weak, appeared as it were in spittle; but within His Divine Strength was covered as a beard. Therefore humility is commended unto us. Be humble if thou wouldest bless the Lord at all times, and that His praise should be ever in thy mouth. ...

4. But wherefore doth man bless the Lord at all times? Because he is humble. What is it to be humble? To take not praise unto himself. Who would himself be praised, is proud: who is not proud, is humble. Wouldest thou not then be proud? That thou mayest be humble, say what is here written; "In the Lord shall my soul be praised: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad" (ver. 2). Those then who will not be praised in the Lord, are not humble, but fierce, rough, lifted up, proud. Gentle cattle would the Lord have; be thou the Lord's jumentum; that is, be thou humble. He sitteth upon thee, He ruleth thee: fear not lest thou stumble, and fall headlong: that indeed is thy infirmity; but consider Who sitteth upon thee. Thou art an ass's colt, but thou carriest Christ. For even He on an ass's colt came into the city; and that beast was gentle. ..."Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding." For horse and mule sometimes lift up their neck, and by their own fierceness throw off their rider. They are tamed with the bit, with bridle, with stripes, until they learn to submit, and to carry their master. But thou, before thy jaws are bruised with the bridle, be humble, and carry thy Lord: wish not praise for thyself, but praised be He who sitteth upon thee, and say thou, "In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." ...

5. Now followeth, "O magnify the Lord with me" (ver. 3). Who is this that exhorteth us, that we should magnify the Lord with him? Whoever, Brethren, is in the body of Christ, ought for this to labour, that the Lord may be magnified with him. For he loveth the Lord, whoever he is. And how doth he love Him? So as not to envy his fellow-lover. ...Let them blush who so love God as to envy others. Abandoned men love a charioteer, and whoever loveth a charioteer or hunter, wisheth the whole people to love with him, and exhorteth, saying, Love with me this pantomime, love with me this or that shame. He calleth among the people that shame may be loved with him; and doth not a Christian call in the Church, that the Truth of God may be loved with him? Stir up then love in yourselves, Brethren; and call to every one of yours, and say, "O magnify the Lord with me." Let there be in you that fervour. Wherefore are these things recited and explained? If ye love God, bring quickly to the love of God all who are joined unto you, and all who are in your house; if the Body of Christ is loved by you, that is, if the unity of the Church, bring them quickly to enjoy, and say, "O magnify the Lord with me."

6. "And let us exalt His Name together." What is, "let us exalt His Name together"? That is, in one. For many copies so have it, "O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one." Whether it be said, "together," or "in one," it is the same thing. Therefore bring quickly whom ye can, by exhorting, by transporting, by beseeching, by disputing, by rendering a reason, with meekness, with gentleness. Bring them quickly unto love; that if they magnify the Lord, they may magnify Him in one. ... 7. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me" (ver. 4). Where heard the Lord? Within. Where giveth He? Within. There thou prayest, there thou art heard, there thou art blessed. Thou hast prayed, thou art heard, thou art blessed; and he knoweth not who standeth by thee: it is all carried on in secret, as the Lord saith in the Gospel, "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." When therefore thou enterest into thy chamber, thou enterest into thy heart. Blessed are they who rejoice when they enter into their heart, and find therein nought of evil. ...

8. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me." Who then are not heard, seek not the Lord. Attend, Holy Brethren; he said not, I sought gold from the Lord, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord long life, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord this or that, and He heard me. It is one thing to seek anything from the Lord, another to seek the Lord Himself. "I sought" (saith he) "the Lord, and He heard me." But thou, when thou prayest, saying, Kill that my enemy, seekest not the Lord, but, as it were, makest thyself a judge over thy enemy, and makest thy God an executioner. How knowest thou that he is not better than thou, whose death thou seekest? In that very thing haply he is, that he seeketh not thine. Therefore seek not from the Lord anything without, but seek the Lord Himself, and He will hear thee, and while thou yet speakest, He will say, "Lo, here I am." ...

9. I have said who was the exhorter, namely, that lover who would not alone embrace what he loveth, and saith, "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened" (ver. 5). For he saith what

he himself proved. For some spiritual person in the Body of Christ, or even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself according to the flesh, the Head exhorting His Own Members, saith; what? "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Or rather some spiritual Christian inviteth us to approach to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But let us approach to Him and be lightened; not as the Jews approached to Him, that they might be darkened; for they approached to Him that they might crucify Him: let us approach to Him that we may receive His Body and Blood. They by Him crucified were darkened; we by eating and drinking The Crucified are lightened. "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Lo, this is said to the Gentiles. Christ was crucified amid the Jews raging and seeing; the Gentiles were absent; lo, they have approached who were in darkness, and they who saw not are lightened. Whereby approach the Gentiles? By following with faith, by longing with the heart, by running with charity. Thy feet are thy charity. Have two feet, be not lame. What are thy two feet? The two commandments of love, of thy God, and of thy Neighbour.

With these feet run thou unto God, approach unto Him, for He hath both exhorted thee to run, and hath Himself shed His Own Light, as he hath magnificently and divinely continued. "And your faces shall not be ashamed. "Approach" (saith he) "unto Him, and be ye lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. No face shall be ashamed but of the proud. Wherefore? Because he would be lifted up, and when he hath suffered insult, or ignominy, or mischance in this world, or any affliction, he is ashamed. But fear not thou, approach unto Him, and thou shalt not be ashamed. ...

10. As the Prophet testifieth, "The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him" (ver. 6). He teacheth thee how thou mayest be heard. Therefore art thou not heard, because thou art rich. Lest haply thou say, thou criedst and wast not heard, hear wherefore; "The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him." As poor cry thou, and the Lord heareth. And how shall I cry as poor? By not, if thou hast aught, presuming therefrom upon thy own strength: by understanding that thou art needy; by understanding that so long art thou poor, as thou hast not Him who maketh thee rich. But how did the Lord hear him? "And saved him out of all his troubles." And how saveth He men out of all their troubles? "The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them" (ver. 7). So it is written, brethren, not as some bad copies have it, "The Lord shall send His Angel round about them that fear Him, and He shall deliver them:" but thus, "The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them." Whom called He here the Angel of the Lord, who shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is called in Prophecy, the Angel of the great Counsel, the Messenger of the great Counsel; so the Prophets called Him. Even He then, the Angel of the great Counsel, that is, the Messenger, shall send unto them that fear the Lord, and shall deliver them. Fear not then lest thou be hid: wheresoever thou hast feared the Lord, there doth that Angel know thee, who shall send to succour thee, and shall deliver thee.

11. Now will He speak openly of the same Sacrament, whereby He was carried in His Own Hands. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (ver. 8). Doth not the Psalm now open itself,

and show thee that seeming insanity and constant madness, the same insanity and sober inebriety of that David, who in a figure showed I know not what, when in the person of king Achis they said to him, How is it? Widen the Lord said, "Except a man eat My Flesh and drink My Blood,he shall have no life in him"? And they in whom reigned Achis, that is, error and ignorance, said; what said they? "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" If thou art ignorant, "Taste and see that the Lord is good:" but if thou understandest not, thou art king Achis: David shall change His Countenance and shall depart from thee, and shall quit thee, and shall depart.

12. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Why needeth this to be explained at length? Whoever trusteth not in the Lord, is miserable. Who is there that trusteth not in the Lord? He that trusteth in himself. ...

13. "O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him" (ver. 9). For many therefore will not fear God the Lord, lest they suffer hunger. It is said to them, Defraud not; and they say, Whence can I feed myself? No art can be without imposture; no business can be without fraud. But fraud God punisheth: fear God. But if I should fear God, I shall not have whence to live. "O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. He promiseth plenty to him that trembleth, and doubteth, lest haply if he should fear God, he should lose things superfluous. The Lord fed thee despising Him, and will He desert thee fearing Him? Attend, and say not, Such an one is rich, and I am poor. I fear the Lord, he by not fearing how much has he gained, and I by fearing am bare! See what follows; "The rich do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (ver. 10). If thoureceive it according to the letter, He seemeth to deceive thee, for thou seest that many rich men that are wicked die in their riches, and are not made poor while they live; thou seest them grow old, and come even to the end of life amid great abundance and riches.

Thou seest their funeral pomp celebrated with great profusion, the man himself brought rich even to the sepulchre, having expired in beds of ivory, his family weeping around; and thou sayest in thy mind, if haply thou knowest some both sins and crimes done by him: I know what things that man hath done; lo, he hath grown old, he hath died in his bed, his friends follow him to the grave, his funeral is celebrated with all this pomp; I know what he hath done; the Scripture has deceived me, and has spoken falsely, where I hear and sing; "The rich do lack and suffer hunger. When was this man in need? when did he suffer hunger? "But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Daily I rise up to Church, daily I bend the knee, daily I seek the Lord, and have nothing good: this man sought not the Lord, and he hath died in the midst of all these good things! Thus thinking, the snare of offence choketh him; for he seeketh mortal food on the earth, and seeketh not a true reward in heaven, and so he putteth his head into the devil's noose, his jaws are tied close, and the devil holdeth him fast unto evil doing, that so he may imitate the evil men, whom he seeth to die in such plenty.

14. Therefore understand it not so. ...When thou art filled with spiritual riches, canst thou be poor? And was he therefore rich, because he had a bed of ivory; and art thou poor who hast the chamber of thy heart filled with such jewelry of virtues, justice, truth, charity, faith, endurance? Unfold thy riches, if thou hast them, and compare them with the riches of the rich. But such an one has found in the market mules of great value, andhas bought them. If thou couldest find faith to be sold, how much wouldest thou give for that, which God willeth that thou shouldest have gratis, and thou art ungrateful? Those rich then lack, they lack, and what is heavier, they lack bread. ...For He hath said, "I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven." And again, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing:" but what manner of good, I have already said.

15. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (ver. 11). Ye think, brethren, that I say this: think that David saith it; think that an Apostle saith it; nay think that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith it; "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me." Let us hearken unto Him together: hearken ye unto Him through us. For He would teach us; He the Humble, He that drummeth, He that affecteth, would teach us. ...

16. "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days?" (ver. 12). He asketh a question. Doth not every one among you answer, I? Is there any man among you that loveth not life, that is, that desireth not life, and loveth not to see good days? Do ye not daily thus murmur, and thus speak; How long shall we suffer these things? Daily are they worse and worse: in our fathers' time were days more joyful, were days better. O if thou couldest ask those same, thy fathers, in like manner would they murmur to thee of their own days. Our fathers were happy, miserable are we, evil days have we: such an one ruled over us, we thought that after his death might some refreshing be given to us; worse things have come: O God, show unto us good days! "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days?" Let him not seek here good days. A good thing he seeketh, but not in its right place doth he seek it. As, if thou shouldest seek some righteous man in a country, wherein he lived not, it would be said to thee, A good man thou seekest, a great man thou seekest, seek him still, but not here; in vain thou seekest him here, thou wilt never find him. Good days thou seekest, together let us seek them, seek not here. ...Read the Scriptures. ...

17. Let not a Christian then murmur, let him see whose steps he followeth: but if he loveth good days, let him hearken unto Him teaching and saying, "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." What wouldest thou? Life and good days. Hear, and do. "Keep thy tongue from evil" (ver. 13). This do. I will not, saith a miserable man, I will not keep my tongue from evil, and yet I desire life and good days. If a workman of thine should say to thee, I indeed lay waste this vineyard, yet I require of thee my reward; thou broughtest me to the vineyard to lop and prune it, I cut away all the useful wood, I will cut short also the very trunks of the vines, that thou have thereon nothing to gather, and when I have done this, thou shall repay to me my labour. Wouldest thou not call him mad? Wouldest thou not drive him from thy house or ever he put his hand to the knife? Such are

those men who would both do evil, and swear falsely, and speak blasphemy against God, and murmur, and defraud, and be drunken, and dispute, and commit adultery, and use charms, and consult diviners, and withal see good days. To such it is said, thou canst not doing ill seek a good reward. If thou art unjust, shall God also be unjust? What shall I do, then? What desirest thou? Life I desire, good days I desire. "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile," that is, defraud not any, lie not to any.

18. But what is, "Depart from evil"? (ver. 14). It is little that thou injure none, murder none, steal not, commit not adultery, do no wrong, speak no false witness; "Depart from evil." When thou hast departed, thou sayest, Now I am safe, I have done all, I shall have life, I shall see good days. Not only saith he, "Depart from evil," but also, "and do good." It is nothing that thou spoil not: clothe the naked. If thou hast not spoiled, thou hast declined from evil; but thou wilt not do good, except thou receive the stranger into thine house. So then depart from evil, as to do good. "Seek peace, and ensue it." He hath not said, Thou shalt have peace here; seek it, and ensue it. Whither shall I ensue it? Whither it hath gone before. For the Lord is our peace, hath risen again, and hath ascended into Heaven. "Seek peace, and ensue it;" because when thou also hast risen, this mortal shall be changed, and thou shall embrace peace there where no man shall trouble thee. For there is perfect peace, where thou wilt not hunger. ...

19. "The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous:" fear not then; labour; the eyes of the Lord are upon thee. "And His Ears are open unto their prayers" (ver. 15). What wouldest thou more? If an householder in a great house should not hearken to a servant murmuring, he would complain, and say, What hardship do we here suffer, and none heareth us. Canst thou say this of God, What hardships I suffer, and none heareth me? If He heard me, haply, sayest thou, He would take away my tribulation: I cry unto Him, and yet have tribulation. Only do thou hold fast His ways, and when thou art in tribulation, He heareth thee. But He is a Physician, and still hast thou something of putrefaction; thou criest out, but still He cutteth, and taketh not away His Hand, until He hath cut as much as pleaseth Him. For that Physician is cruel who heareth a man, and spareth his wound and putrefaction. How do mothers rub their children in the baths for their health. Do not the little ones cry out in their hands? Are they then cruel because they spare not, nor hearken unto their tears? Are they not full of affection? And yet the children cry out, and are not spared. So our God also is full of charity, but therefore seemeth He not to hear, that He may spare and heal us for everlasting.

20. Haply say the wicked, I securely do evil, because the Eyes of the Lord are not upon me: God attendeth to the righteous, me He seeth not, and whatever I do, I do securely. Immediately added the Holy Spirit, seeing the thoughts of men, and said, "But the Face of the Lord is against them that do evil; to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth" (ver. 16).

21. "The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles" (ver. 17). Righteous were the Three Children; out of the furnace cried they unto

the Lord, and in His praises their flames cooled. The flame could not approach nor hurt the innocent and righteous Children praising God, and He delivered them out of the fire. Some one saith, Lo, truly righteous were those who were heard, as it is written, "The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles: but I have cried, and He delivereth me not; either I am not righteous, or I do not the things which He commandeth me, or haply He seeth me not. Fear not: only do what He commandeth; and if He deliver thee not bodily, He will deliver thee spiritually. For He who took out of the fire the Three Children, did He take out of the fire the Maccabees? Did not the first sing hymns in the flames, these last in the flames expire? The God of the Three Children, was not He the God also of the Maccabees? The one He delivered, the other He delivered not. Nay, He delivered both: but the Three Children He so delivered, that even the carnal were confounded; but the Maccabees therefore He delivered not so, that those who persecuted them should go into greater torments, while they thought that they had overcome God's Martyrs.

He delivered Peter, when the Angel came unto him being in prison, and said, "Arise, and go forth," and suddenly his chains were loosed, and he followed the Angel, and He delivered him. Had Peter lost righteousness when He delivered him not from the cross? Did He not deliver him then? Even then He delivered him. Did his long life make him unrighteous? Haply He heard him more at last than at first, when truly He delivered him out of all his troubles. For when He first delivered him, how many things did he suffer afterwards! For thither He sent him at last, where he could have suffered no evil.

22. "The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart; and saveth such as be lowly in spirit" (ver. 18). God is High: let a Christian be lowly. If he would that the Most High God draw nigh unto him, let him be lowly. A great mystery, Brethren. God is above all: thou raisest thyself, and touchest not Him: thou humblest thyself, and He descendeth unto thee. "Many are the troubles of the righteous" (ver. 19): doth He say, "Therefore let Christians be righteous, therefore let them hear My Word, that they may suffer no tribulation? He promiseth not this; but saith, "Many are the troubles of the righteous." Rather, if they be unrighteous they have fewer troubles, if righteous they have many. But after few tribulations, or none, these shall come to tribulation everlasting, whence they shall never be delivered: but the righteous after many tribulations shall come to peace everlasting, where they shall never suffer any evil. "Many are the tribulations of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of all."

23. "The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken" (ver. 20): this also, Brethren, let us not receive carnally. Bones are the firm supports of the faithful. For as in flesh our bones give firmness, so in the heart of a Christian it is faith that gives firmness. The patience then which is in faith, is as the bones of the inner man: this is that which cannot be broken. "The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken. If of our Lord God Jesus Christ he had said this, "The Lord keepeth all the bones of His Son; not one of them shall be broken; as is prefigured of Him also in another place, when the

lamb was spoken of that should be slain, and it was said of it, "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof: then was it fulfilled in the Lord, because when He hung upon the Cross, He expired before they came to the Cross, and found His Body lifeless already, and would not break His legs, that it might be fulfilled which was written. But He gave this promise to other Christians also, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Therefore, Brethren, if we see any Saint suffer tribulation, and haply either by a Physician so cut, or by some persecutor so mangled, that his bones be broken;

let us not say, This man was not righteous, for this hath the Lord promised to His righteous, of whom He said, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Wouldest thou see that He spoke of other bones, those which we called the firm supports of faith, that is, patience and endurance in all tribulations? For these are the bones which are not broken. Hear, and see ye in the very Passion of our Lord, what I say. The Lord was in the middle Crucified; near Him were two thieves: the one mocked, the other believed: the one was condemned, the other justified: the one had his punishment both in this world, and that which shall be, but unto the other said the Lord, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise; and yet those who came brake not the bones of the Lord, but of the thieves they brake: as much were broken the bones of the thief who blasphemed, as of the thief who believed. Where then is that which is spoken, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken"? Lo, unto whom He said, "To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise," could He keep all his bones? The Lord answereth thee: Yea, I kept them: for the firm support of his faith could not be broken by those blows whereby his legs were broken.

24. "The death of sinners is the worst" (ver. 21). Attend, Brethren, for the sake of those things which I said. Truly Great is the Lord, and His Mercy, truly Great is He who gave to us to eat His Body, wherein He suffered such great things, and His Blood to drink. How regardeth He them that think evil and say, "Such an one died ill, by beasts was he devoured: he was not a righteous man, therefore he perished ill; for else would he not have perished. Is he then righteous who dieth in his own house and in his own bed? This then (sayest thou) it is whereat I wonder; because I know the sins and the crimes of this same man, and yet he died well; in his own house, within his own doors, with no injury of travel, with none even in mature age. Hearken, "The death of sinners is worst. What seemeth to thee a good death, is worst if thou couldest see within. Thou seest him outwardly lying on his bed, dost thou see him inwardly carried to hell? Hearken, Brethren, and learn from the Gospel what is the "worst death" of sinners. Were there not two in that age, a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; another a poor man who lay at his door full of sores, and the dogs came and licked his sores, and he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table?

Now it came to pass that the poor man died (righteous was that poor man), and was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. He who saw his body lying at the rich man's door, and no man to bury it, what haply said he? So die he who is my enemy; and whoever persecutes me,

so may I see him. His body is accursed with spitting, his wounds stink; and yet in Abraham's bosom he resteth. If we are Christians, let us believe: if we believe not, Brethren, let none feign himself a Christian. Faith bringeth us to the end. As the Lord spake these things, so are they. Doth indeed an astrologer speak unto thee, and it is true, and doth Christ speak, and it is false? But by what sort of death died the rich man? What sort of death must it not be in purple and fine linen, how sumptuous, how pompous! What funeral ceremonies were there! In what spices was that body buried! And yet when he was in hell, being in torments, from the finger of that despised poor man he desired one drop of water to be poured upon his burning tongue, and obtained it not. Learn then what meaneth, "The death of sinners is worst; and ask not beds covered with costly garments, and to have the flesh wrapped in many rich things, friends exhibiting a show of lamentation, a household beating their breasts, a crowd of attendants going before and following when the body is carried out, marble and gilded memorials.

For if ye ask those things, they answer you what is false, that of many not light sinners, but altogether wicked, the death is best, who have deserved to be so lamented, so embalmed, so covered, so carried out, so entombed. But ask the Gospel, and it will show to your faith the soul of the rich man burning in torments, which was nothing profited by all those honours and obsequies, which to his dead body the vanity of the living did afford.

25. But because there are many kinds of sinners, and not to be a sinner is difficult, or perhaps in this life impossible, he added immediately, of what kind of sinners the death is worst. "And they that hate the righteous one" (saith he) "shall perish." What righteous one, but "Him that justifieth the ungodly"? Whom, but our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also "the propitiation for our sins"? Who then hate Him, have the worst death; because they die in their sins, who are not through Him reconciled to our God. "For the Lord redeemeth the souls of His servants." But according to the soul is death to be understood either the worst or best, not according to bodily either dishonour, or honours which men see. "And none of them which trust in Him shall perish" (ver. 22); this iS the manner of human righteousness, that mortal life, however advanced, because without sin it cannot be, in this perisheth not, while it trusteth in Him, in whom is remission of sins. Amen.

Psalm 35

1. ...The title of it causeth us no delay, for it is both brief, and to be understood not difficult, especially to those nursed in the Church of God. For so it is, "To David himself." The Psalm then is to David himself: now David is interpreted, Strong in hand, or Desirable. The Psalm then is to the Strong in hand, and Desirable, to Him who for us hath overcome death, who unto us hath promised life: for in this is He Strong in hand, that He hath overcome death for us; in this is He Desirable, that He hath promised unto us life eternal. For what stronger than that Hand which touched the bier, and he that was dead rose up? What stronger than that Hand which overcame the world, not armed with steel, but pierced with wood? Or what more desirable than He, whom not having seen, the Martyrs wished even to die, that they might be worthy to come unto Him? Therefore is the Psalm unto Him: to Him let our heart, to Him our tongue sing worthily: if yet Himself shall deign to give somewhat to sing. ...

2. "Judge Thou, O Lord" (saith he), "them that hurt me, and fight Thou against them that fight against me" (ver. 1). "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And whereby doth God this for us? "Take hold" (saith he) "of arms and shield, and rise up to my help" (ver. 2). A great spectacle is it, to see God armed for thee. And what is His Shield, what are His Arms? "Lord," in another place saith the man who here also speaketh, "as with the shield of Thy good-will hast Thou compassed us." But His Arms, wherewith He may not only us defend, but also strike His enemies, if we have well profited, shall we ourselves be. For as we from Him have this, that we be armed, so is He armed from us. But He is armed from those whom He hath made, we are armed with those things which we have received from Him who made us: These our arms the Apostle in a certain place calleth, "The shield of Faith, the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." He hath armed us with such arms as ye have heard, arms admirable, and unconquered, insuperable and shining; spiritual truly and invisible, because we have to fight also against invisible enemies. If thou seest thine enemy, let thine arms be seen. We are armed with faith in those things which we see not, and we overthrow enemies whom we see not. ...

3. "Pour forth the weapon, and stop the way against them that persecute me" (ver. 3). Who are they that persecute thee? Haply thy neighbour, or he whom thou hast offended, or to whom thou hast done wrong, or who would take away what is thine, or against whom thou preachest the truth, or whose sin thou rebukest, or whom living ill by thy well living

thou offendest. There are indeed even these enemies to us, and they persecute us: but other enemies we are taught to know, those against whom we fight invisibly, of whom the Apostle warneth us, saying, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," that is, against men; not against those whom ye see, but against those whom ye see not; "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world, of this darkness." ..."The whole world lieth in wickedness;" therefore the Apostle explained of what world they were rulers, he said, "of this darkness." The rulers of this world, I say, are the rulers of this darkness. ...

4. And what follows? "Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul" (ver. 4): for to this end they seek after it, to destroy it. For I would that they would seek it for good! for in another Psalm he blameth this in men, that there was none who would seek after his soul: "Refuge failed me: there was none that would seek after my soul." Who is this that saith, "There was none that would seek after my soul"? Is it haply He, of whom so long before it was predicted, "They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they numbered all My Bones, they stared and looked upon Me, they have parted My Garments among them, and cast lots for My Vesture"? Now all these things were done before their eyes, and there was none who would seek after His Soul. ...

5. ...Many have been confounded to their health: many, put to shame, have passed over from the persecution of Christ to the society of His members with devoted piety; and this would not have been, had they not been confounded and put to shame. Therefore he wished well to them. ...Let them not go before, but follow; let them not give counsel, but take it. For Peter would go before the Lord, when the Lord spake of His future Passion: he would to Him as it were give counsel for His health. The sick man to the Saviour give counsel for His health! And what said he to the Lord, affirming that His future Passion? "Be it far from Thee, Lord. Be gracious to Thyself. This shall not be to Thee." He would go before that the Lord might follow; and what said He? "Get thee behind Me, Satan." By going before thou art Satan, by following thou wilt be a disciple. The same then is said to these also, "Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that think evil against me." For when they have begun to follow after, now they will not think evil against me, but desire my good.

6. What of others? For all are not so conquered as to be converted and believe: many continue in obstinacy, many preserve in heart the spirit of going before, and if they exert it not, yet they labour with it, and finding opportunity bring it forth. Of such, what followeth? "Let them be as dust before the wind" (ver. 5). "Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth." The wind is temptation; the dust are the ungodly. When temptation cometh, the dust is raised, it neither standeth nor resisteth. "Let them be as dust before the wind, and let the Angel of the Lord trouble them." "Let their way be darkness and slipping" (ver. 6). A horrible way! Darkness alone who feareth not? A slippery way alone who avoids not? In a dark and slippery way how shall thou go? where set foot? These two ills are the great punishments of men: darkness, ignorance; a slippery way, luxury. "And let the Angel of the Lord persecute them;" that they be not able to stand. i For any one in a dark and slippery way, when he seeth that if he move his foot he will fall,

and there is no light before his feet, haply resolveth to wait until light come; but here is the Angel of the Lord persecuting them. These things he predicted would come upon them, not as though he wished them to happen. Although the Prophet in the Spirit of God so speaketh these things, even as God doth the same, with sure judgment, with a judgment good, righteous, holy, tranquil; not moved with wrath, not with bitter jealousy, not with desire of wreaking enmities, but of punishing wickedness with righteousness; nevertheless, it is a prophecy.

7. But wherefore these so great evils? By what desert? Hear by what desert. "For without cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap" (ver. 7). For Him that is our Head, observe, the Jews did this: they hid the corruption of their trap. For whom hid they their trap? For Him who saw the hearts of those that hid. But yet was He among them like one ignorant, as though He were deceived, whereas they were in that deceived, that they thought Him to be deceived. For therefore was He as though deceived, living among them, because we among such as they were so to live, as to be without doubt deceived. He saw His betrayer, and chose him the more to a necessary work. By his evil He wrought a great good: and yet among the twelve was he chosen, lest even the small number of twelve should be without one evil. This was an example of patience to us, because it was necessary that we should live among the evil: it was necessary that we should endure the evil, either knowing them or knowing them not: an example of patience He gave thee lest thou shouldest fail, when thou hast begun to live among the evil. And because that School of Christ in the twelve failed not, how much more ought we to be firm, when in the great Church is fulfilled what was predicted of the mixture of the evil. ...

8. But yet what is to be done? "Without a cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap." What meaneth, "Without a cause"? I have done them no evil, I have hurt them not at all. "Vainly have they reviled my soul." What is, "Vainly"? Speaking falsely, proving nothing. "Let a trap come upon them which they know not of" (ver. 8). A magnificent retribution, nothing more just! They have hidden a trap that I might know not: let a trap come upon them which they know not of. For I know of their trap. But what, trap is coming upon them? That which they know not of. Let us hear, lest haply he speak of that. "Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of." Perhaps that is one which they hid for him, that another which shall come upon themselves. Not so: but what? "The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his own sins." Thereby are they deceived, whereby they would deceive. Thence shall come mischief to them, whence they endeavoured mischief. For it follows, "And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves, and let them fall into their own trap." As if any one should prepare a cup of poison for another, and forgetting should drink it up himself: or as if one should dig a pit, that his enemy might fall thereinto in the darkness and himself forgetting what he had dug, should first walk that way, and fall into it. ...

9. This then for the wicked that would hurt me: what for me? "But my soul shall rejoice in the Lord" (ver. 9); as in Him from whom it hath heard, "I am thy salvation; as not seeking other riches from without; as not seeking to abound in pleasures and good things of earth;

but loving freely the true Spouse, not from Him wishing to receive aught that may delight, but Him alone proposing to itself, by whom it may be delighted. For what better than God will be given unto me? God loveth me: God loveth thee. See He hath proposed to thee, Ask what thou wilt. If the emperor should say to thee, Ask what thou wilt, what commands, what dignities, wouldest thou burst forth with! What great things wouldest thou propose to thyself, both to receive and to bestow! When God saith unto thee, Ask what thou wilt, what wilt thou ask? empty thy mind, exert thy avarice, stretch forward as far as possible, and enlarge thy desire: it is not any one, but Almighty God that said, Ask what thou wilt. If of possessions thou art a lover, thou wilt desire the whole earth, that all who are born may be thy husbandmen, or thy slaves. And what when thou hast possessed the whole earth? Thou wilt ask the sea, in which yet thou canst not live. In this greediness the fishes will have the better of thee. But perhaps thou wilt possess the islands. Pass over these also;

ask the air although thou canst not fly; stretch thy desire even unto the heavens, call thine own the sun, the moon, and the stars, because He who made all said, Ask what thou wilt: yet nothing wilt thou find more precious, nothing wilt thou find better, than Himself who made all things. Him seek, who made all things, and in Him and from Him shalt thou have all things which He made. All things are precious, because all are beautiful; but what more beautiful than He? Strong are they; but what stronger than He? And nothing would He give thee rather than Himself. If aught better thou hast found, ask it. If thou ask aught else, thou wilt do wrong to Him, and harm to thyself, by preferring to Him that which He made, when He would give to thee Himself who made. ...

"But my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation." The salvation of God is Christ: "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." 10. "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee" (ver. 10). Who can speak anything worthily of these words? I think them only to be pronounced, not to be expounded. Why seekest thou this or that? What is like unto thy Lord? Him hast thou before thee. "The unrighteous have declared unto me delights, but not after Thy law, O Lord!" Persecutors have been who have said, Worship Saturn, worship Mercury. I worship not idols (saith he): "Lord, who is like unto Thee? They have eyes, and see not; ears have they, but they hear not." "Lord, who is like unto Thee," who hast made the eye to see, the ear to hear? But I (saith he) worship not idols, for them a workman made. Worship a tree or mountain; did a workman make them also? Here too, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Earthly things are shown unto me; Thou art Creator of the earth. And from these haply they turn to the higher creation, and say to me, Worship the Moon, worship this Sun, who with his light, as a great lamp in the Heavens, maketh the day. Here also I plainly say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?" The Moon and the Stars Thou hast made, the Sun to rule the day hast Thou kindled, the Heavens hast Thou framed together. There are many invisible things better. But haply here also it is said to me, Worship Angels, adore Angels. And here also will I say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?" Even the Angels Thou hast created. The Angels are nothing, but by seeing Thee. It is better with them to possess Thee, than by worshipping them to fall from Thee.

11. O Body of Christ, Holy Church, let all thy bones say, "Lord, who is like unto thee?" And if the flesh under persecution hath fallen away, let the bones say, "Lord, who is like untoThee?" For of the righteous it is said, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken." Of how many righteous have the bones under persecution been broken?Finally, "The just shall live by faith," and "Christ justifieth the ungodly." But how justifieth He any except believing and confessing? "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Therefore also that thief, although from His theft led to the judge, and from the judge to the cross, yet on the very cross was justified: with his heart he believed, with his mouth he confessed. For neither to a man unrighteous and not already justified, would the Lord have said, "To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise," and yet his bones were broken. For when they came to take down the bodies, by reason of the approaching Sabbath, the Lord was found already dead, and His Bones were not broken. But of those that yet lived, that they might be taken down, the legs were broken, that so from this pain having died, they might be buried. Were then of the one thief, who persisted in his ungodliness on the cross, the bones broken, and not also of the other who with his heart believed, and with his mouth made confession unto salvation? Where then is that which was said, "The Lord keepeth all his bones; not one of them shall be broken;" except that in the Body of the Lord the name of bones is given to all the righteous, the firm in heart, the strong, yielding to no persecutions, no temptations, so as to consent unto evil? ...

12. "Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him." ...Who that deliverest, but He who is Strong in hand? Even that David shall deliver the poor from him that is too strong for him. For the devil was too strong for thee, and held thee, because he conquered thee, when thou consentedst unto him. But what hath the Strong in hand done? "No man entereth into a strong man's house, to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man." By His own Power, most Holy, most Magnificent, hath He bound the devil by pouring forth the weapon to stop the way against him, that He may deliver the poor and needy, to whom there was no helper. For who is thy helper but the Lord to whom thou sayest, "O Lord, My Strength, and My Redeemer." If thou wilt presume of thy own strength, thereby wilt thou fall, whereof thou hast presumed: if of another's, he would lord it over thee, not succour thee. He then alone is to be sought Who hath redeemed them, and made them free, and hath given His Blood to purchase them, and of His servants hath made them His Brethren. ...

13. Let then our Head say, "False witnesses did rise up, they laid to My charge things that I knew not" (ver. 11). But let us say to our Head, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Didst Thou indeed know not anything? Didst Thou not know the hearts of them that charged Thee? Didst Thou not foresee their deceits? Didst Thou not give Thyself into their hands knowingly? Hadst Thou not come that Thou mightest suffer by them? What then knewest Thou not? He knew not sin, and thereby He knew not sin, not by not judging, but by not committing. There are phrases of this kind also in daily use, as when thou sayest of any one, He knoweth not to stand, that is, he doth not stand; and, He knoweth not to do good, because

he doth not good; and, He knoweth not to do ill, because he doth not ill. ...What knew not Christ so much, as to blaspheme? Thereof was He called in question by His persecutors, and because He spake truth, He was judged to have spoken blasphemy? But by whom? By them of whom it followeth, "They rewarded Me evil for good, and barrenness to My Soul" (ver. 12). I gave unto them fruitfulness, they rewarded Me barrenness; I gave life, they death; I honour, they dishonour; I medicine, they wounds; and in all these which they rewarded Me, was truly barrenness. This barrenness in the tree He cursed, when seeking fruit He found none. Leaves there were, and fruit there was not: words there were, and deeds there were not. See of words abundance, and of deeds barrenness. "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, stealest: thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, committest adultery." Such were they who charged Christ with things that He knew not.

14. "But I, when they troubled me, clothed myself with sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer shall return into mine own bosom" (ver. 13)... Brethren, if for some little space with pious curiosity we lift the veil, and search with the intent eye of the heart the inner part of this Scripture, we find that even this the Lord did. Sackcloth, haply He calleth His mortal flesh. Wherefore Sackcloth? For the likeness of sinful flesh. For the Apostle saith, "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that through sin He might condemn sin in the flesh: that is, He clothed His Own Son with sackcloth, that through sackcloth He might condemn the goats. Not that there was sin, I say not in the Word of God, but not even in that Holy Soul and Mind of a Man, which the Word and Wisdom of God had so joined to Himself as to be One Person. Nay, nor even in His very Body was any sin, but the likeness of sinful flesh there was in the Lord; because death is not but by sin, and surely that Body was mortal. For had It not been mortal, It had not died; had It not died, It had not risen again; had It not risen again, It had not showed us an example of eternal life. So then death, which is caused by sin, is called sin;

as we say the Greek tongue, the Latin tongue, meaning not the very member of flesh, but that which is done by the member of flesh. For the tongue in our members is one among others, as the eyes, nose, ears, and the rest: but the Greek tongue is Greek words, not that the tongue is words, but that words are by the tongue. ...So then the sin of the Lord is that which was caused by sin; because He assumed flesh, of the same lump which had deserved death by sin. For to speak more briefly, Mary who was of Adam died for sin, Adam died for sin, and the Flesh of the Lord which was of Mary died to put away sin. With this sackcloth the Lord clothed Himself, and therefore was He not known, because He lay hid under sackcloth. "When they," saith He, "troubled Me, I clothed Myself with sackcloth: that is, they raged, I lay hid. For had He not willed to lie hid neither could He have died, since in one moment of time one drop only of His Power, if indeed it is to be called a drop, He put forth, when they wished to seize Him, and at His one question, "Whom seek ye? they all went back and fell to the ground. Such power could He not have humbled in passion, if He had not lain hid under sackcloth.

15. Again, if we have understood the sackcloth, how understand we the fasting? Wished Christ to eat, when He sought fruit on the tree, and if He had found, would He have eaten? Wished Christ to drink, when He said to the woman of Samaria, "Give Me to drink"? when He said on the Cross, "I thirst"? For what hungered, for what thirsted Christ, but our good works? Because in them that crucified and persecuted Him He had found no good works, He fasted; for they rewarded barrenness to His soul. For what a fast was His, who found barely one thief, whom on the Cross He might taste! For the Apostles had fled, and had hidden themselves in the multitude. And even Peter, who even to the death of his Lord had promised to persevere, had now thrice denied Him, had now wept, and still lay hid in the multitude, still feared lest He should be known. Lastly, having seen Him dead, all of them despaired of their own safety and despairing He found them, after His resurrection, and when He spake with them, found them grieving and mourning, no longer hoping anything. ...In great fasting had the Lord remained, had He not refreshed them that He might feed on them. For He refreshed them, He comforted them, He confirmed them, and into His Own Body converted them. In this manner then was our Lord also in fasting.

16. "And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom." In the bosom of this verse is plainly a great depth, and may the Lord grant that it be fathomable by us. For in the "bosom" a secret is understood. And we ourselves, Brethren, are here well admonished to pray within our own bosom, where God seeth, where God heareth, where no human eye penetrateth, where none seeth but He who succoureth; where Susanna prayed, and her voice, though it was not heard by men, yet by God was heard. ...We read also that in the mount Jesus prayed alone, we read that He passed the night in prayer, even at the time of His Passion. What then? "And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom." I know not what better to understand concerning the Lord: take meanwhile what now occurs; perhaps something better will occur hereafter, either to me or to some better: "My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom:" this I understand to be said, because in His Own Bosom He had the Father. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." In Himself He had Him to whom He prayed. He was not far from Him, for Himself had said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." But because prayer rather belongeth to very Man (for according as Christ is the Word, He prayeth not, but heareth prayer; and seeketh not to be succoured for Himself, but with the Father succoureth all): what is, "My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom," but in Me My Manhood invoketh in Me My Godhead.

17. "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him: as one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself" (ver. 14). Now looketh He back to His Own Body: let us now look to this. When we rejoice in prayer, when our mind is calmed, not by the world's prosperity, but by the light of Truth: (who perceiveth this light, knoweth what I say, and he seeth and acknowledgeth what is said, "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him"): even then our soul pleaseth God, not placed afar off, for, "In Him," saith one, "we live and move and have our being," but as a Brother, as a Neighbour, as a Friend. But if it be not such that it can so rejoice, so shine, so approach, so cleave unto Him, and seeth itself far off thence, then let it do what followeth, "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself. As our

Brother, so I pleased Him," said He, drawing near; "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself," said He, removed and set afar off. ...Did not Peter draw near, when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God"? And yet the same man became afar off by saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. Lastly, what said He, his Neighbour, as it were, to him drawing near? "Blessed art thou, Simon, Barjona. To him afar off, as it were, and unlike, what said He? "Get thee behind Me, Satan.

To him drawing near, "Flesh and blood," saith He, "hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father, which is in Heaven. His Light is shed over thee, in His Light thou shinest. But when having become afar off, he spake against the Lord's Passion, which should be for our Salvation, "Thou savourest not," said He, "the things that be of God, but those that be of men," One rightly placing together both of these saith in a certain Psalm, "I said in my ecstasy, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. In my ecstasy, would he not have said, had he not drawn near; for ecstasy, is the transporting of the mind. He poured: over himself his own soul, and drew near unto God; and through some cloud and weight of the flesh being again cast down to earth, and recollecting where he had been, and seeing where he was, he said, "I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. This then, "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him," may He grant to be done in us; but when that is not, let even this be done, "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself."

18. And against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together (ver. 15), against Me only: they rejoicing, I sorrowful. But we heard just now in the Gospel, "Blessed are they that mourn." If they are blessed that mourn, miserable are they that laugh. "Against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: scourges were gathered together against Me, and they knew not." Because they laid to My charge things that I knew not, they also knew not Whom they charged. 19. "They tempted Me, and mocked Me with mocking" (ver. 16). That is, they derided Me, they insulted Me; this of the Head, this of the Body. Consider, Brethren, the glory of the Church which now is; remember its past dishonours, remember how once were Christians everywhere put to flight, and wherever found, mocked, beaten, slain, exposed to beasts, burned, men rejoicing against them. As it was to the Head, so it is also to the Body. For as it was to the Lord on the Cross, so has it been to His Body in all that persecution which was made but now: nor even now cease the persecutions of the same. Wherever men find a Christian, they are wont to insult, to persecute, to deride him, to call him dull, senseless, of no spirit, of no knowledge. Do they what they will, Christ is in Heaven: do they what they will, He hath honoured His punishment, already hath He fixed His Cross in the foreheads of all; the ungodly is permitted to insult, to rage he is not permitted; but yet from that which the tongue uttereth, is understood what he beareth in his heart: "They gnashed upon Me with their teeth."

20. "Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions" (ver. 17). For to us the time is slow; and in our person is this said, "When wilt Thou look on?" that is, when shall we see vengeance upon those who insult us? When shall the Judge, overcome by weariness, hear the widow? But our Judge, not from weariness,

but from love, delayeth our salvation; from reason, not from need; not that He could not even now succour us, but that the number of us all may be filled up even to the end. And yet out of our desire, what do we say? "Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions:" that is, My Church from raging powers. 21. Lastly, wouldest thou know what is that Darling? Read the words following: "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, in the great Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee" (ver. 18). Truly saith He, "I will confess unto Thee:" for confession is made in all the multitude, but not in all is God praised: the whole multitude heareth our confession, but notin all the multitude is the praise of God. For in all the whole multitude, that is, in the Church which is spread abroad in the whole world, is chaff, and wheat: the chaff flieth, the wheat remaineth; therefore, "in a weighty people will I praise Thee." In a weighty people, which the wind of temptation carries not away, in such is God praised.For in the chaff He is ever blasphemed. ...

22. "Let not them that are Mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over Me: for they rejoice lover Me because of My chaff. "Who hate Me without a cause; that is, whom I never hurt; "winking with their eyes" (ver. 19): that is, pretending hypocrites, "For they spake indeed peace to Me" (ver. 20). What is, "winking with their eyes"? Declaring by their looks, what they carry not in their heart. And who are these "winking with their eyes"? "For they spake indeed peace to Me; and with wrath devised craftily. "Yea they opened their mouth wide against Me" (ver. 21). First winking with their eyes, those lions sought to ravish and devour; first fawning they spake peace, and then with wrath devised craftily. What peace spake they? "Master, we know that Thou acceptest not man's person, and teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? They spake indeed peace unto Me. What then? Didst not Thou know them, and deceived they Thee, winking with their eyes? Truly He knew them; therefore said He, "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Afterward, "they opened their mouth wide against Me," crying, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him! and said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it. This, when they insulted Him, "Aha, Aha, Prophesy unto us, Thou Christ. As their peace was pretended when they tempted Him concerning the money, so now insulting was their praise. "They said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it" (ver. 21): that is, Thy deeds, Thy miracles.

This Man is the Christ. "If He be the Christ, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He saved others, Himself He cannot save. "Our eyes have seen it. This is all whereof He boasted Himself, when "He called Himself the Son of God. But the Lord was hanging patient upon the Cross: His power had He not lost, but He showed His patience. For what great thing was it for Him to come down from the Cross, who could afterward rise again from the sepulchre? But He seems to have yielded to His insulters; and this, beloved, that having risen again He should show Himself to His own, and not to them, and this is a great mystery; for His resurrection signified the New Life, but the New Life is known to His friends, not to His enemies. 23. "This Thou hast seen, O Lord; keep not silence" (ver. 22). What is, "keep not silence"? Judge Thou. For of judgment is it said in a certain place, "I have kept silence; shall I keep silence for ever? And of the delaying of judgment it is said

to the sinner, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. How keepeth He silence, who speaketh by the Prophets, who speaketh with His own mouth in the Gospel, who speaketh by the Evangelists, who speaketh by us, when we speak the truth? What then? He keepeth silence from judgment, not from precept, not from doctrine.

But this His judgment the Prophet in a manner invoketh, and predicteth: "Thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence; that is, Thou wilt not keep silence, needs must that Thou wilt judge. "O Lord, be not far from Me. Until Thy judgment come, be not far from Me, as Thou hast promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

24. "Arise, Lord, and attend to My judgment" (ver. 23). To what judgment? That Thou art in tribulation; that Thou art tormented with labours and pains? Do not even many wicked men suffer the same? To what judgment? Therefore art Thou righteous, because Thou sufferest these things? No: but what? "To My judgment." What followeth? "Attend to My judgment; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord." Not to My punishment, but to My cause: not to that which the robber hath in common with Me, but to that whereof is said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." For this cause is distinguished. For punishment is equal to good and bad. Therefore Martyrs, not the punishment, but the cause maketh, for if punishment made Martyrs, all the mines would be full of Martyrs, every chain would drag Martyrs, all that are executed with the sword would be crowned. Therefore let the cause be distinguished; let none say, because I suffer, I am righteous. Because He who first suffered, suffered for righteousness' sake, therefore He added a great exception, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." For many having a good cause do persecution, and many having a bad cause suffer persecution. For if persecution could not be done rightly, it had not been said in a certain Psalm, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him did I persecute." ...Let none then say, I suffer persecution: let him not sift the punishment, but prove the cause: lest if he prove not the cause, he be numbered with the ungodly. Therefore how watchfully, how excellently hath This Man recommended Himself, "O Lord, attend to My judgment," not to My punishments; "even to My cause, My God, and My Lord."

25. "Judge me, O Lord, according to My righteousness" (ver. 24); that is, attend to My cause. Not according to My punishment, but "according to My righteousness, O Lord, My God," that is, according to this judge Thou Me. "And let them not rejoice over Me;" that is, Mine enemies.

26. "Let them not say in their heart, Aha, aha, so would we have it" (ver. 25); that is, We have done what we could, we have slain him, we have taken him away. "Let them not say:" show them that they have done nothing. "Let them not say, We have swallowed him up." Whence say those Martyrs, "If the Lord had not been on our side, then they had swallowed us up quick." What is, "had swallowed us up"? Had passed into their own body. For that thou swallowest up, which thou passest into thy own body. The world would swallow thee up; swallow thou the world, pass it into thy own body: kill and eat. As it was said to Peter,

"Kill and eat;" do thou kill in them what they are, make them what thou art. But if they on the other hand persuade thee to ungodliness, thou art swallowed up by them. Not when they persecute thee art thou swallowed up by them, but when they persuade thee to be what they are. "Let them not say, We have swallowed him up." Do thou swallow up the body of Pagans. Why the body of Pagans? It would swallow thee up. Do thou to it, what it would to thee. Therefore perhaps that calf, being ground to powder, was cast into the water and given to the children of Israel to drink, that so the body of ungodliness might be swallowed up by Israel. "Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour" (ver. 26); so that we may swallow up them ashamed and brought to confusion. "Who speak evil against me:" let them be ashamed, let them be brought to confusion.

27. What sayest thou now, the Head with the Members? "Let them shout for joy and be glad that favour My righteous cause:" who cleave to My Body. Yea, let them say "continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant" (ver. 27). "And my tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness, and of Thy praise all the day long" (ver. 28). And whose tongue endureth to speak the praise of God all the day long? See now I have made a discourse something longer; ye are wearied. Who endureth to praise God all the day long? I will suggest a remedy, whereby thou mayest praise God all the day long if thou wilt. Whatever thou dost, do well, and thou hast praised God. When thou singest an hymn, thou praisest God, but what doth thy tongue, unless thy heart also praise Him? Hast thou ceased from singing hymns, and departed, that thou mayest refresh thyself? Be not drunken, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou go away to sleep? Rise not to do evil, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou transact business? Do no wrong, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou till thy field? Raise not strife, and thou hast praised God. In the innocency of thy works prepare thyself to praise God all the day long.

Psalm 36

1. ..."The ungodly hath said in himself that he will sin: there is no fear of God before his eyes" (ver. 1). Not of one man, but of a race of ungodly men he speaketh, who fight against their own selves, by not understanding, that so they may live well; not because they cannot, but because they will not. For it is one thing, when one endeavours to understand some thing, and through infirmity of flesh cannot; as saith the Scripture in a certain place, "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things;" but another when the human heart acts mischievouslyagainst itself, so that what it could understand, if it had but good will thereto, it understandeth not, not because it is difficult, but because the will is contrary. But so it is when men love their own sins, and hate God's Commandments. For the Word of God is thy adversary, if thou be a friend to thy ungodliness; but if thou art an adversary to thy ungodliness, the Word of God is thy friend, as well as the adversary of thy ungodliness. ...

2. "For he hath wrought deceitfully in His sight" (ver. 2). In whose sight? In His, whose fear was not before the eyes of him that did work deceitfully. "To find out his iniquity, and hate it. He wrought so as not to find it. For there are men who as it were endeavour to seek out their iniquity, and fear to find it; because if they should find it, it is said to them, Depart from it: this thou didst before thou knewest; thou didst iniquity being in ignorance; God giveth pardon: now thou hast discovered it, forsake it, that to thy ignorance pardon may easily be given; and that with a clear face thou mayest say to God, "Remember not the sins of my youth, and of my ignorance. Thus he seeketh it, thus he feareth lest he find it; for he seeketh it deceitfully. When saith a man, I knew not that it was sin? When he hath seen that it is sin, and ceaseth to do the sin, which he did only because he was ignorant: such an one in truth would know his sin, to find it out, and hate it. But now many "work deceitfully to find out their iniquity: they work not from their heart to find it out and hate it. But because in the very search after iniquity, there is deceit, in the finding it there will be defence of it. For when one hath found his iniquity, lo now it is manifest to him that it is iniquity.

Do it not, thou sayest. And he who wrought deceitfully to find it out, now he hath found, hateth it not; for what saith he? How many do this! Who is there that doth it not? And will God destroy them all? Or at least he saith this: if God would not these things to be done,

would men live who commit the same? Seest thou that thou didst work deceitfully to find out thy iniquity? For if not deceitfully but sincerely thou hadst wrought, thou wouldest now have found it out, and hated it; now thou hast found it out, and thou defendest it; therefore thou didst work deceitfully, when thou soughtest it.

3. "The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he would not understand, that he might do good" (ver. 3). Ye see that he attributeth that to the will: for there are men who would understand and cannot, and there are men who would not understand, and therefore understand not. "He would not understand, that he might do good." 4. "He hath meditated iniquity on his bed." What said He, "On his bed?" (ver. 4). "The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin:" what above he said, in himself, that here he said, "On his bed." Our bed is our heart: there we suffer the tossing of an evil conscience; and there we rest when our conscience is good. Whoso loveth the bed of his heart, let him do some good therein. There is our bed, where the Lord Jesus Christ commands us to pray. "Enter into thy chamber, and shut thy door." What is, "Shut thy door?" Expect not from God such things as are without, but such as are within; "and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Who is he that shutteth not the door? He who asketh much from God such things, and in such wise directeth all his prayers, that he may receive the goods that are of this world. Thy door is open, the multitude seeth when thou prayest. What is it to shut thy door? To ask that of God, which God alone knoweth how He giveth. What is that for which thou prayest, when thou hast shut the door? What "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man." And haply it hath not entered into thy verybed, that is, into thy heart. But God knoweth what He will give: but when shall it be? When the Lord shall be revealed, when the Judge shall appear. ...

5. "He hath set himself in every way that is not good." What is, "he hath set himself"? He hath sinned perseveringly. Whence also of a certain pious and good man it is said, "He hath not stood in the way of sinners." As this "hath not stood," so that "hath set himself." "But wickedness hath he not hated." There is the end, there the fruit: if a man cannot but have wickedness, let him at least hate it. For when thou hatest it, it scarcely occurs to thee to do any wickedness. For sin is in our mortal body, but what saith the Apostle? "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." When beginneth it not to be therein? When that shall be fulfilled in us which he saith, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality." Before this come to pass, there is a delighting in sin in the body, but greater is the delighting and the pleasure in the Word of Wisdom, in the Commandment of God. Overcome sin and the lust thereof. Sin and iniquity do thou hate, that thou mayest join thyself to God, who hateth it as well as thou. Now being joined in mind unto the Law of God, in mind thou servest the Law of God. And if in the flesh thou therefore servest the law of sin, because there are in thee certain carnal delightings, then will there be none when thou shalt no longer fight. It is one thing not to fight, and to be in true and lasting peace; another to fight and overcome; another to fight and to be overcome; another not to fight at all, but to be carried away. ...

6. ”Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth even unto the clouds” (ver. 5). I know not what Mercy of Him he meaneth, which is in the heavens. For the Mercy of the Lord is also in the earth. Thou hast it written, ”The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord.” Of what Mercy then speaketh He, when He saith, ”Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens”? The gifts of God are partly temporal and earthly, partly eternal and heavenly. Whoso for this worshippeth God, that he may receive those temporal and earthly goods, which are open to all, is still as it were like the brutes: he enjoyeth indeed the Mercy of God, but not that which is excepted, which shall not be given, save only to the righteous, to the holy, to the good. What are the gifts which abound to all? ”He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Who hath not this Mercy of God, first that he hath being, that he is distinguished from the brutes, that he is a rational animal, so as to understand God; secondly, that he enjoys this light, this air, rain, fruits, diversity of seasons, and all the earthly comforts, health of body, the affection of friends, the safety of his family? All these are good, and they are God’sgifts. ...

7. But this man rightly understood what mercy he should pray for from God. ”Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens; and Thy Truth reacheth even to the clouds.” That is, the Mercy which Thou givest to Thy Saints, is Heavenly, not earthly; is Eternal, not temporal. And how couldest Thou declare it unto men? Because ”Thy Truth reacheth even unto the clouds.” For who could know the Heavenly Mercy of God, unless God should declare it unto men? How did He declare it? By sending His truth even unto the clouds. What are the clouds? The Preachers of the Word of God. ...Truth reached even to the clouds: therefore unto us could be declared the Mercy of God, which is in Heaven and not in earth. And truly, Brethren, the clouds are the Preachers of the Word of Truth. When God threateneth through His Preachers, He thunders through the clouds. When God worketh miracles through His Preachers, He lightneth through the clouds, He terrifieth through the clouds, and watereth by the rain. Those Preachers, then, by whom is preached the Gospel of God, are the clouds of God. Let us then hope for Mercy, but for that which is in the Heavens.

8. ”Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: Thy Judgments are a great deep” (ver. 6). Who are the mountains of God? Those who are called clouds, the same are also the mountains of God. The great Preachers are the mountains of God. And as when the sun riseth, he first clothes the mountains with light, and thence the light descends to the lowest parts of the earth: so our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came, first irradiated the height of the Apostles, first enlightened the mountains, and so His Light descended to the valley of the world. And therefore saith He in a certain Psalm, ”I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help.” But think not that the mountains themselves will give thee help: for they receive what they may give, give not of their own. And if thou remain in the mountains, thy hope will not be strong: but in Him who enlighteneth the mountains, ought to be thy hope and presumption. Thy help indeed will come to thee through the mountains, because the Scriptures are administered to thee through the mountains, through the great Preachers of the Truth: but fix not thy hope in them. Hear what He saith next following: ”I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help.” What then? Do the

mountains give thee help? No; hear what follows, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and earth." Through the mountains cometh help, but not from the mountains. From whom then? "From the Lord, which made Heaven and earth." ...

9. "Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. The abyss he calleth the depth of sin, whither every one cometh by despising God; as in a certain place it is said, "God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do the things which are not convenient." ...Because then they were proud and ungrateful, they were held worthy to be delivered up to the lusts of their own hearts, and became a great abyss, so that they not only sinned, but also worked craftily, lest they should understand their iniquity, and hate it. That is the depth of wickedness, to be unwilling to find it out and to hate it. But how one cometh to that depth, see; "Thy Judgments are the great abyss. As the mountains are by the Righteousness of God, who through His Grace become great: so also through His Judgments come they unto the depth, who sink lowest. By this then let the mountains delight thee, by this turn away from the abyss, and turn thyself unto that, of which it is said, "My help cometh from the Lord. But whereby? "I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains. What meaneth this? I will speak plainly. In the Church of God thou findest an abyss, thou findest also mountains; thou findest there but few good, because the mountains are few, the abyss broad; that is, thou findest many living ill after the wrath of God, because they have so worked that they are delivered up to the lusts of their own heart;

so now they defend their sins and confess them not; but say, Why? What have I done? Such an one did this, and such an one did that. Now will they even defend what the Divine Word reproves. This is the abyss. Therefore in a certain place saith the Scripture (hear this abyss), "The sinner when he cometh unto the depth of sin despiseth. See, "Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. But yet not art thou a mountain; not yet art thou in the abyss; fly from the abyss, tend towards the mountains; but yet remain not on the mountains. "For thy help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and earth."

10. Because he said, Thy Mercy is in the Heavens, that it may be known to be also on earth, he said, "O Lord, Thou surest man and beast, as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God" (ver. 7). Great is Thy Mercy, and manifold is Thy Mercy, O God; and that showest Thou both to man and beast. For from whom is the saving of men? From God. Is not the saving of beasts also from God? For He who made man, made also beasts; He who made both, saveth both; but the saving of beasts is temporal. But there are who as a great thing ask this of God, which He hath given to beasts. "Thy Mercy, O God, is multiplied," so that not only unto men, but unto beasts also is given the same saving which is given to men, a carnal and temporal saving.

11. Have not men then somewhat reserved with God, which beasts deserve not, and whereunto beasts arrive not? They have evidently. And where is that which they have. "The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings." Attend, my Beloved, to this most pleasant sentence; "Thou savest man and beast." First, he spake of "man and beast," then of "the children of men;" as though "men" were one, "the children of men" other.

Sometimes in Scripture children of men is said generally of all men, sometimes in some proper manner, with some proper signification, so that not all men are understood; chiefly when there is a distinction. For not without reason is it here put; "O Lord, Thou savest man and beast: but the children of men;" as though setting aside the first, he keepeth separate the children of men. Separate from whom? Not only from beasts, but also from men, who seek from God the saving of beasts, and desire this as a great thing. Who then are the children of men? Those who put their trust under the shadow of His wings. For those men together with beasts rejoice in possession, but the children of men rejoice in hope: those follow after present goods with beasts, these hope for future goods with Angels. ...

12. "They shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House" (ver. 8). He promiseth us some great thing. He would speak it, and He speaketh it not. Can He not, or do not we receive it? I dare, my Brethren, to say, even of holy tongues and hearts, by which Truth is declared to us, that it can neither be spoken, which they declared, nor even thought of. For it is a great thing, and ineffable; and even they saw through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Lo, they who saw through a glass darkly, thus burst forth. What then shall we be, when we shall see face to face? That with which they travailed in heart, and could not with their tongue bring forth, that men might receive it. For what necessity was there that he should say, "They shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House"? He sought a word whereby to express from human things what he would say; and because he saw that men drowning themselves in drunkenness receive indeed wine without measure, but lose their senses, he saw what to say; for when shall have been received that ineffable joy, then shall be lost in a manner the human soul, it shall become Divine, and be satiated with the fulness of God's House. Wherefore also in another Psalm it is said, "Thy cup inebriating, how excellent is it!

With this cup were the Martyrs satiated when going to their passion, they knew not their own. What so inebriated as not to know a wife weeping, not children, not parents? They knew them not they thought not that they were before their eyes. Wonder not: they were inebriated Wherewith were they so? Lo, they had received a cup wherewith they were satiated Wherefore he also gives thanks to God, saying "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. Therefore, Brethren of men, let us be children and let us trust under the shadow of His wings and be satiated with the fulness of His House As I could, I have spoken; and as far as I can I see; and how far I see, I cannot speak. "And of the torrent of Thy Pleasure shalt Thou give them to drink. A torrent we call water coming with a flood. There will be a flood of God's Mercy to overflow and inebriate those who now put their trust under the shadow of His wings. What is that Pleasure? As it were a torrent inebriating the thirsty. Let him then who thirsts now, lay up hope: whoso thirsts now, let him have hope; when inebriated, he shall have possession: before he have possession, let him thirst in hope. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

13. With what fountain then wilt thou be overflowed, and whence runneth such a torrent of His Pleasure? "For with Thee," saith he, "is the fountain of Life." What is the fountain of Life, but Christ? He came to thee in the flesh, that He might bedew thy thirsty lips: He will satisfy thee trusting, who bedewed thee thirsting. "For with Thee is the fountain of Life; in Thy Light shall we see light" (ver. 9). Here a fountain is one thing, light another: there not so. For that which is the Fountain, the same is also Light: and whatever thou wilt thou callest It, for It is not what thou callest It: for thou canst not find a fit name: for It remaineth not in one name. If thou shouldest say, that It is Light only, it would be said to thee, Then without cause am I told to hunger and thirst, for who is there that eateth light? It is said to me plainly, directly, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." If It is Light, my eyes must I prepare. Prepare also lips; for That which is Light is also a Fountain: a Fountain, because It satisfieth the thirsty: Light, because It enlighteneth the blind. Here sometimes, light is in one place, a fountain in another. For sometimes fountains run even in darkness; and sometimes in the desert thou sufferest the sun, findest no fountain: here then can these two be separated: there thou shall not be wearied, for there is a Fountain; there thou shall not be darkened, for there is Light.

14. "Show forth Thy Mercy unto them that know Thee; Thy Righteousness to them that are of a right heart" (ver. 10). As I have said, Those are of a right heart who follow in this life the Will of God. The will of God is sometimes that thou shouldest be whole, sometimes that thou shouldest be sick. If when thou art whole God's Will be sweet, and when thou art sick God's Will be bitter; thou art not of a right heart. Wherefore? Because thou wilt not make right thy will according to God's Will, but wilt bend God's Will to thine. That is right, but thou art crooked: thy will must be made right to That, not That made crooked to thee; and thou wilt have a right heart. It is well with thee in this world; be God blessed, who comforteth thee: it goeth hardly with thee in this world; be God blessed, because He chasteneth and proveth thee; and so wilt thou be of a right heart, saying, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His Praise shall be ever in my mouth."

15. "Let not the foot of pride come against me" (ver. 11). But now he said, The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings: they shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House. When one hath begun to be plentifully overflowed with that Fountain, let him take heed lest he grow proud. For the same was not wanting to Adam, the first man: but the foot of pride came against him, and the hand of the sinner removed him, that is, the proud hand of the devil. As he who seduced him, said of himself, "I will sit in the sides of the north; so he persuaded him, by saying, "Taste, and ye shall be as gods. By pride then have we so fallen as to arrive at this mortality. And because pride had wounded us, humility maketh us whole. God came humbly, that from such great wound of pride He might heal man. He came, for "The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. He was taken by the Jews; He was reviled of them. Ye heard when the Gospel was read, what they said, and to Whom they said, "Thou hast a devil: and He said not, Ye have a devil, for ye are still in your sins, and the devil possesseth your hearts. He said not this, which if He had said, He

had said truly: but it was not meet that He should say it, lest He should seem not to preach Truth, but to retort evil speaking.

He let go what He heard as though He heard it not. For a Physician was He, and to cure the madman had He come. As a Physician careth not what he may hear from the madman; but how the madman may recover and become sane; nor even if he receive a blow from the madman, careth he; but while he to him giveth new wounds, he cureth his old fever: so also the Lord came to the sick man, to the madman came He, that whatever He might hear, whatever He might suffer, He should despise; by this very thing teaching us humility, that being taught by humility, we might be healed from pride: from which he here prayeth to be delivered, saying, "Let not the foot of pride come against me; neither let the hand of the sinner remove me. For if the foot of pride come, the hand of the sinner removeth. What is the hand of the sinner? The working of him that adviseth ill. Hast thou become proud? Quickly he corrupteth thee who adviseth ill. Humbly fix thyself in God, and care not much what is said to thee. Hence is that which is elsewhere spoken, "From my secret sins cleanse Thou me; and from others' sins also keep Thy servant. What is, "From my secret sins"? "Let not the foot of pride come against me. What is, "From other men's sins also keep Thy servant"? "Let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

Keep that which is within, and thou shall not fear from without.

16. But wherefore so greatly fearest thou this? Because it is said, "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity" (ver. 12); so that they have come into that abyss of which it is said, "Thy judgments are like the great abyss: so that they have come even to that deep wherein sinners who despise have fallen. "Have fallen. Whereby did they first fall? By the foot of pride. Hear the foot of pride. "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. Therefore came against them the foot of pride, whereby they came into the depth. "God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do those things which are not convenient. The root of sin, and the head of sin feared he who said, "Let not the foot of pride come against me. Wherefore said he, "the foot"? Because by walking proudly man deserted God, and departed from Him. His foot, called he his affection. "Let not the foot of pride come against me: let not the hand of the wicked remove me: that is, let not the works of the wicked remove me from Thee, that I should wish to imitate them. But wherefore said he this against pride, "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity"? Because those who now are ungodly, have fallen by pride. Therefore when the Lord would caution His Church, He said, "It shall watch thy head, and thou shall watch his heel.

The serpent watcheth when the foot of pride may come against thee, when thou mayest fall, that he may cast thee down. But watch thou his head: the beginning of all sin is pride. "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity: they are driven out, and are not able to stand. He first, who in the Truth stood not, then, through him, they whom God sent out of Paradise. Whence he, the humble, who said that he was not worthy to unloose His shoe's latchet, is not driven out, but standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth greatly because of

the Bridegroom's voice; not because of his own, lest the foot of pride come against him, and he be driven out, and be not able to stand. ...

Psalm 37

On the First Part of the Psalm. 1. With terror do they hear of the coming of the last day, who will not be secure by living well: and who fain would live ill, long. But it was for useful purposes that God willed that day to remain unknown; that the heart may be ever ready to expect that of which it knows it is to come, but knows not when it is to come. Seeing, however, that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent to us to be our "Master," He said, that "of the day not even the Son of Man knew," because it was not part of His office as our Master that through Him it should become known to us. For indeed the Father knoweth nothing that the Son knoweth not; since that is the Very Knowledge of the Father Itself, which is His Wisdom; now His Son, His Word, is "His Wisdom." But because it was not for our good to know that, which however was known to Him who came indeed to teach us, though not to teach us that which it was not good for us to know, He not only, as a Master, taught us something, but also, as a Master, left something untaught. For, as a Master, He knew how both to teach us what was good for us, and not to teach us what was injurious. Now thus, according to a certain form of speech, the Son is said not to know what He does not teach: that is, in the same way that we are daily in the habit of speaking, He is said not to know what He causes us not to know. ...

2. This it is that disturbs you who are a Christian; that you see men of bad lives prospering, and surrounded with abundance of things like these; you see them sound in health, distinguished with proud honours; you see their family unvisited by misfortune; the happiness of their relatives, the obsequious attendance of their dependants, their most commanding influence, theirs life uninterrupted by any sad event; you see their characters most profligate, their external resources most affluent; and your heart says that there is no Divine judgment; that all things are carried to and fro by accidents, and blown about in disorderly; and irregular motions. For if God, thou sayest, regarded human affairs, would his iniquity flourish, and my innocence suffer? Every sickness of the soul hath in Scripture its proper remedy. Let him then whose sickness is of that kind that he says in his heart things like these, let him drink this Psalm by way of potion. ...

3. "Be not envious because of evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity" (ver. 1). "For they shall soon wither like the grass, and shall fade like the herbs of the meadow" (ver. 2). That which to thee seemeth long, is "soon" in the sight of God. Conform

thou thyself to God; and it will be ”soon” to thee. That which he here calls ”grass,” that we understand by the ”herbs of the meadow. They are some worthless things, occupying the surface only of the ground, they have no depth of root. In the winter then they are green; but when the summer sun shall begin to scorch, they will wither away. For now it is the season of winter. Thy glory cloth not as yet appear. But if thy love hath but a deep root, like that of many trees during winter, the frost passes away, the summer (that is, the Day of Judgment) will come; then will the greenness of the grass wither away. Then will the glory of the trees appear. ”For ye” (saith the Apostle) ”are dead. even as trees seem to be in winter, as it were dead, as it were withered. What is our hope then, if we are dead? The root is within; where our root is, there is our life also, for there our love is fixed. ”And your life is hid with Christ in God. When shall he wither who is thus rooted? But when will our spring be? When our summer?

When will the honour of foliage clothe us around, and the fulness of fruit make us rich? When shall this come to pass? Hear what follows: ”When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And what then shall we do now? ”Be not envious because of the evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon wither like the grass, and fade like the herb of the meadow.”

4. What shouldest thou do then? ”Trust in the Lord” (ver. 3). For they too trust, but not ”in the Lord.” Their hope is perishable. Their hope is short-lived, frail, fleeting, transitory, baseless. ”Trust thou in the Lord.” ”Behold,” thou sayest, ”I do trust; what am I to do?” ”And do good.” Do not do that evil which thou beholdest in those men, who are prosperous in wickedness. ”Do good, and dwell in the land.” Lest haply thou shouldest be doing good without ”dwelling in the land.” For it is the Church that is the Lord’s land. It is her whom He, the Father, the tiller of it, waters and cultivates. For there are many that, as it were, do good works, but yet, in that they do not ”dwell in the land,” they do not belong to the husbandman. Therefore do thou thy good, not outside of the land, but do thou ”dwell in the land.” And what shall I have?

”And thou shalt be fed in its riches.” What are the riches of that land? Her riches are her Lord! Her riches are her God! He it is to whom it is said, ”The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup.” In a late discourse we suggested to you, dearly beloved, that God is our possession, and that we are at the same time God’s possession. Hear how that He is Himself the riches of that land. ”Delight thyself in the Lord” (ver. 4). As if thou hadst put the question, and hadst said ”Show me the riches of that land, in which thou biddest me dwell”, he says, ”Delight thyself in the Lord.”

5. ”And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” Understand in their proper signification, ”the desires of thine heart.” Distinguish the ”desires of thine heart” from the desires of thy flesh; distinguish as much as thou canst. It is not without a meaning that it is said in a certain Psalm, ”God is” (the strength) ”of mine heart.” For there it says in what follows: ”And God is myportion for ever.” For instance: One labours under bodily blindness. He asks that he may receive his sight. Let him ask it; for God does that too, and gives those blessings

also. But these things are asked for even by the wicked. This is a desire of the flesh. One is sick, and prays to be made sound. From the point of death he is restored to health. That too is a desire of the flesh, as are all of such a kind. What is "the desire of the heart"? As the desire of the flesh is to wish to have one's eyesight restored, to enable him, that is, to see that light, which can be seen by such eyes; so "the desire of the heart" relates to a different sort of light. For, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Delight thou thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

6. "Behold" (you say), "I do long after it, I do ask for it, I do desire it. Shall I then accomplish it?" No. Who shall then? "Reveal thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" (ver. 5). Mention to Him what thou sufferest, mention to Him what thou dost desire. For what is it that thou sufferest? "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." What is it then that thou dost desire? "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And because it is He "Himself" that "will bring it to pass," when thou shall have "revealed thy ways unto Him;" hear what follows: "The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." What is it then that He is to bring to pass, since it is said, "Reveal thy way unto Him, and He will bring it to pass"? What will He bring to pass?

"And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light" (ver. 6). For now, "thy righteousness" is hid. Now it is a thing of faith; not yet of sight. You believe something that you may do it. You do not yet see that in which you believe. But when thou shall begin to see that, which thou didst believe before, "thy righteousness will be brought forth to the light," because it is thy faith that was thy righteousness. For "the just lives by faith." 7. "And He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day." That is to say, "as the clear light." It was too little to say, "as the light." For we call it "light" already, even when it but dawns: we call it light even while the sun is rising. But never is the light brighter than at mid-day. Therefore He will not only "bring forth thy righteousness as the light," but "thy judgment shall be as the noon-day." For now dost thou make thy "judgment" to follow Christ. This is thy purposé: this is thy choice: this is thy "judgment."...

8. "What should I do then?" Hear what thou shouldest do. "Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him" (ver. 7). Be this thy life, to obey His commandments. For this is to submit thee to Him; and to entreat Him until He give thee what He hath promised. Let good works "continue;" let prayer "continue." For "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Wherein dost thou show that thou art "submitted to Him"? In doing what He hath commanded. But haply thou dost not receive thy wages as yet, because as yet thou art not able. For He is already able to give them; but thou art not already able to receive them. Exercise thou thyself in works. Labour in the vineyard; at the close of the day crave thy wages. "Faithful is He" who brought thee into the vineyard. "Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him."

9. "See! I do so; I do 'submit to the Lord, and I do entreat.' But what do you think? That neighbour of mine is a wicked man, living a bad life, and prosperous! His thefts, adulteries, robberies, are known to me. Lifted up above every one, proud, and raised on high by

wickedness, he deigns not to notice me. In these circumstances, how shall I hold out with patience?" This is a sickness; drink, by way of remedy. "Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way." He prospereth, but it is "in his way:" thou sufferest, but it is in God's way! His portion is prosperity on his way, misery on arriving at its end: yours, toil on the road, happiness in its termination. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and the way of the ungodly shall perish." Thou walkest those ways which "the Lord knoweth," and if thou dost suffer toil in them, they do not deceive thee. The "way of the ungodly" is but a transitory happiness; at the end of the way the happiness is at an end also. Why? Because that way is "the broad road;" its termination leads to the pit of hell. Now, thy way is narrow; and "few there be" that enter in through it: but into how ample a field it comes at the last, thou oughtest to consider. "Fret not thyself at him who prospereth in his way; because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (ver. 8). Wherefore art thou wroth? Wherefore is it that, through that passion and indignation, thou dost blaspheme, or almost blaspheme? Against "the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass, cease from anger, and forsake wrath." Knowest thou not whither that wrath tempts thee on? Thou art on the point of saying unto God, that He is unjust. It tends to that. "Look! why is that man prosperous, and this man in adversity?" Consider what thought it begets: stifle the wicked notion. "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath:" so that now returning to thy senses, thou mayest say, "Mine eye is disturbed because of wrath." What eye is that, but the eye of faith? To the eye of thy faith I appeal. Thou didst believe in Christ: why didst thou believe? What did He promise thee? If it was the happiness of this world that Christ promised thee, then murmur against Christ; yes! murmur against Him, when thou seest the wicked flourishing. What of happiness did He promise? What, save in the Resurrection of the Dead? But what in this life? That which was His portion. His portion, I say! Dost thou, servant and disciple, disdain what thy Lord, what thy Master bore? ...

"For evil-doers shall be cut off" (ver. 9). "But I see their prosperity." Believe Him who saith, "they shall be cut off;" Him who seeth better than thou, since His eye anger cannot cloud. "For evil-doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord,"-not upon any one that can deceive them; but verily on Him who is the Truth itself,-"But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land." What "land," but that Jerusalem, with the love of which whosoever is inflamed, shall come to peace at the last. 10. "But how long is the sinner to flourish? How long shall I have to endure?" Thou art impatient; that which seems long to thee, will soon come to pass. It is infirmity makes that seem long, which is really short, as is found in the case of the longings of sick men. Nothing seems so long as the mixing of the potion for him when athirst. For all that his attendants are making all speed, lest haply the patient be angry; "When will it be done? (he cries). When will it be drest? When will it be served?" Those who are waiting upon you are making haste, but your infirmity fancies that long which is being done with expedition. Behold ye, therefore, our Physician complying with the infirmity of the patient, saying, "How long shall I have to endure? How long will it be?"

"Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be" (ver. 10). Is it certainly among sinners, and because of the sinner, that thou murmurest? "A little while, and he shall not be. Lest haply because I said, "They that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land," thou shouldest think that waiting to be of very long duration. Wait "a little while," thou shalt receive without end what thou waitest for. A little while, a moderate space. Review the years from Adam's time up to this day; run through the Scriptures. It is almost yesterday that he fell from Paradise! So many ages have been measured out, and unrolled. Where now are the past ages? Even so, however, shall the few which remain, pass away also. Hadst thou been living throughout all that time, since Adam was banished from Paradise up to this present day, thou wouldest certainly see that the life, which had thus flown away, had not been of long duration. But how long is the duration of each individual's life? Add any number of years you please: prolong old age to its longest duration: what is it? Is it not but a morning breeze? Be it so, however, that the Day of Judgment is far off, when the reward of the righteous and of the unrighteous is to come: your last day at all events cannot be far off. Make thyself ready against this! For such as thou shall have departed from this life, shalt thou be restored to the other.

At the close of that short life, you will not yet be, where the Saints shall be, to whom it shall be said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. You will not yet be there? Who does not know that? But you may already be there, where that beggar, once "covered with sores," was seen at a distance, at rest, by that proud and unfruitful "rich man" in the midst of his torments. Surely hid in that rest thou waitest in security for the Day of Judgment, when thou art to receive again a body, to be changed so as to be made equal to an Angel. How long then is that for which we are impatient, and are saying, "When will it come? Will it tarry long? This our sons will say hereafter, and our sons' sons will say too; and, though each one of these in succession will say this same thing, that "little while" that is yet to be, passes away, as all that is already past hath passed away already! O thou sick one! "Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and thou shalt not find him." ...

11. "But the meek shall inherit the land" (ver. 11). That land is the one of which we have often spoken, the holy Jerusalem, which is to be released from these her pilgrimages, and to live for ever with God, and on God. Therefore, "They shall inherit the land." What shall be their delight? "And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Let the ungodly man delight himself here in the multitude of his gold, in the multitude of his silver, in the multitude of his slaves, in the multitude, lastly, of his baths, his roses, his intoxicating wines, his most sumptuous and luxurious banquets. Is this the power thou enviest? Is this the glory that delights thee? Would not his fate be worthy to be deplored, even if he were to be so for ever? What shall be thy delights? "And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Peace shall be thy gold. Peace shall be thy silver. Peace shall be thy lands. Peace shall be thy life, thy God Peace. Peace shall be to thee whatsoever thou dost desire. ...

On the Second Part of the Psalm. 1. Then follow these words: "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth" (ver. 12): "But the Lord shall laugh at him" (ver. 13). At whom? Surely at the sinner, "gnashing upon" the other "with his teeth." But wherefore shall the Lord "laugh at him"? "For He foreseeth that his day is coming." He seems indeed full of wrath, while, ignorant of the morrow that is in store for him, he is threatening the just. But the Lord beholds and "foresees his day." "What day?" That in which "He will render to every man according to his works." For he is "treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God." But it is the Lord that foresees it; thou dost not foresee it. It hath been revealed to thee by Him who foresees it. Thou didst not know of the "day of the unrighteous," in which he is to suffer punishment. But He who knows it hath revealed it to thee. It is a main part of knowledge to join thyself to Him who hath knowledge. He hath the eyes of knowledge: have thou the eyes of a believing mind. That which God "sees," be thou willing to believe. For the day of the unjust, which God foresees, will come. What day is that? The day for all vengeance! For it is necessary that vengeance should be taken upon the ungodly, that vengeance be taken upon the unjust, whether he turn, or whether he turn not. For if he shall turn from his ways, that very thing, that his "injustice is come to an end," is the infliction of vengeance. ...

2. "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright heart" (ver. 14). "Their weapon shall enter into their own heart" (ver. 15). It is an easy thing for his weapon, that is, his sword, to reach thy body, even as the sword of the persecutorsreached the body of the Martyrs, but when the body had been smitten, "the heart" remained unhurt; but his heart who "drew out the sword against" the body of the just did not clearly remain unhurt. This is attested by this very Psalm. It saith, Their weapon, that is, "Their sword shall," not go into their body, but, "their weapon shall go into their own heart." They would fain have slain him in the body. Let them die the death of the soul. For those whose bodies they sought to kill, the Lord hath freed from anxiety, saying, "Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul." ...

3. "And their bows shall be broken." What is meant by, "And their bows shall be broken"? Their plots shall be frustrated. For above He haft said, "The wicked have drawn out the sword and bent their bows." By the "drawing out of the sword" he would have understood open hostility; but by the" bending of the bow," secret conspiracies. See! His sword destroys himself, and his laying of snares is frustrated. What is meant by frustrated? That it does no mischief to the righteous. How then, for instance (you ask), did it do no mischief to the man, whom it thus stripped of his goods, whom it reduced to straitened circumstances by taking away his possessions? He has still cause to sing, "A little that a righteous man hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly" (ver. 16).

4. ..."For the arms of the wicked shall be broken" (ver. 17). Now by "their arms" is meant their power. What will he do in hell? Will it be what the rich man had to do, he who was wont "to fare sumptuously" in the upper world, and in hell "was tormented"? Therefore their arms shall be broken; "but the Lord upholdeth the righteous." How does He "uphold"

them? What saith He unto them? Even what is said in another Psalm, "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage; and let thine heart be strengthened. Wait, I say, on the Lord." What is meant by this, "Wait on the Lord"? Thou sufferest but for a time; thou shalt rest for ever: thy trouble is short; thy happiness is to be everlasting. It is but for "a little while" thou art to sorrow; thy joy shall have no end. But in the midst of trouble does thy "foot" begin to "slip"? The example even of Christ's sufferings is set before thee. Consider what He endured for thee, in whom no cause was found why He should endure it? How great soever be thy sufferings, thou wilt not come to those insults, those scourgings, to that robe of shame, to that crown of thorns, and last of all to that Cross, which He endured; because that is now removed from the number of human punishments. For though under the ancients criminals were crucified, in the present day no one is crucified. It was honoured, and it came to an end. It came to an end as a punishment; it is continued in glory. It hath removed from the place of execution to the foreheads of Emperors. He who hath invested His very sufferings with such honour, what doth He reserve for His faithful servants? ...

5. But observe whether that was fulfilled in his case which the Psalm now speaks of. "The Lord strengtheneth the righteous.-Not only so" (saith that same Paul, whilst suffering many evils), "but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Justly is it said by him, now righteous, now "strengthened." As therefore those who persecuted him did no harm to him, when now "strengthened," so neither did he himself do any harm to those whom he persecuted. "But the Lord," he saith, "strengtheneth the righteous." ... 6. Therefore "the Lord does strengthen the righteous." In what way does He strengthen them? "The Lord knoweth the ways of the spotless ones" (ver. 18). When they suffer ills, they are believed to be walking ill ways by those who are ignorant, by those who have not knowledge to discern "the ways of the spotless ones." He who "knoweth those ways," knoweth by what way to lead His own, "them that are gentle," in the right way. Whence in another Psalm he said, "The meek shall He guide in judgment; them that are gentle will He teach His way." How, think you, was that beggar, who lay covered with sores before the rich man's door, spurned by the passers by! How did they, probably, close their nostrils and spit at him! The Lord, however, knew how to reserve Paradise for him. How did they, on the other hand, desire for themselves the life of him who was "clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day!" But the Lord, who foresaw that man's "day coming," knew the torments, the torments without end, that were in store for him. Therefore "The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright."

7. "And their inheritance shall be for ever" (ver. 18). This we hold by faith. Doth the Lord too know it by faith? The Lord knoweth those things with as clear a manifestation, as we cannot speak of even when we shall be made equal to the Angels. For the things that shall be manifest to us, shall not be equally manifest to us as they are now to Him, who is incapable of change. Yet even of us ourselves what is said? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He

shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." There is therefore surely some blissful vision reserved for us; and if it can be now in some measure conceived, "darkly and through a glass," yet cannot we in any way express in language the ravishing beauty of that bliss, which God reserves for them that fear Him, which He consummates in those that hope in Him, It is for that destination that our hearts are being disciplined in all the troubles and trials of this life. Wonder not that it is in trouble that thou art disciplined for it. It is for something glorious that thou art being disciplined. Whence comes that speech of the now strengthened righteous man: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us"? What is that promised glory to be, but to be made equal to the Angels and to see God? How great a benefit doth he bestow on the blind man, who makes his eyes sound so as to be able to see the light of this life. ...What reward then shall we give unto that Physician who restores soundness to our inward eyes, to enable them to see a certain eternal Light, which is Himself? ...

8. "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time" (ver. 19). In the day of trouble, in the day of distress, they shall not be "ashamed," as he is ashamed whose hope deceives him. Who is the man that is "ashamed"? He who saith, "I have not found that which I was in hopes of." Nor undeservedly either; for thou didst hope it from thyself or from man, thy friend. But "cursed is he that putteth his trust in man." Thou art ashamed, because thy hope hath deceived thee; thy hope that was set on a lie. For "every man is a liar." But if thou dost place thy hopes on thy God, thou art not made "ashamed." For He in whom thou hast put thy trust, cannot be deceived. Whence also the man whom we mentioned just above, the now "strengthened" righteous man, when fallen on an evil time, on the day of tribulation, what saith he to show that he was not "ashamed"? "We glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed." Whence is it that hope "maketh not ashamed"? Because it is placed on God. Therefore follows immediately, "Because the love of God is spread in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." The Holy Spirit hath been given to us already: how should He deceive us, of whom we possess such an "earnest" already? "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." ...

9. "For the wicked shall perish. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly, even as the smoke" (ver. 20). Recognise from the comparison itself the thing which he intimates. Smoke, breaking forth from the place where fire has been, rises up on high, and by the very act of rising up, it swells into a large volume: but the larger that volume is, the more unsubstantial does it become; for from that very largeness of volume, which has no foundation or consistency, but is merely loose, shifting and evanescent, it passes into air, and dissolves; so that you perceive its very largeness to have been fatal to it. For the higher it ascends, the farther it is extended, the wider the circumference which it spreads itself over, the thinner, and the more rare and wasting and evanescent does it become. "But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly even as the smoke." Of such as these was it said, "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so

do these also resist the Truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." But how is it that they resist the Truth, except by the vain inflation of their swelling pride, while they raise themselves up on high, as if great and righteous persons, though on the point of passing away into empty air? But what saith he of them? As if speaking of smoke, he says, "They shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, even as theirs also was." ...

10. "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again" (ver. 20). He receiveth, and will not repay. What is it he will not repay? Thanksgiving. For what is it that God would have of thee, what doth He require of thee, except that He may do thee good? And how great are the benefits which the sinner hath received, and which he will not repay! He hath received the gift of being; he hath received the gift of being a man; and of a being highly distinguished above the brutes; he hath received the form of a body, and the distinction of the senses in the body, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, the nostrils for smelling, the palate for tasting, the hands for touching, and the feet for walking; and even the very health and soundness of the body. But up to this point we have these things in common even with the brute; he hath received yet more than this; a mind capable of understanding, capable of Truth, capable of distinguishing right from wrong; capable of seeking after, of longing for, its Creator, of praising Him, and fixing itself upon Him. All this the wicked man hath received as well as others; but by not living well, he fails to repay that which he owes. Thus it is, "the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: he will not requite Him from whom he hath received; he will not return thanks; nay, he will even render evil for good, blasphemies, murmuring against God, indignation.

Thus it is that he "borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous showeth mercy, and lendeth" (ver. 21). The one therefore hath nothing; the other hath. See, on the one side, destitution: see, on the other, wealth. The one receiveth and "payeth not again: the "other showeth mercy, and lendeth: and he hath more than enough. What if he is poor? Even so he is rich; do you but look at his riches with the eyes of Religion. For thou lookest at the empty chest; but dost not look at the conscience, that is full of God. ...

11. "For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land" (ver. 23), that is, they shall possess that righteous One: the only One who both is truly righteous, and maketh righteous: who both was poor in this world, and brought great riches to it, wherewith to make those rich whom He found poor. For it is He who hath enriched the hearts of the poor with the Holy Spirit; and having emptied out their souls by confession of sins, hath filled them with the richness of righteousness: He who was able to enrich the fisherman, who, by forsaking his nets, spurned what he possessed already, but sought to draw up what he possessed not. For "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." And it was not by an orator that He gained to Himself the fisherman; but by the fisherman that He gained to Himself the orator; by the fisherman that He gained the Senator; by the fisherman that He gained the Emperor. For "such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land;"

they shall be fellow-heirs with Him, in that "land of the living," of which it is said in another Psalm, "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living." ...

12. Observe what follows: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way" (ver. 23). That man may himself "delight in the Lord's way," his steps are ordered by the Lord Himself. For if the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He hath given this ransom; He hath done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He hath done, He is God! Consider Him in what He hath suffered, He is Man! Who is that God-Man? Hadst not thou, O man, forsaken God, God would not have been made Man for thee! For that was too little for thee to requite, or for Him to bestow, that He had made thee man; unless He Himself should become Man for thee also. For it is He Himself that hath "ordered our steps;" that we should "delight in His way." ...

13. Now if man were to be through the whole of his life in toil, and in sufferings, in pain, in tortures, in prison, in scourgings, in hunger, and in thirst, every day and every hour through the whole length of life, to the period of old age, yet the whole life of man is but a few days. That labour being over, there is to come the Eternal Kingdom; there is to come happiness without end; there is to come equality with the Angels; there is to come Christ's inheritance, and Christ, our "joint Heir," is to come. How great is the labour, for which thou receivest so great a recompense? The Veterans who serve in the wars, and move in the midst of wounds for so many years, enter upon the military service from their youth, and quit it in old age: and to obtain a few days of repose in their old age, when age itself begins to weigh down those whom the wars do not break down, how great hardships do they endure; what marches, what frosts, what burning suns; what privations, what wounds, and what dangers! And while suffering all these things, they fix their thoughts on nothing but those few days of repose in old age, at which they know not whether they will ever arrive. Thus it is, the "steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way. This is the point with which I commenced.

If thou dost "delight in the way" of Christ, and art truly a Christian (for he is a Christian indeed who does not despise the way of Christ, but "delighteth in" following Christ's "way" through His sufferings), do not thou go by any other way than that by which He Himself hath also gone. It appears painful, but it is the very way of safety; another perhaps is delightful, but it is full of robbers. "And he delighteth in His way."

14. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth his hand" (ver. 24). See what it is "to delight in" Christ's "way." Should it happen that he suffers some tribulation; some forfeiture of honour, some affliction, some loss, some contumely, or all those other accidents incident to mankind frequently in this life, he sets the Lord before him, what kind of trials He endured! and, "though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth his hand," because He has suffered before him. For what shouldest thou

fear, O man, whose steps are ordered so, that thou shouldest "delight in the way of the Lord"? What shouldest thou fear? Pain? Christ was scourged. Shouldest thou fear contumelies? He was reproached with, "Thou hast a devil," who was Himself casting out the devils. Haply thou fearest faction, and the conspiracy of the wicked. Conspiracy was made against Him. Thou canst not make clear the purity of thy conscience in some accusation, and sufferest wrong and violence, because false witnesses are listened to against thee. False witness was borne against Him first, not only before His death, but also after His resurrection. ...

On the Third Part of the Psalm. 1. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (ver. 25).

If it is spoken but in the person of one single individual, how long is the whole life of one man? And what is there wonderful in the circumstance, that a single man, fixed in some one part of the earth, should not, throughout the whole space of his life, being so short as maws life is, have ever seen "the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread," although he may have advanced from youth to age. It is not anything worthy of marvel; for it might have happened, that before his lifetime there should have been some "righteous man seeking bread;" it might have happened, that there had been some one in some other part of the earth not where he himself was. Hear too another thing, which makes an impression upon us. Any single one among you (look you) who has now grown old, may perhaps, when, looking back upon the past course of his life, he turns over in his thoughts the persons whom he has known, not find any instance of a righteous man begging bread, or of his seed begging bread, suggest itself to him; but nevertheless he turns to the inspired Scriptures, and finds that righteous Abraham was straitened, and suffered hunger in his own country, and left that land for another; he finds too that the son of the very same man, Isaac, removed to other countries in search of bread, for the same cause of hunger. And how will it be true to say, "I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"? And if he finds this true in the duration of his own life, he finds it is otherwise in the inspired writings, which are more trustworthy than humanlife is.

2. What are we to do then? Let us be seconded by your pious attention, so that we may discern the purpose of God in these verses of the Psalm, what it is He would have us understand by them. For there is a fear, lest any unstable person, not capable of understanding the Scriptures spiritually, should appeal to human instances, and should observe the virtuous servants of God to be sometimes in some necessity, and in want, so as to be compelled to beg bread: should particularly call to mind the Apostle Paul, who says, "In hunger and thirst; in cold and nakedness; and should stumble thereat, saying to himself, "Is that certainly true which I have been singing? Is that certainly true, which I have been sounding forth in so devout a voice, standing in church? 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'" Lest he should say in his heart, "Scripture deceives us; and all his limbs should be paralyzed to good works: and when those limbs within him, those limbs of the inner man, shall have been paralyzed (which is the more fearful paralysis), he

should henceforth leave off from good works, and say to himself, "Wherefore do I do good works?

Wherefore do I break my bread to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and take home to mine house him who hath no shelter, putting faith in that which is written? 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread;' whereas I see so many persons who live virtuously, yet for the most part suffering from hunger. But if perhaps I am in error in thinking the man who is living well, and the man who is living ill, to be both of them living well, and if God knows him to be otherwise; that is, knows him, whom I think just, to be unjust, what am I to make of Abraham's case, who is commended by Scripture itself as a righteous person? What am I to make of the Apostle Paul, who says, 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.' What? that I should myself be in evils such as he endured, 'In hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness'?"

3. Whilst therefore he thus thinks, and whilst his limbs are paralyzed to the power of good works, can we, my brethren, as it were, lift up the sick of the palsy; and, as it were, "lay open the roof" of this Scripture, and let him down before the Lord? For you observe that it is obscure. If obscure therefore, it is covered. And I behold a certain patient paralytic in mind, and I see this roof, and am convinced that Christ is concealed beneath the roof. Let me, as far as I am able, do that which was praised in those who opened the roof, and let down the sick of the palsy before Christ; that He might say unto him, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." For it was so that He made the inner man whole of his palsy, by loosing his sins, by binding fast his faith. ...

4. But who is "the righteous" man, who "hath never been seen forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"? If you understand what is meant by "bread," you understand who is meant by him. For the "bread" is the Word of God, which never departs from the righteous man's mouth. ...See now if "holy meditation doth 'keep thee'" in the rumination of this bread, then "hast thou never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

5. "He is always merciful, and lendeth" (ver. 26). "Foeneratur" is used in Latin indeed, both for him who lendeth, and for him who borroweth. But in this passage the meaning is more plain, if we express it by "foenerat. What matters it to us, what the grammarians please to rule? It were better for us to be guilty of a barbarism, so that ye understand, than that in our propriety of speech ye be left unprovided. Therefore, that "righteous man is all day merciful, and (foenerat) lendeth. Let not the lenders of money on usury, however, rejoice. For we find it is a particular kind of lender that is spoken of, as it was a particular kind of bread; that we may, in all passages, "remove the roof," and find our way to Christ. I would not have you be lenders of money on usury; and I would not have you be such for this reason, because God would not have you. ...Whence does it appear that God would not have it so? It is said in another place, "He that putteth not out his money to usury. And how detestable, odious, and execrable a thing it is, I believe that even usurers themselves know. Again, on the other hand, I myself, nay rather our God Himself bids thee be an usurer, and says to

thee, "Lend unto God. If thou lendest to man, hast thou hope? and shalt thou not have hope, if thou lendest to God?

If thou hast lent thy money on usury to man, that is, if thou hast given the loan of thy money to one, from whom thou dost expect to receive something more than thou hast given, not in money only, but anything, whether it be wheat, or wine, or oil, or whatever else you please, if you expect to receive more than you have given, you are an usurer, and in this particular are not deserving of praise, but of censure. "What then," you say, "am I to do, that I may 'lend' profitably? Consider what the usurer does. He undoubtedly desires to give a less sum, and to receive a larger; do thou this also; give thou a little, receive much. See how thy principal grows, and increases! Give "things temporal," receive "things eternal: give earth, receive heaven! And perhaps thou wouldest say, "To whom shall I give them? The self-same Lord, who bade thee not lend on usury, comes forward as the Person to whom thou shouldest lend on usury! Hear from Scripture in what way thou mayest "lend unto the Lord. "He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord. For the Lord wanteth not aught of thee. But thou hast one who needs somewhat of thee: thou extendest it to him; he receives it. For the poor hath nothing to return to thee, and yet he would himself fain requite thee, and finds nothing wherewith to do it: all that remains in his power is the good-will that desires to pray for thee.

Now when the poor man prays for thee, he, as it were, says unto God, "Lord, I have borrowed this; be Thou surety for me. Then, though you have no bond on the poor man to compel his repayment, yet you have on a sponsible security. See, God from His own Scriptures saith unto thee; "Give it, and fear not; I repay it. It is to Me thou givest it. In what way do those who make themselves sureties for others, express themselves? What is it that they say? "I repay it: I take it upon myself. It is to me you are giving it. Do we then suppose that God also says this, "I take it on Myself. It is unto me thou givest it"? Assuredly, if Christ be God, of which there is no doubt, He hath Himself said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. And when they said unto Him, "When saw we Thee hungry? that He might show Himself to be the Surety for the poor, that He answers for all His members, that He is the Head, they the members, and that when the members receive, the Head receiveth also; He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these that belong to Me, ye have done it unto Me. Come, thou covetous usurer, consider what thou hast given; consider what thou art to receive.

Hadst thou given a small sum of money, and he to whom thou hadst given it were to give thee for that small sum a great villa, worth incomparably more money than thou hadst given, how great thanks wouldest thou render, with how great joy wouldest thou be transported! Hear what possession He to whom thou hast been lending bestows. "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive" -What? The same that they have given? God forbid! What you gave were earthly things, which, if you had not given them, would have; become corrupted on earth. For what could you have made of them, if you had not given them? That which on earth would have been lost, has been preserved in heaven. Therefore what we are to receive is that

which hath been preserved. It is thy desert that hath been preserved, thy desert hath been made thy treasure. For consider what it is that thou art to receive. Receive-" the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On the other hand, what shall be their sentence, who would not "lend"? "Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And what is the kingdom which we receive called? Consider what follows: "And these shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Make interest for this; purchase this. Give your money on usury to earn this. You have Christ throned in heaven, begging on earth. We have discovered in what way the righteous lendeth. "He is alway merciful, and lendeth."

6. "And his seed is blessed." Here too let not any carnal notion suggest itself. We see many of the sons of the righteous dying of hunger; in what sense then will his seed be blessed? His seed is that which remains of him afterwards that wherewith he soweth here, and will here-after reap. For the Apostle says, "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore time," he says, "let us do good unto all men." This is that "seed" of thine which shall "be blessed." You commit it to the earth, and gather ever so much more; and dost thou lose it in committing it to Christ? See it expressly termed "seed" by the Apostle, when he was speaking of alms. For this he saith; "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in blessings, shall also reap in blessings." ...

7. Observe therefore what follows, and be not slothful. "Depart from evil, and do good" (ver. 27). Do not think it to be enough for thee to do, if thou dost not strip the man who is already clothed. For in not stripping the man who is already clothed, thou hast indeed "departed from evil: but do not be barren, and wither. So choose not to strip the man who is clothed already, as to clothe the naked. For this is to "depart from evil, and to do good. And you will say, "What advantage am I to derive from it? He to whom thou lendest has already assured thee of what He will give thee.He will give thee everlasting life. Give to Him, and fear not! Hear too what follows: "Depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore. And think not when thou givest that no one sees thee, or that God forsakes thee, when haply after thou hast given to the poor, and some loss, or some sorrow for the property thou hast lost, should follow, and thou shouldest say to thyself, "What hath it profited me to have done good works? I believe God doth not love the men who do good. Whence comes that buzz, that subdued murmur among you, except that those expressions are very common? Each one of you at this present moment recognises these expressions, either in his own lips, or on those of his friend. May God destroy them; may He root out the thorns from His field;

may He plant "the good seed," and "the tree bearing fruit"! For wherefore art thou afflicted, O man, that thou hast given some things away to the poor, and hast lost certain other things? Seest thou not that it is what thou hast not given, that thou hast lost? Wherefore dost thou not attend to the voice of thy God? Where is thy faith? wherefore is it so fast asleep? Wake it up in thy heart. Consider what the Lord Himself said unto thee, while exhorting thee to good works of this kind: "Provide yourselves bags which wax not old; a treasure in the

heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth. Call this to mind therefore when you are lamenting over a loss. Wherefore dost thou lament, thou fool of little mind, or rather of unsound mind? Wherefore didst thou lose it, except that thou didst not lend it to Me? Wherefore didst thou lose it? Who has carried it off? Thou wilt answer, "A thief. Was it not this, that I forewarned thee of? that thou shouldest not lay it up where the thief could approach? If then he who has lost anything, grieves, let him grieve for this, that he did not lay it up there, whence it could not be lost.

8. "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints" (ver. 28). When the Saints suffer affliction, think not that God doth not judge, or doth not judge righteously. Will He, who warns thee to judge righteously, Himself judge unrighteously? He "loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints." But (think) how the "life" of the Saints is "hid with Him," in such a manner, that who now suffer trouble on earth, like trees in the winter-time, having no fruit and leaves, when He, like a newly-risen sun, shall have appeared, that which before was living in their root, will show itself forth in fruits. He does then "love judgment, and doth not forsake His Saints." ...

9. "But the unrighteous shall be punished; the seed of the wicked shall be cut off." Just as the "seed of the" other "shall be blessed," so shall the "seed of the wicked be cut off." For the "seed" of the wicked is the works of the wicked. For again, on the other hand, we find the son of the wicked man flourish in the world, and sometimes become righteous, and flourish in Christ. Be careful therefore how thou takest it; that thou mayest remove the covering, and make thy way to Christ. Do not take the text in a carnal sense; for thou wilt be deceived. But "the seed of the wicked"-all the works of the wicked-"will be cut off:" they shall have no fruit. For they are effective indeed for a short time; afterwards they shall seek for them, and shall not find the reward of that which they have wrought. For it is the expression of those who lose what they have wrought, that text which says, "What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow." "The seed of the wicked," then, "shall be cut off."

10. "The righteous shall inherit the land" (ver. 29). Here again let not covetousness steal on thee, nor promise thee some great estate; hope not to find there, what you are commanded to despise in this world. That "land" in the text, is a certain "land of the living," the kingdom of the Saints. Whence it is said: "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living." For if thy life too is the same life as that there spoken of, think what sort of "land" thou art about to inherit. That is "the land of the living;" this the land of those who are about to die: to receive again, when dead, those whom it nourished when living. Such then as is that land, such shall the life itself be also: if the life be for ever, "the land" also is to be thine "for ever." And how is "the land" to be thine "for ever"?

"And they shall dwell therein" (it says) "for ever." It must therefore be another land, where "they are to dwell therein for ever." For of this land (of this earth) it is said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." 11. "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom" (ver. 30). See here is that "bread." Observe with what satisfaction this righteous man feedeth upon it; how

he turns wisdom over and over in his mouth. "And his tongue talketh of judgment." "The law of his God is in his heart" (ver. 31). Lest haply thou shouldest think him to have that on his lips, which he hath not in his heart, lest thou shouldest reckon him among those of whom it is said, "This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." And of what use is this to him? "And none of his steps shall slide." The "word of God in the heart" frees from the snare; the "word of God in the heart" delivers from the evil way; "the word of God in the heart" delivers from "the slippery place." He is with thee, Whose word departeth not from thee. Now what evil doth he suffer, whom God keepeth? Thou settest a watchman in thy vineyard, and feelest secure from thieves; and that watchman may sleep, and may himself fall, and may admit a thief. But "He who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide." Let him therefore live free from fear; let him live free from fear even in the midst of the wicked; free from fear even in the midst of the ungodly. For what evil can the ungodly or unrighteous man do to the righteous? Lo! see what follows.

"The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him" (ver. 32). For he says, what it was foretold in the book of Wisdom that he should say, "He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other men's." Therefore he "seeks to slay him." What? Doth the Lord, who keepeth him, who dwelleth with him, who departeth not from his lips, from his heart, doth He forsake him? What then becomes of what was said before: "And He forsaketh not His Saints"? 12. "The wicked therefore watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. But the Lord will not leave him in his hands" (ver. 33). Wherefore then did He leave the Martyrs in the hands of the ungodly? Wherefore did they do unto them "whatsoever they would"? Some they slew with the sword; some they crucified; some they delivered to the beasts; some they burnt by fire; others they led about in chains, till wasted out by a long protracted decay. Assuredly "the Lord forsaketh not His Saints." He will not "leave him in his hands." Lastly, wherefore did He leave His own Son in "the hands of the ungodly"? Here also, if thou wouldest have all the limbs of thy inner man made strong, remove the covering of the roof, and find thy way to the Lord. Hear what another Scripture, foreseeing our Lord's future suffering at the hands of the ungodly, saith. What saith it? "The earth is given into the hands of the wicked." What is meant by "earth" being "given into the hands of the ungodly"? The delivering of the flesh into the hands of the persecutors. But God did not leave "His righteous One" there: from the flesh, which was taken captive, He leads forth the soul unconquered. ...

"The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when there shall be judgment for him" (ver. 33). Some copies have it, "and when He shall judge him, there shall be judgment for him." "For him," however, means when sentence is passed upon him. For we can express ourselves so as to say to a person, "Judge for me," i.e. "hear my cause." When therefore God shall begin to hear the cause of His righteous servant, since "we must all" be presented "before the tribunal of Christ," and stand before it to receive every one "the things he hath done in this body," whether good or evil, when therefore he shall have come to that Judgment, He will not condemn him; though he may seem to be condemned in this

present life by man. Even though the Proconsul may have passed sentence on Cyprian, yet the earthly seat of judgment is one thing, the heavenly tribunal is another. From the inferior tribunal he receives sentence of death; from the superior one a crown, "Nor will He condemn him when there shall be judgment for him."

13. "Wait on the Lord" (ver. 34). And while I am waiting upon Him, what am I to do?-"and keep His ways." And if I keep them, what am I to receive? "And He shall exalt thee to inherit the land." "What land"? Once more let not any estate suggest itself to your mind:-the land of which it is said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." What of those who have troubled us, in the midst of whom we have groaned, whose scandals we have patiently endured, for whom, while they were raging against us, we have prayed in vain? What will become of them? What follows? "When the wicked are cut off, thou shall see it."... "I have seen the ungodly lifted up on high, and rising above the cedars of Libanus" (ver. 35). And suppose him to be "lifted up on high;" suppose him to be towering above the "rest;" what follows?

"I passed by, and, lo, he was not! I sought him, and his place could nowhere be found!" (ver. 36). Why was he "no more, and his place nowhere to be found"? Because thou hast "passed by." But if thou art yet carnally-minded, and that earthly prosperity appears to thee to be true happiness, thou hast not yet "passed by" him; thou art either his fellow, or thou art below him; go on, and pass him; and when thou hast made progress, and hast passed by him, thou observest him by the eye of faith; thou seest his end, thou sayest to thyself, "Lo! he who so swelled before, is not!" just as if it were some smoke that thou wert passing near to. For this too was said above in this very Psalm, "They shall consume and fade away as the smoke." ... 14. "Keep innocency" (ver. 37); keep it even as thou usedst to keep thy purse, when thou wert covetous; even as thou usedst to hold fast that purse, that it might not be snatched from thy grasp by the thief, even so "keep innocency," lest that be snatched from thy grasp by the devil. Be that thy sure inheritance, of which the rich and the poor may both be sure. "Keep innocency." What doth it profit thee to gain gold, and to lose innocence?

"Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing which is right." Keep thou thine eyes "right," that thou mayest see "the thing which is right;" not perverted, wherewith thou lookest upon the wicked; not distorted, so that God should appear to thee distorted and wrong, in that He favours the wicked, and afflicts the faithful with persecutions. Dost thou not observe how distorted thy vision is? Set right thine eyes, and "behold the thing that is right." What "thing that is right"?. Take no heed of things present. And what wilt thou see? "For there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace." What is meant by "there is a remainder"? When thou art dead, thou shall not be dead. This is the meaning of "there is a remainder." He will still have something remaining to him, even after this life, that is to say, that "seed," which "shall be blessed." Whence our Lord saith, "He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live;" -"seeing there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace."

15. "But the transgressors shall be destroyed in the self-same thing" (ver. 38). What is meant by, "in the self-same thing"? It means for ever: or all together in one and the same

destruction. "The remainder of the wicked shall be cut off." Now there is "(a remainder) for the man that maketh peace:" they therefore who are not peace-makers, are ungodly. For, "Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God." 16. "But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, and He is their strength in the time of trouble" (ver. 39). "And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the sinners" (ver. 40). At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire. The one will be consigned to the garner, the other to "everlasting burning;" for it was for this reason that the just and the unjust were at the first together; that the one should lay a stumbling-block, that the other should be proved; that afterwards the one should be condemned, the other receive a crown. ...

Psalm 38

A Psalm TO David Himself, ON The Remembrance OF The Sabbath. 1. What doth this recollection of the Sabbath mean? What is this Sabbath? For it is with groaning that he "calls it to recollection." You have both heard already when the Psalm was read, and you will now hear it when we shall go over it, how great is his groaning, his mourning, his tears, his misery. But happy he who is wretched after this manner! Whence the Lord also in the Gospel called some who mourn blessed. "How should he be blessed if he is a mourner? How blessed, if he is miserable?" Nay rather, he would be miserable, if he were not a mourner. Such an one then let us understand here too, calling the Sabbath to remembrance (viz.), some mourner or other: and would that we were ourselves that "some one or other"! For there is here some person sorrowing, groaning, mourning, calling the Sabbath to remembrance. The Sabbath is rest. Doubtless he was in some disquietude, who with groaning was calling the Sabbath to remembrance. ...

2. "O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure" (ver. 1). For it will be that some shall be chastened in God's "hot displeasure," and rebuked in His "indignation." And haply not all who are "rebuked" will be "chastened;" yet are there some that are to be saved in the chastening. So it is to be indeed, because it is called "chastening," but yet it shall be "so as by fire." But there are to be some who will be "rebuked," and will not be "corrected." For he will at all events "rebuke" those to whom He will say, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat." ... "Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure;" so that Thou mayest cleanse me in this life, and make me such, that I may after that stand in no need of the cleansing fire, for those "who are to be saved, yet so as by fire." Why? Why, but because they "build upon the foundation, wood, stubble, and hay." Now they should build on it, "gold, silver, and precious stones;" and should have nothing to fear from either fire: not only that which is to consume the ungodly for ever, but also that which is to purge those who are to escape through the fire. For it is said, "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." And because it is said, "he shall be saved," that fire is thought lightly of. For all that, though we should be "saved by fire," yet will that fire be more grievous than anything that man can suffer in this life whatsoever. ...

3. Now on what ground does this person pray that he may not be "rebuked in indignation, nor chastened in hot displeasure"? (He speaks) as if he would say unto God, "Since the

things which I already suffer are many in number, I pray Thee let them suffice;" and he begins to enumerate them, by way of satisfying God; offering what he suffers now, that he may not have to suffer worse evils hereafter.

4. "For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore" (ver. 2). "There is no soundness in my flesh, from the face of Thine anger" (ver. 3). He has now begun telling these evils, which he is suffering here: and yet even this already was from the wrath of the Lord, because it was of the vengeance of the Lord. "Of what vengeance? That which He took upon Adam. For think not that punishment was not inflicted upon him, or that God had said to no purpose, "Thou shalt surely die; or that we suffer anything in this life, except from that death which we earned by the original sin. ...Whence then do His "arrows stick fast in" him? The very punishment, the very vengeance, and haply the pains both of mind and of body, which it is necessary for us to suffer here, these he describes by these self-same "arrows. For of these arrows holy Job also made mention, and said that the arrows of the Lord stuck fast in him, whilst he was labouring under those pains. We are used, however, to call God's words also arrows; but could he grieve that he should be struck by these? The words of God are arrows, as it were, that inflame love, not pain. ...We may then understand the "arrows sticking fast," thus: Thy words are fixed fast in my heart; and by those words themselves is it come to pass, that I "called the Sabbath to remembrance:

and that very remembrance of the Sabbath, and the non-possession of it at present, prevents me from rejoicing at present; and causes me to acknowledge that there "is neither health in my very flesh," neither ought it to be so called when I compare this sort of soundness to that soundness which I am to possess in the everlasting rest; where "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality," and see that in comparison with that soundness this present kind is but sickness.

5. "Neither is there any rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. It is commonly enquired, of what person this is the speech; and some understand it to be Christ's, on account of some things which are here said of the Passion of Christ; to which we shall shortly come; and which we ourselves shall acknowledge to be spoken of His Passion. But how could He who had no sin, say, "There is no rest in my bones, from the face of my sin."... For if we were to say that they are not the words of Christ, those words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? will also not be the words of Christ. For there too you have, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? "The words of mine offences are far from my health. Just as here you have, "from the face of my sins," so there also you have, "the words of my offences. And if Christ is, for all that, without "sin," and without "offences," we begin to think those words in the Psalm also not to be His. And it is exceedingly harsh and inconsistent that that Psalm should not relate to Christ, where we have His Passion as clearly laid open as if it were being read to us out of the Gospel. For there we have, "They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.

Why should I mention that the first verse of that Psalm was pronounced by the Lord Himself while hanging on the Cross, with His own mouth, saying, "My God, My God, why hast Thou

forsaken Me? What did He mean to be inferred from it, but that the whole of that Psalm relates to Him, seeing He Himself, the Head of His Body, pronounced it in His own Person? Now when it goes on to say, "the words of mine offences," it is beyond a doubt that they are the words of Christ. Whence then come "the sins," but from the Body, which is the Church? Because both the Head and the Body of Christ are speaking. Why do they speak as if one person only? Because "they twain," as He hath said, "shall be one flesh. "This" (says the Apostle) "is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."... For why should He not say, "my sins," who said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in. I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Assuredly the Lord was not in prison. Why should He not say this, to whom when it was said, "When saw we Thee a hungred, and athirst, or in prison; and did not minister unto Thee? He replied, that He spake thus in the person of His Body.

"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it not unto Me. Why should He not say, "from the face of my sins," who said to Saul, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me," who, however, being in Heaven, now suffered from no persecutors? But just as, in that passage, the Head spake for the Body, so here too the Head speaks the words of the Body; whilst you hear at the same time the accents of the Head Itself also. Yet do not either, when you hear the voice of the Body, separate the Head from it; nor the Body, when you hear the voice of the Head: because "they are no more twain, but one flesh."

6. "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of thine anger." But perhaps God is unjustly angry with thee, O Adam; unjustly angry with thee, O son of man; because now brought to acknowledge that thy punishment, now that thou art a man that hath been placed in Christ's Body, thou hast said, "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger." Declare the justice of God's anger: lest thou shouldest seem to be excusing thyself, and accusing Him. Go on to tell whence the "anger" of the Lord proceeds. "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones." He repeats what he said before, "There is no soundness in my flesh;" for, "There is no rest in my bones," is equivalent to this. He does not however repeat "from the face of Thine anger;" but states the cause of the anger of God. "There is no rest in my bones from the face of my sins."

7. "For mine iniquities have lifted up my head; and are like a heavy burden too heavy for me to bear" (ver. 4). Here too he has placed the cause first, and the effect afterwards. What consequence followed, and from what cause, he has told us. "Mine iniquities have lift up mine head." For no one is proud but the unrighteous man, whose head is lifted up. He is "lifted up," whose "head is lifted up on high" against God. You heard when the lesson of the Book of Ecclesiasticus was read: "The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God." He who was the first to refuse to listen to the Commandment, "his head iniquity lifted up" against God. And because his iniquities have lifted up his head, what hath God done unto him? They are "like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear"! It is the part of levity to lift up the head, just as if he who lifts up his head had nothing to carry. Since therefore

that which admits of being lifted up is light, it receives a weight by which it may be weighed down. For "his mischief returns upon his own head, and his violent dealing comes down upon his own pate." "They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear."

8. "My wounds stink and are corrupt" (ver. 5). Now he who has wounds is not perfectly sound. Add to this, that the wounds "stink and are corrupt." Wherefore do they "stink"? Because they are "corrupt:" now in what way this is explained in reference to human life, who doth not understand? Let a man but have his soul's sense of smelling sound, he perceives how foully sins stink. The contrary to which stink of sin, is that savour of which the Apostle says, "We are the sweet savour of Christ unto God, in every place, unto them which be saved." But whence is this, except from hope? Whence is this, but from our "calling the Sabbath to remembrance"? For it is a different thing that we mourn over in this life, from that which we anticipate in the other. That which we mourn over is stench, that which we reckon upon is fragrance. Were there not therefore such a perfume as that to invite us, we should never call the Sabbath to remembrance. But since, by the Spirit, we have such a perfume, as to say to our Betrothed, "Because of the savour of Thy good ointments we will run after Thee;" we turn our senses away from our own unsavourinesses, and turning ourselves to Him, we gain some little breathing-time. But indeed, unless our evil deeds also did smell rank in our nostrils, we should never confess with those groans, "My wounds stink and are corrupt." And wherefore? "from the face of my foolishness." From the same cause that he said before, "from the face of my sins;" from that same cause he now says, "from the face of my foolishness."

9. "I am troubled, I am bowed down even unto the end" (ver. 6). Wherefore was he "bowed down"? Because he had been "lifted up." If thou art "humble, thou shalt be exalted;" if thou exaltest thyself, thou shalt be "bowed down;" for God will be at no loss to find a weight wherewith to bow thee down. ...Let him groan on these things; that he may receive the other; let him "call the Sabbath to remembrance," that he may deserve to arrive at it. For that which the Jews used to celebrate was but a sign. Of what thing was it the sign? Of that which he calls to remembrance, who saith, "I am troubled, and am bowed down even unto the end." What is meant by even "unto the end"? Even to death. "I go mourning all the day long." "All day long," that is, "without intermission." By "all the day long," he means, "all my life long." But from what time hath he known it? From the time that he began to "call the Sabbath to remembrance." For so long as he "calls to remembrance" what he no longer possesses, wouldest thou not have him "go mourning"? "All the day long have I gone mourning."

10. "For my soul is filled with illusions, and there is no soundness in my flesh" (ver. 7). Where there is the whole man, there there is soul and flesh both. The "soul is filled with illusions; the flesh hath "no soundness. What does there remain that can give joy? Is it not meet that one should "go mourning"? "All the day long have I gone mourning. Let mourning be our portion, until our soul be divested of its illusions; and our body be clothed with soundness. For true soundness is no other than immortality. How great however are

the soul's illusions, were I even to attempt to express, when would the time suffice me? For whose soul is not subject to them? There is a brief particular that I will remind you of, to show how our soul is filled with illusions. The presence of those illusions sometimes scarcely permits us to pray. We know not how to think of material objects without images, and such as we do not wish, rush in upon the mind; and we wish to go from this one to that, and to quit that for another. And sometimes you wish to return to that which you were thinking of before, and to quit that which you are now thinking of; and a fresh one presents itself to you; you wish to call up again what you had forgotten; and it does not occur to you; and another comes instead which you would not have wished for.

Where meanwhile was the one that you had forgotten? For why did it afterwards occur to you, when it had ceased to be sought after; whereas, while it was being sought for, innumerable others, which were not desired, presented themselves instead of it? I have stated a fact briefly; I have thrown out a kind of hint or suggestion to you, brethren, taking up which, you may yourselves suggest the rest to yourselves, and discover what it is to mourn over the "illusions" of our "soul. He hath received therefore the punishment of illusion; he hath forfeited Truth. For just as illusion is the soul's punishment, so is Truth its reward. But when we were set in the midst of these illusions, the Truth Itself came to us, and found us overwhelmed by illusions, took upon Itself our flesh, or rather took flesh from us; that is, from the human race. He manifested himself to the eyes of the Flesh, that He might "by faith" heal those to whom He was going to reveal the Truth hereafter, that Truth might be manifested to the now healed eye. For He is Himself "the Truth," which He promised unto us at that time, when His Flesh was to be seen by the eye, that the foundation might be laid of that Faith, of which the Truth was to be the reward. For it was not Himself that Christ showed forth on earth; but it was His Flesh that He showed.

For had He showed Himself, the Jews would have seen and known Him; but had they "known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. But perhaps His disciples saw Him, when they said unto Him, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us; and He, to show that it was not Himself that had been seen by them, added: "Have I been so long with you, and have ye not known Me, Philip? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. If then they saw Christ, wherefore did they yet seek for the Father? For if it were Christ whom they saw, they would have seen the Father also. They did not therefore yet see Christ, who desired that the Father should be shown unto them. To prove that they did not yet see Him, hear that, in another place, He promised it by way of reward, saying, "He who loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and whoso loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him and" (as if it were said to Him, "what wilt Thou give unto him, as Thou lovest him? He saith), "I will manifest Myself unto him. If then He promises this by way of a reward unto them that love Him, it is manifest that the vision of the Truth, promised to us, is of such a nature, that, when we have seen it, we shall no longer say, "My soul is filled with illusions."

11. "I am become feeble, and am bowed down greatly" (ver. 8). He who calls to mind the transcendent height of the Sabbath, sees how "greatly" he is himself "bowed down. For he

who cannot conceive what is that height of rest, sees not where he is at present. Therefore another Psalm hath said, "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For his mind being taken up thither, he beheld something sublime; and was not yet entirely there, where what he beheld was; and a kind of flash, as it were, if one may so speak, of the Eternal Light having glanced upon him, when he perceived that he was not yet arrived at this, which he was able after a sort to understand, he saw where he himself was, and how he was cramped and "bowed down" by human infirmities. And he says, "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. Such is that certain something which I saw in my trance, that thence I perceive how far off I am, who am not already there. He was already there who said that he was "caught up into the third Heaven, and there heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. But he was recalled to us, in order that, as requiring to be made perfect, he might first mourn his infirmity, and afterwards be clothed with might.

Yet encouraged for the ministration of his office by having seen somewhat of those things, he goes on saying, "I heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Now then what use is it for you to ask, either of me or of any one, the "things which it is not lawful for man to utter. If it was not lawful for him to utter them, to whom is it lawful to hear them? Let us however lament and groan in Confession; let us own where we are; let us "call the Sabbath to remembrance," and wait with patience for what He has promised, who hath, in His own Person also, showed forth an example of patience to us. "I am become feeble, and bowed down greatly."

12. "I have roared with the groaning of my heart." You observe the servants of God generally interceding with groaning; and the reason of it is asked, and there is nothing apparent, but the groaning of some servant of God, if indeed it does find its way at all to the ears of a person placed near him. For there is a secret groaning, which is not heard by man: yet if the thought of some strong desire has taken so strong hold of the heart, that the wound of the inner man finds expression in some uttered exclamation, the reason of it is asked; and a man says to himself, "Perhaps this is the cause of his groaning;" and, "Perhaps this or that hath befallen him." Who can determine, but He in whose Eyes and Ears he groaned? Therefore he says, "I roared with the groaning of mine heart;" because if men ever hear a man's groanings, they for the most part hear but the groaning of the flesh; they do not hear him who groans "with the groaning of his heart." Some one hath carried off his goods; he "roareth," but not "with the groaning of his heart:" another because he has buried his son, another his wife; another because his vineyard has been injured by a hailstorm; another because his cask has turned sour; another because some one hath stolen his beast; another because he has suffered some loss; another because he fears some man who is his enemy: all these "roar" with the "groaning of the flesh." The servant of God, however, because he "roareth" from the recollection of the Sabbath, where the Kingdom of God is, which flesh and blood shall not possess, says, "I have roared with the groaning of my heart."

13. And who observed and noticed the cause of his groaning? ”All my desire is before Thee” (ver. 9). For it is not before men who cannot see the heart, but it is before Thee that all my desire is open! Let your desire be before Him; and ”the Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee. For it is thy heart’s desire that is thy prayer; and if thy desire continues uninterrupted, thy prayer continueth also. For not without a meaning did the Apostle say, ”Pray without ceasing. Are we to be ”without ceasing” bending the knee, prostrating the body, or lifting up our hands, that he says, ”Pray without ceasing”? Or if it is in this sense that we say that we ”pray,” this, I believe, we cannot do ”without ceasing. There is another inward kind of prayer without ceasing, which is the desire of the heart. Whatever else you are doing, if you do but long for that Sabbath, you do not cease to pray. If you would never cease to pray, never cease to long after it. The continuance of thy longing is the continuance of thy prayer. You will be ceasing to speak, if you cease to long for it. Who are those who have ceased to speak? They of whom it is said ”Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. The freezing of charity is the silence of the heart; the burning of charity is the cry of the heart.

If love continues still you are still lifting up your voice; if you are always lifting up your voice, you are always longing after something; if always longing for something absent, you are calling ”the Sabbath rest to remembrance. And it is important you should understand too before whom the ”roaring of thine heart” is open. Now then consider what sort of desires those should be, that are before the eyes of God. Should it be the desire for the death of our enemy? a thing which men flatter themselves they lawfully wish for? For sometimes we pray for what we ought not. Let us consider what they flatter themselves they pray for lawfully! For they pray that some person may die, and his inheritance come to them. But let those too, who pray for the death of their enemies, hear the Lord saying, ”Pray for your enemies. Let them not pray for this, that their enemies may die; but rather pray for this, that they may be reclaimed; then will their enemies be dead; for from the time that they are reclaimed, henceforth they will be enemies no longer. ”And all my desire is before Thee. What if we suppose that our desire is before Him, and that yet that very ”groaning” is not before Him? How can that be, since our desire itself finds its expression in ”groaning”? Therefore follows, ”And my groaning is not hid from Thee.”

From Thee indeed it is not hid; but from many men it is hid. The servant of God sometimes seems to be saying in humility, ”And my groaning is not hid from Thee.” Sometimes also he seems to smile. Is then that longing dead in his heart? If however there is the desire within, there is the ”groaning” also. It does not always find its way to the ears of man; but it never ceases to sound in the ears of God. 14. ”My heart is troubled” (ver. 10). Wherefore is it troubled? ”And my courage hath failed me.” Generally something comes upon us on a sudden; the ”heart is troubled;” the earth quakes; thunder is sent from Heaven; a formidable attack is made upon us, or a horrible sound heard. Perhaps a lion is seen on the road; the ”heart is troubled.” Perhaps robbers lie in wait for us; the ”heart is troubled:” we are filled with a panic fear; from every quarter something excites anxiety. Wherefore? Because ”my courage hath failed me.” For what would be feared, did that courage still remain unmoved?

Whatever bad tidings were brought, whatever threatened us, whatever sound was heard, whatever were to fall, whatever appeared horrible, would inspire no terror. But whence that trouble? "My courage faileth me." Wherefore hath my courage failed me? "The light of mine eyes also is gone from me." Thus Adam also could not see "the light of his eyes." For the "light of his eyes" was God Himself, whom when he had offended, he fled to the shade, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise. He shrunk in alarm from the face of God: and sought the shelter of the trees; thenceforth among the trees he had no more "the light of his eyes," at which he had been wont to rejoice. ...

15. "My lovers;" why should I henceforth speak of my enemies? "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me" (ver. 11). Understand this that he saith, "Stood over against me." For if they stood over against me, they fell against themselves. "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh and stood over against me." Let us now recognise the words of the Head speaking; now let our Head in His Passion begin to dawn upon us. Yet again when the Head begins to speak, do not sever the Body from it. If the Head would not separate itself from the words of the Body, should the Body dare to separate itself from the sufferings of the Head? Do thou suffer in Christ's suffering: for Christ, as it were, sinned in thy infirmity. For just now He spoke of thy sins, as if speaking in His own Person, and called them His own. ...To those who wished to be near His exaltation, yet thought not of His humility, He answered and said to them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" Those sufferings of the Lord then are our sufferings also: and were each individual to serve God well, to keep faith truly, to render to each their dues, and to conduct himself honestly among men, I should like to see if he does not suffer even that which Christ here details in the account of His Passion. "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me."

16. "And my neighbours stood afar off" Who were the "neighbours" that drew nigh, and who were those who stood afar off? The Jews were"neighbours" because "near kinsmen," they drew near even when they crucified Him: the Apostles also were His "neighbours; and they also "stood afar off," that they might not have to suffer with Him. This may also be understood thus: "My friends," that is, those who feigned themselves "My friends: for they feigned themselves His friends, when they said, "We know that. Thou teachest the way of God in truth; when they wished to try Him, whether tribute ought to be paid to Caesar; when He convinced them out of their own mouth, they wished to seem to be His friends. "But He needed not that any should testify of man, for He Himself knew what was in man; so that when they spoke unto Him words of friendship, He answered them, "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? "My friends and my neighbours" then "drew near and stood over against me, and my neighbours stood afar off. You understand what I said. I called those neighhours who "drew nigh," and at the same time "stood afar off. For they "drew nigh" in the body, but "stood afar off" in their heart. Who were in the body so near to Him as those who lifted Him on the Cross? Who in heart so as those who blasphemed Him? Hear this sort of distance described by the Prophet Isaiah;

observe this nearness and distance at one and the same time. "This people honours Me with their lips: behold, with their body they draw near; "but their heart is far from Me. The same persons are at the same time "near" and "afar off" also: with their lips they are near, in heart afar off. However, because the Apostles also stood afar off, through fear, we understand it more simply and properly of them; so that we mean by it, that some drew near, and others stood afar off; since even Peter, who had followed more boldly than the rest, was still so far off, that being questioned and alarmed, he thrice denied the Lord, with whom he had promised to "be ready to die. Who afterwards that, from being afar off, he might be made to draw nigh, heard after the resurrection the question, "Lovest thou Me? and said, "I love Thee; and by so saying was brought "nigh," even as by denying Him, he had become "far off; till with the threefold confession of love, he had put away from him his threefold denial. "And my neighbours stood afar off."

17. "They also that sought after my soul were preparing violence against me" (ver. 12). It is now plain who "sought after His soul;" viz. those who had not His soul, in that they were not in His Body. They who were "seeking after His soul," were far removed from His soul; but they were "seeking it" to destroy it. For His soul may be "sought after" in a right way also. For in another passage He finds fault with some persons, saying, "There is no man to care for My soul." He finds fault with some for not seeking after His soul; and again, with others for seeking after it. Who is he that seeketh after His soul in the right way? He who imitates His sufferings. Who are they that sought after His soul in the wrong way? Even those who "prepared violence against Him," and crucified Him.

18. He goes on: "Those who sought after My faults had spoken vanity." What is, "sought after My faults"? They sought after many things, and found them not. Perhaps He may have meant this: "They sought for criminal charges against me." For they sought for somewhat to say against Him, and "they found not." For they were seeking to find evil things to say of "the Good;" crimes of the Innocent; When would they find such things in Him, who had no sin? But because they had to seek for sins in Him who had no sin, it remained for them to invent that which they could not find. Therefore, "those who sought after My faults have spoken vanity," i.e., untruth, "and imagined deceit all the day long;" that is, they meditated treachery without intermission. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against the Lord, before He suffered. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against Him, even after His resurrection. For those soldiers who watched His sepulchre of whom Isaiah spake, "I will appoint the wicked for His burial" (for they were wicked men, and would not speak the truth, and being bribed they disseminated a lie), consider what "vanity" they spake. They also were examined, and they said, "While we slept, His disciples cameand stole Him away." This it is, "to speak vanity." For if they were sleeping, how could they know what had been done?

19. He saith then, "But I as a deaf man heard not" (ver. 13). He who replied not to what He heard, did, as it were, not hear them. "But I as a deaf man heard not. And I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth." And he repeats the same things again. "And I

became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs" (ver. 14). As if He had nothing to say unto them, as if He had nothing wherewith to reproach them. Had He not already reproached them for many things? Had He not said many things, and also said, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees," and many things besides? Yet when He suffered, He said none of these things; not that He had not what to say, but He waited for them to fulfil all things, and that all the prophecies might be fulfilled of Him, of whom it had been said, "And as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so openeth He not His mouth." It behoved Him to be silent in His Passion, though not hereafter to be silent in Judgment. For He had come to be judged, then, who was hereafter coming to judge; and who was for this reason to come with great power to judge, that He had been judged in great humility.

20. "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou wilt hear, O Lord, my God" (ver. 15). As if it were said to Him, "Wherefore openedst thou not thy mouth? Wherefore didst Thou not say, 'Refrain'? Wherefore didst Thou not rebuke the unrighteous, while hanging on the Cross?" He goes on and says, "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear." He warns you what to do, should tribulation haply befall. For you seek to defend yourself, and perhaps your defence is not listened to by any one. Then are you confounded, as if you had lost your cause; because you have none to defend or to bear testimony in your favour. "Keep" but your "innocence" within, where no one can pervert thy cause. False-witness has prevailed against you before men. Will it then prevail before God, where your cause has to be pleaded? When God shall be Judge, there shall be no other witness than your own conscience. In the presence of a just judge, and of your own conscience, fear nothing but your own cause. If you have not a bad cause, you will have no accuser to dread; no false-witness to confute, nor witness to the truth to look for. Do but bring into court a good conscience, that you may say, "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear."

21. "For I said, Let not mine enemies ever rejoice over me. And when my feet slip, they magnify themselves against me" (ver. 16). Again He returns to the infirmity of His Body: and again the Head takes heed of Its "feet." The Head is not in such a manner in Heaven, as to forsake what It has on earth; He evidently sees and observes us. For sometimes, as is the way of this life, our feet are "turned aside," and they slip by falling into some sin; there the tongues of the enemy rise up with the bitterest malignity. From this then we discern what they really had in view, even while they kept silence. Then they speak with an unsparing harshness; rejoicing to have discovered what they ought to have grieved for. "And I said, Lest at any time my adversaries should rejoice over me." I said this indeed; and yet it was perhaps for my correction that Thou hast caused them to "magnify themselves against me, when my feet slipped;" that is to say, when I stumbled, they were elated, and said many things. For pity, not insult, was due from them to the weak; even as the Apostle speaks: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;" and he combines the reason why: "considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted." Not such as these were the persons of whom He speaks: "And when my feet slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me;" but they were such as those of whom He says elsewhere: "They that hate me will rejoice if I fall."

22. "For I am prepared for the scourges" (ver. 17). Quite a magnificent expression; as if He were saying, "It was even for this that I was born; that I might suffer." For He was not to be born, but from Adam, to whom the scourge is due. But sinners are in this life sometimes not scourged at all, or are scourged less than their deserts: because the wickedness of their heart is given over as already desperate. Those, however, for whom eternal life is prepared, must needs be scourged in this life: for that sentence is true: "My son, faint not under the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art rebuked of Him." "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Let not mine enemies therefore insult over me; let "them not magnify themselves;" and if my Father scourgeth me, "I am prepared for the scourge;" because there is an inheritance in store for me. Thou wilt not submit to the scourge: the inheritance is not bestowed upon thee. For "every son" must needs be scourged. So true it is that "every son" is scourged, that He spared not even Him who had no sin. For "I am prepared for the scourges."

23."And my sorrow is continually before me. What "sorrow" is that? Perhaps, a sorrow for my scourge. And, in good truth, my brethren, in good truth, let me say unto you, men do mourn for their scourges, not for the causes on account of which they are scourged. Not such was the person here. Listen, my brethren: If any person suffers any loss, he is more ready to say, "I did not deserve to suffer it," than to consider why he suffered it, mourning the loss of money, not mourning over that of righteousness. If thou hast sinned, mourn for the loss of thy inward treasure. Thou hast nothing in thy house, but perhaps thou art still more empty in heart; but if thine heart is full of its Good, even thy God, why dost thou not say, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord was it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Whence then was it that He was grieving? Was it for the "scourging" wherewith He was scourged? God forbid. "And my sorrow" (says He) "is continually before me. And as if we were to say, "What sorrow? whence comes that sorrow? he says: "For I declare mine iniquity; and I will have a care for my sin" (ver. 18). See here the reason for the sorrow! It is not a sorrow occasioned by the scourge; not one for the remedy, not for the wound. For the scourge is a remedy against sins. Hear, brethren;

We are Christians, and yet if any one's son dies, he mourns for him but does not mourn for him if he sins. It is then, when he sees him sinning, that he ought to make mourning for him, to lament over him. It is then he should restrain him, and give him a rule to live by; should impose a discipline upon him: or if he has done so, and the other has not taken heed, then was the time when he ought to have been mourned over; then he was more fatally dead whilst living in luxury, than when, by death, he brought his luxury to its close: at that time, when he was doing such things in thine house, he was not only "dead, but he stank also. These things were worthy to be lamented, the others were such as might well be endured; those, I say, were tolerable, these worthy to be mourned over. They were to be mourned over in the same way that you have heard this person mourn over them: "For I declare mine iniquity. I will have a care for my sin. Be not free from anxiety when you have confessed your sin, as if always able to confess thy sin, and to commit it again. Do thou "declare thine

iniquity in such a manner, as to have a care for thy sin. What is meant by "having a care of thy sin"? To have a care of thy wound.

If you were to say, "I will have a care of my wound," what would be meant by it, but I will do my endeavour to have it healed. For this is "to have a care for one's sin," to be ever struggling, ever endeavouring, ever exerting one's self, earnestly and zealously, to heal one's wound. Behold! thou art from day to day mourning over thy sins; but perhaps thy tears indeed flow, but thy hands are unemployed. Do alms, redeem thy sins, let the poor rejoice of thy bounty, that thou also mayest rejoice of the Grace of God. He is in want; so art thou in want also: he is in want at thy hands; so art thou also in want at God's hand. Dost thou despise one who needs thy aid; and shall God not despise thee when thou needest His? Do thou therefore supply the needs of him who is in want of thine aid; that God may supply thy needs within. This is the meaning of, "I will have a care for my sin. I will do all that ought to be done, to blot out and to heal my sin. "And I will have a care for my sin."

24. "But mine enemies live" (ver. 19). They are well of: they rejoice in worldly prosperity, while I am suffering, and "roaring with the groaning of my heart." In what way do His enemies "live," in that He hath said of them already, that they have "spoken vanity"? Hear in another Psalm also: "Whose sons are as young plants; firmly rooted." But above He had said, "Whose mouth speaketh vanity. Their daughters polished after the similitude of a temple: their garners full bursting forth more and more; their cattle fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their streets; no hedge falling into ruin; no cry in their streets." "Mine enemies" then "live." This is their life; this life they praise; this they set their hearts upon: this they hold fast to their own ruin. For what follows? They pronounce "the people that is in such a case" blessed. But what sayest thou, who "hast a care for thy sin"? What sayest thou, who "confessest thine iniquity"? He says, "Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord."

"But mine enemies live, and are strengthened against me, and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied." What is "hate me wrongfully"? They hate me, who wish their good, whereas were they simply requiting evil for evil, they would not be righteous; were they not to requite with good the good done to them, they would be ungrateful: they, however, who "hate wrongfully," actually return evil for good. Such were the Jews; Christ came unto them with good things; they requited Him evil for good. Beware, brethren, of this evil; it soon steals upon us. Let no one of you think himself to be far removed from the danger, because we said, "Such were the Jews." Should a brother, wishing your good, rebuke you, and you hate him, you are like them. And observe, how easily, how soon it is produced; and avoid an evil so great, a sin so easily committed.

25. "They also that render evil for good, were speaking evil of me, because I have pursued the thing that is just" (ver. 20). Therefore was it that I was requited evil for good. What is meant by "pursued after the thing that is just"? Not forsaken it. That you might not always understand persecutio in a bad sense, He means by persecutus pursued after, thoroughly followed. "Because I have followed the thing that is just. Hear also our Head crying with a

lamentable voice in His Passion: ”And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination. Was it not enough that He was ”dead”? wherefore ”in abomination” also? Because He was crucified. For this death of the Cross was a great abomination in their eyes, as they did not perceive that it was spoken in prophecy, ”Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. For He did not Himself bring death; but He found it here, propagated from the curse of the first man; and this same death of ours, which had originated in sin, Hehad taken upon Himself, and hung on the Tree. Lest therefore some persons should think (as some of the Heretics think), that our Lord Jesus Christ had only a false body of flesh; and that the death by which He made satisfaction on the Cross was not a real death, the Prophet notices this, and says, ”Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

He shows then that the Son of God died a true death, the death which was due to mortal flesh: lest if He were not ”accursed,” you should think that He had not truly died. But since that death was not an illusion, but had descended from that original stock, which had been derived from the curse, when He said, ”Ye shall surely die: and since a true death assuredly extended even to Him, that a true life might extend itself to us, the curse of death also did extend to Him, that the blessing of life might extend even unto us. ”And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination.”

26. ”Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, depart not from me” (ver. 21). Let us speak in Him, let us speak through Him (for He Himself intercedeth for us), and let us say, ”Forsake me not, O Lord my God.” And yet He had said, ”My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?” and He now says, ”O My God, depart not from Me.” If He does not forsake the body, did He forsake the Head? Whose words then are these but the First Man’s? To show then that He carried about Him a true body of flesh derived from him, He says, ”My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken Me?” God had not forsaken Him. If He does not forsake Thee, who believest in Him, could the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God, forsake Christ? But He had transferred to Himself the person of the First Man. We know by the words of an Apostle, that ”our old man is crucified with Him.” We should not, however, be divested of our old nature, had He not been crucified ”in weakness.” For it was to this end that He came that we may be renewed in Him, because it is by aspiration after Him, and by following the example of His suffering, that we are renewed. Therefore that was the cry of infirmity; that cry, I mean, in which it was said, ”Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Thence was it said in that passage above, ”the words of mine offences.” As if He were saying, These words are transferred to My Person from that of the sinner.

27. ”Depart not from me. Make haste to help me, Lord of my salvation” (ver. 22). This is that very ”salvation,” Brethren, concerning which, as the Apostle Peter saith, ”Prophets have enquired diligently,” and though they have enquired diligently, yet have not found it. But they searched into it, and foretold of it; while we have come and have found what they sought for. And see, we ourselves too have not as yet received it; and after us shall others also be born, and shall find, what they also shall not receive, and shall pass away, that we may, all of us together, receive the ”penny of salvation in the end of the day,” with

the Prophets, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles. For you know that the hired servants, or labourers, were taken into the vineyard at different times; yet did they all receive their wages on an equal footing. Apostles, then, and Prophets, and Martyrs, and ourselves also, and those who will follow us to the end of the world, it is in the End itself that we are to receive everlasting salvation; that beholding the face of God, and contemplating His Glory, we may praise Him for ever, free from imperfection, free from any punishment of iniquity, free from every perversion of sin: praising Him; and no longer longing after Him, but now clinging to Him for whom we used to long to the very end, and in whom we did rejoice, in hope.

For we shall be in that City, where God is our Bliss, God is our Light, God is our Bread, God is our Life; whatever good thing of ours there is, at being absent from which we now grieve, we shall find in Him. In Him will be that ”rest,” which when we ”call to remembrance” now, we cannot choose but grieve. For that is the ”Sabbath” which we ”call to remembrance; in the recollection of which, so great things have been said already; and so great things ought to be said by us also, and ought never to cease being said by us, not with our lips indeed, but in our heart: for therefore do our lips cease to speak, that we may cry out with our hearts.

Psalm 39

1. The title of this Psalm, which we have just chanted and proposed to discuss, is, "On the end, for Idithun, a Psalm for David himself" Here then we must look for, and must attend to, the words of a certain person who is called Idithun; and if each one of ourselves may be Idithun, in that which he sings he recognises himself, and hears himself speak. For thou mayest see who was called Idithun, according to the ancient descent of man; let us, however, understand what this name is translated, and seek to comprehend the Truth in the translation of the word. According therefore to what we have been able to discover by enquiry in those names which have been translated from the Hebrew tongue into the Latin, by those who study the sacred writings, Idithun being translated is "over-leaping them." Who then is this person "over-leaping them"? or who those whom he hath "over-leaped"?... For there are some persons, yet clinging to the earth, yet bowed down to the ground, yet setting their hearts on what is below, yet placing their hopes in things that pass away, whom he who is called "over-leaping them" hath "over-leaped."

2. You know that some of the Psalms are entitled, "Songs of Degrees;" and in the Greek it is obvious enough what the word anabaqmwn means. For anabaqmoi are degrees (or steps) of them that ascend, not of them that descend. The Latin, not being able to express it strictly, expresses it by the general term; and in that it called them "steps," left it undetermined, whether they were "steps" of persons ascending or descending. But because there is no "speech or language where their voices are not heard among them," the earlier language explains the one which comes after it: and what was ambiguous in one is made certain in another. Just then as there the singer is some one who is "ascending," so here is it some one who is "over-leaping."... Let this Idithun come still to us, let him "over-leap" those whose delight is in things below, and take delight in these things, and let him rejoice in the Word of the Lord; in the delight of the law of the Most High. ...

3. "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue" (ver. 1). ...For it is not without reason that the tongue is set in a moist place, but because it is so prone to slip. Perceiving therefore how hard it was for a man to be under the necessity of speaking, and not to say something that he will wish unsaid, and filled with disgust at these sins, he seeks to avoid the like. To this difficulty is he exposed who is seeking to "leap beyond."... Although I have "leaped beyond" the pleasures of earth, although the fleeting passions for

things temporal ensnare me not, though now I despise these things below, and am rising up to better things than these, yet in these very better things the satisfaction of knowledge in the sight of God is enough for me. Of what use is it for me to speak what is to be laid hold of, and to give a handle to cavillers? Therefore, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I keep my mouth with a bridle. Wherefore is this? Is it on account of the religious, the thoughtful, the faithful, the holy ones? God forbid! These persons hear in such a manner, as to praise what they approve; but as for what they disapprove, perhaps, among much that they praise they rather excuse than cavil at it;

on account of what persons then dost thou "take heed to thy ways," and place a guard on thy lips "that thou mayest not sin with thy tongue"? Hear: it is, "While the wicked standeth over against me. It is not "by me" that he takes up his station, but "against me. Why?... Even the Lord Himself says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And the Apostle, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Yet not as to persons to be despaired of, but as to those who still required to be nourished. For he goes on to say, "As babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able. Well, tell it unto us even now. "Neither yet now are ye able. Be not therefore impatient to hear that which as yet thou art not capable of; but grow that thou mayest be "able to bear it. It is thus we address the little one, who yet requires to be fed with kindly milk in the bosom of Mother Church, and to be rendered meet for the "strong meat" of the Lord's Table. But what can I say even of that kind to the sinner, who "taketh his stand against me," who either thinks or pretends himself capable of what he "cannot bear;

so that when I say anything unto him, and he has failed to comprehend it, he should not suppose that it was not he that had failed to comprehend, but I who had broken down. Therefore because of this sinner, who "taketh up his stand against me, I keep my mouth as it were with a bridle."

4. "I became deaf, and was humbled, I held my peace from good" (ver. 2). For this person, who is "leaping beyond," suffers some difficulty in a certain stage to which he hath already attained; and he desires to advance beyond, even from thence, to avoid this difficulty. I was afraid of committing a sin; so that I spoke not; that I imposed on myself the necessity of silence: for I had spoken thus, "I will take heed to my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue." Whilst I was too much afraid of saying anything wrong, I kept silence from all that is good. For whence could I say good things, except that I heard them? "It is Thou that shalt make me to hear of joy and gladness." And the "friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom's voice," not his own. That he may speak true things, he hears what he is to say. For it is he that "speaketh a lie," that "speaketh of his own." ... When therefore I had "put a bridle," as it were, "on my lips;" and constrained myself to silence, because I saw that everywhere speech was dangerous, then, says he, that came to pass upon me, which I did not wish, "I became deaf, and was humbled;" not humbled myself, but was humbled; "and I held my peace even from good." Whilst afraid

of saying any evil, I began to refrain from speaking what is good: and I condemned my determination; for "I was holding my peace even from what is good."

"And my sorrow was stirred up again" (ver. 2). Inasmuch as I had found in silence a kind of respite from a certain "sorrow," that had been inflicted upon me by those who cavilled at my words, and found fault with me: and that sorrow that was caused by the cavillers, had ceased indeed; but when "I held my peace even from good, my sorrow was stirred up again." I began to be more grieved at having refrained from saying what I ought to have said, than I had before been grieved by having said what I ought not. "And my sorrow was stirred up again. "

5. "And while I was musing, the fire burned" (ver. 3). ...I reflected on the words of my Lord, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put My money to the exchangers, and I at My coming should receive it again with usury." And that which follows may God avert from those who are His stewards! Bind him hand and foot, and let him be cast into outer darkness; the servant, who was not a waster of his master's goods, so as to destroy them, but was slothful in laying them out to improve them. What ought they to expect, who have wasted them in luxury, if they are condemned who through slothfulness have kept them? "As I was musing, the fire burned." And as he was in this state of wavering suspense, between speaking and holding his peace, between those who are prepared to cavil and those who are anxious to be instructed, ...in this state of suspense, he prays for a better place, a place different from this his present stewardship, in which man is in such difficulty and in such danger, and sighing after a certain "end," when he was not to be subject to these things, when the Lord is to say to the faithful dispenser, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," he says, "Then spake I with my tongue." In this fluctuation, in the midst of these dangers and these difficulties, because, that in consequence of the abundance of offences "the love of many is waxing cold," although the law of the Lord inspires delight, in this fluctuation then, (I say), "then spake I with my tongue." To whom? not to the hearer whom I would fain instruct; but to Him who heareth and taketh heed also, by whom I would fain be instructed myself. "I spake with my tongue" to Him, from whom I inwardly hear whatever I hear that is good or true.-What saidst thou?

"Lord, make me to know mine end" (ver. 4). For some things I have passed by already; and I have arrived at a certain point, and that to which I have arrived is better than that from which I have advanced to this; but yet there remains a point, which has to be left behind. For we are not to remain here, where there are trials, offences, where we have to bear with persons who listen to us and cavil at us. "Make me to know mine end;" the end, from which I am still removed, not the course which is already before me. 6. The "end" he speaks of, is that which the Apostle fixed his eye upon, in his course; and made confession of his own infirmity, perceiving in himself a different state of things from that which he looked for elsewhere. For he says, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." And that you might not say, "If the Apostle hath not apprehended, have I apprehended? If the Apostle is not perfect, am I perfect?"...

7. ”And the number of my days, what it is. I ask of ”the number of my days, what it is. I can speak of ”number” without number, and understand ”number without number,” in the same sense as ”years without years” may be spoken of. For where there are years, there is a sort of ”number” at all events, also. But yet, ”Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. ”Make me to know the number of my days; but ”to know what it is. What then? that number in which thou art, think you that it ”is” not? Assuredly, if I weigh the matter well, it has no being; if I linger behind, it has a sort of being; if I rise above it, it has none. If, shaking off the trammels of these things, I contemplate things above, if I compare things that pass away with those that endure, I see what has a true being, and what rather seems to be, than really is. Should I say that these days of mine ”are; and shall I rashly apply this word so full of meaning to this course of things passing away? To such a degree have I my own self almost ceased to ”be, failing” as I am in my weakness, that He escaped from my memory, who said, ”I Am He that is. Hath then any number of days any existence? In truth it hath, and it is ”number without end.”...

Everything is swept on by a series of moments, fleeting by, one after the other; there is a torrent of existences ever flowing on and on; a ”torrent,” of which He ”drank in the way,” who hath now ”lift up His Head. These days then have no true being; they are gone almost before they arrive; and when they are come, they cannot continue; they press upon one another, they follow the one the other, and cannot check themselves in their course. Of the past nothing is called back again; what is yet to be, is expected as something to pass away again: it is not as yet possessed, whilst as yet it is not arrived; it cannot be kept when once it has arrived. He asks then concerning ”the number of his days, which is; not that which is ”not: and (which confounds me by a still greater and more perplexing difficulty) at once ”is,” and ”is not. We can neither say that ”is,” which does not continue; nor that it ”is not,” when it has come and is passing. It is that absolute ”Is,” that true ”Is,” that ”Is” in the true sense of the word, that I long for; that ”Is; which ”is” in that ”Jerusalem” which is ”the Bride” of my Lord; where there will not be death, there will not be failing; there will be a day that passeth not away, but continueth: which has neither a yesterday to precede it, nor a to-morrow pressing, close upon it.

This ”number of my days, which is,” this (I say), ”make Thou me to know.”

8. ”That I may know what is wanting to me.” For while I am struggling here, ”this” is wanting unto me: and so long as it is wanting unto me, I do not call myself perfect. So long as I have not received it, I say, ”not that I have already attained, either am already perfect; but I am pressing towards the prize of God’s high calling.” This let me receive as the prize of my running the race! There will be a certain resting-place, to terminate my course; and in that resting-place there will be a Country, and no pilgrimage, no dissension, no temptation. Make me then to know ”this number of my days, which is, that I may know what is wanting unto me;” because I am not there yet; lest I should be made proud of what I already am, that ”I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness.” ...

9. ”Behold, thou hast made my days old” (ver. 5). For these days are ”waxing old. I long for new days ”that never shall wax old,” that I may say, ”Old things have passed away; behold, things are become new. Already new in hope; then in reality. For though, in hope and in faith, made new already, how much do we even now do after our old nature! For we are not so completely ”clothed upon” with Christ, as not to bear about with us anything derived from Adam. Observe that Adam is ”waxing old” within us, and Christ is being ”renewed” in us. ”Though our outward man is perishing, yet is our inward man being renewed day by day. Therefore, while we fix our thoughts on sin, on mortality, on time, that is hastening by, on sorrow, and toil, and labour, on stages of life following each other in succession, and continuing not, passing on insensibly from infancy even to old age; whilst, I say, we fix our eyes on these things, let us see here ”the old man,” the ”day that is waxing old; the Song that is out of date; the Old Testament; when however we turn to the inner man, to those things that are to be renewed in place of these which are to be changed, let us find the ”new man,” the ”new day,” the ”new song,” the ”New Testament; and that ”newness,” let us so love, as to have no fears of its ”waxing old.”...

This man, therefore, who is hasting forward to those things which are new, and ”reaching forward to those things which are before,” says, ”Lord, make me to know mine end, and the number of my days, which really is, that I may know what is wanting unto me. See he still drags with him Adam; and even so he is hasting unto Christ. ”Behold,” saith he, ”thou hast made my days old. It is those days that are derived from Adam, those days, I say, that thou hast made old. They are waxing old day by day: and so waxing old, as to be at some day or other consumed also. ”And my substance is as nothing before Thee. ”Before Thee, O Lord, my substance is as nothing. ”Before Thee; who seest this; and I too, when I see it, see it only when ”before Thee.”

When ”before men” I see it not. For what shall I say? What words shall I use to show, that which I now am is nothing in comparison of That which truly ”Is”? But it is within that it is said; it is within that it is felt, so far as it is felt. ”Before Thee, O Lord,” where Thine eyes are; and not where the eyes of men are. And where Thine eyes are, what is the state of things? ”That which I am is as nothing.” 10. ”But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity.” ”But, verily.” For what was he saying above? Behold, I have already ”leaped beyond” all mortal things, and despised things below, have trampled under foot the things of earth, have soared upwards to the delights of the law of the Lord, I have been afloat in the dispensation of the Lord, have yearned for that ”End” which Itself is to know no end, have yearned for the number of my days that truly ”is,” because the number of days like these hath no real being. Behold, I am already such a one as this; I have already overleaped so much; I am longing for those things which abide. ”But verily,” in the state in which I am here, so long as I am here, so long as I am in this world, so long as I bear mortal flesh, so long as the life of man on earth is a trial, so long as I sigh among causes of offence, as long as while I ”stand” I am in ”fear lest I fall,” as long as both my good and my ill hangs in uncertainty, ”every man living is altogether vanity.”...

11. ”Albeit man walketh in the Image” (ver. 6). In what ”Image,” save that of Him who said, ”Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness. ”Albeit man walks in the Image. For the reason he says ”albeit,” is, that this is some great thing. And this ”albeit” is followed by ”nevertheless,” that the ”albeit” which you have already heard, should relate to what is beyond the sun; but this ”nevertheless,” which is to follow, to what is ”under the sun,” and that the one should relate to the Truth, the other to ”vanity. ”Albeit,” then, ”that man walketh in the Image, nevertheless he is disquieted in vain. Hear the cause of his ”disquieting,” and see if it be not a vain one; that thou mayest trample it under foot, that thou mayest ”leap beyond it,” and mayest dwell on high, where that ”vanity” is not. What ”vanity” is that? ”He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not for whom he may be gathering them together. O infatuated vanity! ”Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities, nor lying deceits. To you indeed, O covetous man, to you I seem to be out of my senses, these words appear to you to be ”old wives’ tales. For you, a man of great judgment, and of great prudence, to be sure, are daily devising methods of acquiring money, by traffic, by agriculture, by eloquence perhaps, by making yourself learned in the law, by warfare, perhaps you even add that of usury.

Like a shrewd man as you are, you leave nothing untried, whereby you may pile coin on coin; and may store it up more carefully in a place of secrecy. You plunder others; you guard against the plunderer; you are afraid lest you should yourself suffer the wrong, that you yourself do; and even what you do suffer, does not correct you. ...Examine your own heart, and that prudence of yours, which leads you to deride me, to think me out of my senses for saying these things: and tell me now, ”You are heaping up treasures; for whom are you gathering them together? I see what you would tell me; as if what you would say had not occurred to the person described here; you will say, I am keeping them for my children? This is the voice of parental affection; the excuse of injustice. ”I am keeping them” (you say) ”for my children. So then you are keeping them for your children, are you? Did not Idithun then know this? Assuredly he did; but he reckoned it one of the things of the ”old days,” that have waxed old, and therefore he despised it: because he was hastening on to the new ”days.”...

12. For He, ”by whom all things were made,” hath built ”mansions” for all of us: thither He would have that which we have go before us; that we may not lose it on earth. When, however, you have kept them on earth, tell me for whom you are to ”gather them together”? You have children: add one more to their number; and give something to Christ also. ”He is disquieted in vain.”

13. ”And now” (ver. 7). ”And now,” saith this Idithun,-looking back on a certain ”vain” show, and looking up to a certain Truth, standing midway where he has something beyond him, and something also behind him, having below him the place from which he took his spring, having above him that toward which he has stretched forth;-”And now,” when I have ”overleaped” some things, when I have trampled many things under foot, when I am no longer captivated by things temporal; even now, I am not perfect, ”I have not yet apprehended.” ”For

it is by hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Therefore he says: "And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord?" He is my expectation, who hath given me all those things, that I might despise them. He will give unto me Himself also, even He who is above all, and "by whom all things were made," and by whom I was made amongst all; even He, the Lord, is my Expectation! You see Idithun, brethren, you see in what way he waiteth for Him! Let no man therefore call himself perfect here; he deceives and imposes upon himself; he is beguiling himself, he cannot have perfection here, and what avails it that he should lose humility?...

"And my substance is ever before Thee." Already advancing, already tending towards Him, and to some extent already beginning to "be," still (he says) "my substance is ever before Thee." Now that other substance is also before men. You have gold, silver, slaves, estates, trees, cattle, servants. These things are visible even to men. There is a certain "substance that is ever before Thee."

14. "Deliver me from all my transgressions" (ver. 8). I have "over-leaped" a great deal of ground, a very great deal of ground already; but, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I have "over-leaped" a great deal: but still do I "beat my breast," and say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Thou therefore art "my expectation! my "End. For "Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness, unto every man that believeth. From all mine offences: not only from those, that I may not relapse into those which I have already "over-leaped; but from all, without exception, of those on account of which I now beat my breast, and say, "Forgive us our debts. "Deliver me from all mine offences: me being thus minded, and holding fast what the Apostle said, "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. For at the time that he said that he was not "already perfect," he then immediately goes on and says, "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded."... Art thou then, O Apostle, not perfect, and are we perfect? But hath it escaped you, that he did just now call himself "perfect"? For he does not say, "As many of you as are perfect, be ye thus minded; but "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded; after having said a little before, "Not that I have already attained;

either am already perfect. In no other way then can you be perfect in this life, than by knowing that you cannot be perfect in this life. This then will be your perfection, so to have "over-leaped" some things, as to have still some point to which you are hastening on: so as to have something remaining, to which you will have to leap on, when everything else has been passed by. It is such faith as this that is secure; for whoever thinks that he has already attained, is "exalting himself," so as to be "abused" hereafter. ...

15. "Thou hast made me the reproach of the foolish." Thou hast so willed it, that I should live among those, and preach the Truth among those, who love vanity; and I cannot but be a laughing-stock to them. "For we have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men:" to angels who praise, to men who censure, us; or rather to angels, some of whom praise, some of whom are censuring us: and to men also, some of whom are

praising, and some censuring us. ...Both the one and the other are arms to us: the one "on the right hand," the other "on the left:" arms however they are both of them; both of these kinds of arms, both those "on the right hand," and those "on the left;" both those who praise, and those who censure; both those who pay us honour, and those who heap dishonour upon us; with both these kinds I contend against the devil; with both of these I smite him; I defeat him with prosperity, if I be not corrupted by it; by adversity, if I am not broken in spirit by it.

16. "I became dumb; and I opened not my mouth" (ver. 9). But it was to guard against "the foolish man," that "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth." For to whom should I tell what is going on within me? "For I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me; for He will speak peace unto His people." But "There is no peace," saith the Lord, "to the wicked." "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because it is Thou that madest me." Was this the reason that thou openedst not thy mouth, "because God made thee"? That is strange; for did not God make thy mouth, that thou shouldest speak? "He that planted the ear, doth He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not see?" God hath given thee a mouth to speak with; and dost thou say, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because Thou madest me"? Or does the clause, "Because Thou madest me," belong to the verse that follows? "Remove Thy stroke away from me" (ver. 10). Because it is "Thou that hast made me," let it not be Thy pleasure to destroy me utterly; scourge, so that I may be made better, not so that I faint; beat me, so that I may be beaten out to a greater length and breadth, not so that I may be ground to powder. "By the heaviness of Thy hand I fainted in corrections." That is, I "fainted" while Thou wast correcting me. And what is meant by "correcting" me? except what follows.

17. "Thou with rebukes hast chastened man for iniquity; Thou hast made my life to consume away like a spider" (ver. 11). There is much that is discerned by this Idithun; by every one who discerns as he does; who overleaps as he does. For he says, that he has fainted in God's corrections; and would fain have the stroke removed away from him, "because it is He who made him. Let Him renew me, who also made me; let Him who created me, create me anew. But yet, Brethren, do we suppose that there was no cause for his fainting, so that he wishes to be "renewed," to be "created anew"? It is "for iniquity," saith he, "that Thou hast chastened man. All this, my having fainted, my being weak, my "crying out of the deep," all of this is because of "iniquity; and in this Thou hast not condemned, but hast "chastened" me. "Thou hast chastened man for sin. Hear this more plainly from another Psalm: "It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. I have been "afflicted," and at the same time "it is good for me; it is at once a punishment, and an act of favour. What hath He in store for us after punishment is over, who inflicts punishment itself by way of favour? For He it is of whom it was said, "I was brought low, and He made me whole:

and, "It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. "Thou chastenest man for iniquity. And that which is written, "Thou formest my grief in

teaching me," could only be said unto God by one who was "leaping beyond" his fellows; "Thou formest my grief in teaching me; Thou makest, that is to say, a lesson for me out of my sorrow. It is Thou that formest that very grief itself; Thou dost not leave it unformed, but formest it; and that grief, that has been inflicted by Thee, when formed, will be a lesson unto me, that I may be set free by Thee. For the word finges is used in the sense of "forming," as it were moulding, my grief; not in the sense of "feigning" it; in the same way that fingit is applied to the artist, in the same sense that figulus is derived from fingere. Thou therefore "hast chastened man for iniquity. I see myself in afflictions; I see myself under punishment; and I see no unrighteousness in Thee. If I therefore am under punishment, and if there is no unrighteousness with Thee, it remains that Thou must have been "chastening man for iniquity."

18. And by what means hast Thou "chastened" him? Tell us, O Idithun, the manner of thy chastening; tell us in what way thou hast been "chastened. "And Thou hast made my life consume like a spider. This is the chastening! What consumes away sooner than the spider? I speak of the creature itself; though what can be more liable to "consume away" than the spider's webs? Observe too how liable to decay is the creature itself. Do but set your finger lightly upon it, and it is a ruin: there is nothing at all more easily destroyed. To such a state hast Thou brought my life, by chastening me "because of iniquity. When chastening makes us weak, there is a kind of strength that would be a fault. ...It was by a kind of strength that man offended, so as to require to be corrected by weakness: for it was by a certain "pride" that he offended; so as to require to be chastened by humility. All proud persons call themselves strong men. Therefore have many "come from the East and the West," and have attained "to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven. Wherefore was it that they so attained? Because they would not be strong. What is meant by "would not be strong"? They were afraid to presume of their own merits. They did not "go about to establish their own righteousness," that they might "submit themselves to the righteousness of God." ... Behold! you are mortal;

and you bear about you a body of flesh that is corrupting away: "And ye shall fall like one of the princes. Ye shall die like men," and shall fall like the devil What good does the remedial discipline of mortality do you? The devil is proud, as not having a mortal body, as being an angel. But as for you, who have received a mortal body, and to whom even this does no good, so as to humble you by so great weakness, you shall "fall like one of the princes. This then is the first grace of God's gift, to bring us to the confession of our infirmity, that whatever good we can do, whatever ability we have, we may be that in Him; that "He that glorieth, may glory in the Lord. "When I am weak," saith he, "then am I strong."

19. "But surely every man living disquieteth himself in vain. He returns to what he mentioned a little before. Although he be improving here, yet for all that, "every man living disquieteth himself in vain; forasmuch as he lives in a state of uncertainty. For who has any assurance even of his own goodness? "He is disquieted in vain. Let him "cast upon the Lord the burden" of his care; let him cast upon Him whatever causes him anxiety. "Let

Him sustain thee; let Him keep thee. For on this earth what is there that is certain, except death? Consider the whole sum of all the good or the ill of this life, either those belonging to righteousness, or those belonging to unrighteousness; what is there that is certain here, except death? Have you been advancing in goodness? You know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! Are you a sinner? you know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! You hope for wealth; it is uncertain whether it will fall to your lot. You hope to have a wife; it is uncertain whether you will obtain one, or what sort of one you will obtain. You hope for sons: it is uncertain whether they will be born to you. Are they born? it is uncertain whether they will live: if they live, it is uncertain whether they will grow up in virtue, or whether they will fall away. Whichever way you turn, all is uncertain, death alone is certain.

Art thou poor? It is uncertain whether thou wilt grow rich. Art thou unlearned? It is uncertain whether thou wilt become learned. Art thou in feeble health, it is uncertain whether thou wilt regain thy strength. Art thou born? It is certain that thou wilt die: and in this certainty of death itself, the day of thy death is uncertain. Amidst these uncertainties, where death alone is certain, while even of that the hour is uncertain, and while it alone is studiously guarded against, though at the same time it is in no way to be escaped, "every man living disquieteth himself in vain."...

20. "Hear my prayer, O Lord" (ver. 12). Whereof shall I rejoice? Whereof should I groan? I rejoice on account of what is past, I groan longing for these which are not yet come. "Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my cry. Hold not Thy peace at my tears." For do I now no longer weep, because I have already "passed by," have "left behind" so great things as these? "Do I not weep much the more?" For, "He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." The more I long for what is not here, do I not so much the more groan for it until it comes? do I not so much the more weep until it comes?...

21. "For I am a sojourner with Thee. But with whom am I a "sojourner"? When I was with the devil, I was a "sojourner; but then I had a bad host and entertainer; now, however, I am with Thee; but I am a "sojourner" still. What is meant by a sojourner? I am a "sojourner" in the place from which I am to remove; not in the place where I am to dwell for ever. The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home. In the place from which I am to remove I am a "sojourner; but yet it is with my God that I am a sojourner, with whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my home. But what home is that to which you are to remove from this estate of a sojourner? Recognise that home, of which the Apostle speaks, "We have an habitation of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. If this house is eternal in the Heavens, when we have come to it, we shall not be sojourners any more. For how should you be a sojourner in an eternal home? But here, where the Master of the house is some day to say to you, "Remove," while you yourself know not when He will say it, be thou in readiness. And by longing for your eternal home, you will be keeping yourself in readiness for it.

And be not angry with Him, because He gives thee notice to remove, when He Himself pleases. For He made no covenant with thee, nor did He bind Himself by any engagement; nor didst thou enter upon the tenancy of this house on a certain stipulation for a definite term: thou art to quit, when it is its Master's pleasure. For therefore is it that you now dwell there free of charge. "For I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Therefore it is there is my country: it is there is my home. "I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Here too is understood "with Thee. For many are strangers with the devil: but they who have already believed and are faithful, are, it is true, "strangers" as yet, because they have not yet come to that country and to that home: but still they are strangers with God. For so long as we are in the body, we are strangers from the Lord, and we desire, whether we are strangers, or abiding here, "we may be accepted with Him. I am a "sojourner with Thee; and a stranger, as all my fathers were. If then I am as all my fathers were, shall I say that I will not remove, when they have removed? Am I to lodge here on other terms, than those on which they lodged here also?...

22. "Grant me some remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence" (ver. 13). Consider well, Idithun, consider what knots those are which thou wouldest have "loosed" unto thee, that thou mightest be "refreshed before thou goest hence. For thou hast certain fever-heats from which thou wouldest fain be refreshed, and thou sayest, "that I may be refreshed," and "grant me a remission. What should He remit, or loosen unto thee, save that difficulty under which, and in consequence of which, thou sayest, "Forgive us our debts. Grant me a remission before I go hence, and be no more. Set me free from my sins, "before I go hence," that I may not go hence with my sins. Remit them unto me, that I may be set at rest in my conscience, that it may be disburthened of its feverish anxiety, the anxiety with which "I am sorry for my sin. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed" (before everything else), "before I go hence, and be no more. For if thou grantest me not a "remission, that I may be refreshed," I shall "go and be no more. "Before I go" thither, where if I go, I shall thenceforth "be no more. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed. A question has suggested itself, how he will be no more. ...What is meant then by "shall be no more," unless Idithun is alluding to what is true "being," and what is not true "being.

For he was beholding with the mind, with which he could do so, with the "mind's eye," by which he was able to behold it, that end, which he had desired to have shown unto him, saying, "Lord, make me to know mine end. He was beholding "the number of his days, which truly is; and he observed that all that is below, in comparison of that true being, has no true being. For those things are permanent; these are subject to change; mortal, and frail, and the eternal suffering, though full of corruption, is for this very reason not to be ended, that it may ever be being ended without end. He alluded therefore to that realm of bliss, to the happy country, to the happy home, where the Saints are partakers of eternal Life, and of Truth unchangeable; and he feared to "go" where that is not, where there is no true being; longing to be there, where "Being" in the highest sense is! It is on account of this contrast then, while standing midway between them, he says, "Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence and be no more. For if Thou "grantest me not a

remission" of my sins, I shall go from Thee unto all eternity! And from whom shall I go to all eternity? From Him who said, I Am He that Am: from Him who said, "Say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.

He then who goes from Him, in the contrary direction, goes to non-existence. ...

Psalm 40

1. Of all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ has foretold, we know part to have been already accomplished, part we hope will be accomplished hereafter. All of them, however, will be fulfilled, because He is "the Truth" who speaks them, and requires of us to be as "faithful," as He Himself speaks them faithfully. ...

2. Let us say then what this Psalm says. "I waited patiently for the Lord" (ver. 1). I waited patiently for the promise of no mere mortal who can both deceive and be himself deceived: I waited for the consolation of no mere mortal, who may be consumed by sorrow of his own, before he gives me comfort. Should a brother mortal attempt to comfort me, when he himself is in sorrow likewise? Let us mourn in company; let us weep together, let us "wait patiently" together, let us join our prayers together also. Whom did I wait for but for the Lord? The Lord, who though He puts off the fulfilment of His promises, yet never recalls them? He will make it good; assuredly He will make it good, because He has made many of His promises good already: and of God's truth we ought to have no fears, even if as yet He had made none of them good. Lo! let us henceforth think thus, "He has promised us everything; He has not as yet given us possession of anything; He is a sponsible Promiser; a faithful Paymaster: do you but show yourself a dutiful exactor of what is promised; and if you be "weak," if you be one of the little ones, claim the promise of His mercy. Do you not see tender lambs striking their dams' teats with their heads, in order that they may get their fill of milk? ..."And He took heed unto me, and heard my cry.

He took heed to it, and He heard it. See thou hast not waited in vain. His eyes are over thee. His ears turned towards thee. For, "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. What then? Did He not see thee, when thou usedst to do evil and to blaspheme Him? What then becomes of what is said in that very Psalm, "The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil"? But for what end? "that He may cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. Therefore, even when thou wert wicked, He "took heed of thee; but He "took no heed to thee. So then to him who "waited patiently for the Lord," it was not enough to say, "He took heed of me, He says, "He took heed to me; that is, He took heed by comforting me, that He might do me good. What was it that He took heed to? "and He heard my cry."

3. And what hath He accomplished for thee? What hath He done for thee? "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (ver. 2). He hath given us great blessings already: and still He is our debtor; but let him who hath this part of the debt repaid already, believe that the rest will be also, seeing that he ought to have believed even before he received anything. Our Lord has employed facts themselves to persuade us, that He is a faithful promiser, a liberal giver. What then has He already done? "He has brought me out of a horrible pit. What horrible pit is that? It is the depth of iniquity, from the lusts of the flesh, for this is meant by "the miry clay. Whence hath He brought thee out? Out of a certain deep, out of which thou criedst out in another Psalm, "Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord. And those who are already "crying out of the deep," are not absolutely in the lowest deep: the very act of crying is already lifting them up. There are some deeper in the deep, who do not even perceive themselves to be in the deep. Such are those who are proud despisers, not pious entreaters for pardon; not tearful criers for mercy: but such as Scripture thus describes. "The sinner when he comes into the depth of evil despiseth.

For he is deeper in the deep, who is not satisfied with being a sinner, unless instead of confessing he even defends his sins. But he who has already "cried out of the deep," hath already lifted up his head in order that he might "cry out of the deep," has been heard already, and has been "brought out of the horrible pit, and out of the mire and clay. He already has faith, which he had not before; he has hope, which he was before without; he now walks in Christ, who before used to go astray in the devil. For on that account it is that he says, "He hath set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Now "that Rock was Christ. Supposing that we are "upon the rock," and that our "goings are ordered," still it is necessary that we continue to walk; that we advance to something farther. For what did the Apostle Paul say when now upon the Rock, when his "goings had now been established"? "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. What then has been done for thee, if thou hast not apprehended? On what account dost thou return thanks, saying, "But I have obtained mercy"? Because his goings are now established, because he now walks on the Rock?...

Therefore, when he was saying, "I press forward toward the prize of my high calling," because "his feet were now set on the Rock," and "his goings were ordered," because he was now walking on the right way, he had something to return thanks for; something to ask for still; returning thanks for what he had received already, while he was claiming that which still remained due. For what things already received was he giving thanks? For the remission of sins, for the illumination of faith; for the strong support of hope, for the fire of charity. But in what respects had he still a claim of debt on the Lord? "Henceforth," he says, "there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. There is therefore something due me still. What is it that is due? "A crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He was at first a loving Father to "bring him forth from the horrible pit; to forgive his sins, to rescue him from "the mire and clay; hereafter he will be a "righteous Judge," requiting to him walking rightly, what He promised; to him (I say), unto whom He

had at the first granted that power to walk rightly. He then as a "righteous Judge" will repay; but whom will he repay? "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved."

4. "And He hath put a new song in my mouth." What new song is this? "Even a hymn unto our God" (ver. 3). Perhaps you used to sing hymns to strange gods; old hymns, because they were uttered by the "old man," not by the "new man;" let the "new man" be formed, and let him sing a "new song;" being himself made "new," let him love those "new" things by which he is himself made new. For what is more Ancient than God, who is before all things, and is without end and without beginning? He becomes "new" to thee, when thou returnest to Him; because it was by departing from Him, that thou hadst become old; and hadst said, "I have waxed old because of all mine enemies." We therefore utter "a hymn unto our God;" and the hymn itself sets us free. "For I will call upon the Lord to praise Him, and I will be safe from all mine enemies." For a hymn is a song of praise. Call on God to "praise" Him, not to find fault with Him. ...

5. If haply any one asks, what person is speaking in this Psalm? I would say briefly, "It is Christ." But as ye know, brethren, and as we must say frequently, Christ sometimes speaks in His own Person, in the Person of our Head. For He Himself is "the Saviour of the Body." He is our Head; the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin, suffered for us, "rose again for our justification," sitteth "at the right hand of God," to "make intercession for us:" who is also to recompense to the evil and to the good, in the judgment, all the evil and the good that they have done. He deigned to be come our Head; to become "the Head of the Body," by taking of us that flesh in which He should die for us; that flesh which He also raised up again for our sakes, that in that flesh He might place before us an instance of the resurrection; that we might learn to hope for that of which we heretofore despaired, and might henceforth have our feet upon the rock, and might walk in Christ. He then sometimes speaks in the name of our Head; sometimes also He speaks of us who are His members. For both when He said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat," He spoke on behalf of His members, not of Himself: and when He said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" the Head was crying on behalf of its members: and yet He did not say, "Why dost thou persecute My members?" but, "Why persecutest thou Me?" If He suffers in us, then shall we also be crowned in Him. Such is the love of Christ. What is there can be compared to this? This is the thing on account of which "He hath put a hymn in our mouth," and this He speaks on behalf of His members.

6. "The just shall see, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. "The just shall see. Who are the just? The faithful; because it is "by faith that the just shall live. For there is in the Church this order, some go before, others follow; and those who go before make themselves "an example" to those who follow; and those who follow imitate those who go before. But do those then follow no one, who exhibit themselves as an ensample to them that come after? If they follow no one at all, they will fall into error. These persons then must themselves also follow some one, that is, Christ Himself. ..."The just," therefore, "shall see, and shall fear. They see a narrow way on the one hand; on the other side, "a broad road: on this side they see few, on the other many. But thou art a just man; count them not, but weigh them; bring

”a just balance,” not a ”deceitful” one: because thou art called just. ”The just shall see, and fear,” applies to thee. Count not therefore the multitudes of men that are filling the ”broad ways,” that are to fill the circus tomorrow; celebrating with shouts the City’s Anniversary, while they defile the City itself by evil living. Look not at them; they are many in number; and who can count them? But there are a few travelling along the narrow road. Bring forth the balance, I say. Weigh them;

see what a quantity of chaff you lift up on the one side, against a few grains of corn on the other. Let this be done by ”the just,” the ”believers,” who are to follow. And what shall they who precede do? Let them not be proud, let them not ”exalt themselves; let them not deceive those who follow them. How may they deceive those who follow them? By promising them salvation in themselves. What then ought those who follow to do? ”The just shall see, and fear: and shall trust in the Lord; not in those who go before them. But indeed they fix their eyes on those who go before them, and follow and imitate them; but they do so, because they consider from Whom they have received the grace to go before them; and because they trust in Him. Although therefore they make these their models, they place their trust in Him from whom the others have received the grace whereby they are such as they are. ”The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Just as in another Psalm, ”I lift up mine eyes unto the hills,” we understand by hills, all distinguished and great spiritual persons in the Church; great in solidity, not by swollen inflation. By these it is that all Scripture hath been dispensed unto us; they are the Prophets, they are the Evangelists; they are sound Doctors: to these ”I lift up mine eyes, from whence shall come my help.

And lest you should think of mere human help, he goes on to say, ”My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.” ...

7. ”Blessed is that man that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities or lying madnesses” (ver. 4). Behold the way by which thou wouldest fain have gone. Behold the ”multitude that fill the Broad way. It is not without reason ”that” road leads to the amphitheatre. It is not without reason it leads to Death. The ”broad way” leads unto death, its breadth delights for time: its end is straitness to all eternity. Aye; but the multitudes murmur; the multitudes are rejoicing together; the multitudes are hastening along; the multitudes are flocking together! Do not thou imitate them; do not turn aside after them: they are ”vanities, and lying madnesses. Let the Lord thy God be thy hope. Hope for nothing else from the Lord thy God; but let the Lord thy God Himself be thine hope. For many persons hope to obtain from God’s hands riches, and many perishable and transitory honours; and, in short, anything else they hope to obtain at God’s hands, except only God Himself. But do thou seek after thy God Himself: nay, indeed, despising all things else, make thy way unto Him! Forget other things, remember Him. Leave other things behind, and ”press forward” unto Him. Surely it is He Himself, who set thee right, when turned away from the right path; who, now that thou art set in the right path, guides thee

aright, who guides thee to thy destination. Let Him then be thy hope, who both guides thee, and guides thee to thy destination.

Whither does worldly covetousness lead thee? And to what point does it conduct thee at the last? Thou didst at first desire a farm; then thou wouldest possess an estate; thou wouldest shut out thy neighbours; having shut them out, thou didst set thy heart on the possessions of other neighbours; and didst extend thy covetous desires till thou hadst reached the shore: arriving at the shore, thou covetest the islands: having made the earth thine own, thou wouldest haply seize upon heaven. Leave thou all thy loves. He who made heaven and earth is more beautiful than all.

8. "Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his hope, and who hath not regarded vanities and lying madnesses. For whence is it that "madness" is called "lying"? Insanity is a lying thing, even as it is sanity that sees the Truth. For what thou seest as good things, thou art deceived; thou art not in thy sound senses: a violent fever has driven thee to frenzy: that which thou art in love with is not a reality. Thou applaudest the charioteer; thou cheerest the charioteer; thou art madly in love with the charioteer. It is "vanity; it is "a lying madness. "It is 'not'" (he cries). "Nothing can be better; nothing more delightful. What can I do for one in a state of high fever? Pray ye for such persons, if you have any feelings of compassion in you. For the physician himself also in a desperate case generally turns to those in the house, who stand around weeping; who are hanging on his lips to hear his opinion of the patient who is sick and in danger. The physician stands in a state of doubt: he sees not any good to promise; he fears to pronounce evil, lest he should excite alarm. He devises a thoroughly modest sentence: "The good God can do all things. Pray ye for him. Which then of these madmen shall I check? Which of them will listen to me? Which of them would not call us miserable?

Because they suppose us to have lost great and various pleasures, of which they are madly fond, in that we are not as madly in love with them as they are: and they do not see that they are "lying" pleasures. ..."And hath not respected vanities, and lying madnesses. "Such a one has won," he cries; "he harnessed such and such a horse," he proclaims aloud. He would fain be a kind of diviner; he aspires to the honours of divination by abandoning the fountain of Divinity; and he frequently pronounces an opinion, and is frequently mistaken. Why is this? Even because they are "lying madnesses. But why is it that what they say sometimes comes true? That they may lead astray the foolish ones; that by loving the semblance of truth there, they may fall into the snare of falsehood: let them be left behind, let them be "given over," let them be "cut off. If they were members of us, they must be mortified. "Mortify," he says, "your members which are upon the earth. Let our God be our hope. He who made all things, is better than all! He who made what is beautiful, is more beautiful than all that is such. He who made whatever is mighty, is Himself mightier. He who made whatever is great, is Himself greater. He will be unto you everything that you love. Learn in the creature to love the Creator; and in the work Him who made it.

Let not that which has been made by Him detain thine affections, so that thou shouldest lose Him by whom thou thyself wert made also. "Blessed," then, "is the man that maketh the Name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities and lying madnesses." ...

9. We will give him other sights in exchange for such sights as these. And what sights shall we present to the Christian, whom we would fain divert from those sights? I thank the Lord our God; He in the following verse of the Psalm hath shown us what sights we ought to present and offer to spectators who would fain have sights to see? Let us now suppose him to be weaned from the circus, the theatre, the amphitheatre; let him be looking after, let him by all means be looking after, some sight to see; we do not leave him without a spectacle. What then shall we give in exchange for those? Hear what follows.

"Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made" (ver. 5). He used to gaze at the "wonderful works" of man; let him now contemplate the wonderful works of God. "Many are the wonderful works" that God "has made." Why are they become vile in his eyes? He praises the charioteer guiding four horses; running all of them without fault and without stumbling. Perhaps the Lord has not made such "wonderful works" in things spiritual. Let him control lust, let him control cowardice, let him control injustice, let him control imprudence, I mean, the passions which falling into excess produce those vices; let him control these and bring them into subjection, and let him hold the reins, and not suffer himself to be carried away; let him guide them the way he himself would have them go; let him not be forced away whither he would not. He used to applaud the charioteer, he himself shall be applauded for his own charioteering; he used to call out that the charioteer should be invested with a dress of honour; he shall himself be clothed with immortality. These are the spectacles, these the sights that God exhibits to us. He cries out of heaven, "My eyes are upon you. Strive, and 'I will' assist you; triumph, and I will crown you."

"And in Thy thought there is none that is like unto Thee. Now then look at the actor! For the man hath by dint of great pains learnt to walk upon a rope; and hanging there he holds thee hanging in suspense. Turn to Him who exhibits spectacles far more wonderful. This man hath learned to walk upon the rope; but hath he caused another to walk on the sea? Forget now thy theatre; behold our Peter; not a walker on the rope, but, so to speak, a walker on the sea. And do thou also walk on other waters (though not on those on which Peter walked, to symbolize a certain truth), for this world is a sea. It hath a deleterious bitterness; it hath the waves of tribulations, the, tempests of temptations; it hath men in it who, like fish, delight in their own ruin, and prey upon each other; walk thou here, set thou thy foot on this. Thou wouldest see sights; be thyself a "spectacle. That thy spirit may not sink, look on Him who goes before thee, and says, "We have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men. Tread thou on the waters; suffer not thyself to be drowned in the sea. Thou wilt not go there, thou wilt not "tread it under foot," unless it be His bidding, who was Himself the first to walk upon the sea. For it was thus that Peter spoke. "If Thou art, bid me come unto Thee on the waters.

And because ”He was,” He heard him when praying; He granted his wish to him when expressing his desire; He raised him up when sinking. These are the ”wonderful works” that the ”Lord hath made,” Look on them; let faith be the eye of him who would behold them. And do thou also likewise; for although the winds alarm thee, though the waves rage against thee, and though human frailty may have inspired thee with some doubt of thy salvation, thou hast it in thy power to ”cry out,” thou mayest say ”Lord, I perish. He who bids thee walk there, suffers thee not to perish. For in that thou now walkest ”on the Rock,” thou fearest not even on the sea! If thou art without ”the Rock,” thou must sink in the sea; for the Rock on which thou must walk is such an one as is not sunk in the sea,

10. Observe then the ”wonderful works” of God. ”I have declared, and have spoken; they are multiplied beyond number. There is ”a number,” there are some over and above the number. There is a fixed number that belongs to that heavenly Jerusalem. For ”the Lord knoweth them that are His; the Christians that fear Him, the Christians that believe, the Christians that keep the commandments, that walk in God’s ways, that keep themselves from sins; that if they fall confess: they belong to ”the number. But are they the only ones? There are also some ”beyond the number. For even if they be but a few (a few in comparison of the numbers of the larger majority), with how great numbers are our Churches filled, crowded up to the very walls; to what a degree do they annoy each other by the pressure, and almost choke each other by their overflowing numbers. Again, out of these very same persons, when there is a public spectacle, there are numbers flocking to the amphitheatre; these are over and above ”the number. But it is for this reason that we say this, that they may be in ”the number. Not being present, they do not hear this from us; but when ye have gone from hence, let them hear it from you. ”I have declared,” he says, ”and have spoken. It is Christ who speaks. ”He hath declared it,” in His own Person, as our Head. He hath Himself declared it by His members. He Himself hath sent those who should ”declare” it;

He Himself hath sent the Apostles. ”Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. How great the number of believers that are gathered together; how great the multitudes that flock together; many of them truly converted, many but in appearance: and those who are truly converted are the minority; those who are so but in appearance are the majority: because ”they are multiplied beyond the number.”

11. ...These are the ”wonderful works” of God; these are the ”thoughts” of God, to which ”no man’s thoughts are like;” that the lover of sight-seeing may be weaned from curiosity: and with us may seek after those more excellent, those more profitable things, in which, when he shall have attained unto them, he will rejoice. ...

12. ”Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire” (ver. 6), saith the Psalm to God. For the men of old time, when as yet the true Sacrifice, which is known to the faithful, was foreshown in figures, used to celebrate rites that were figures of the reality that was to be hereafter; many of them understanding their meaning; but more of them in ignorance of it. For the Prophets and the holy Patriarchs understood what they were celebrating; but the rest of the ”stiff-necked people” were so carnal, that what was done by them was but

to symbolize the things that were to come afterwards; and it came to pass, when that first sacrifice was abolished; when the burnt-offerings of "rams, of goats, and of calves," and of other victims, had been abolished, "God did not desire them." Why did God not desire them? And why did He at the first desire them? Because all those things werecd, as it were, the words of a person making a promise; and the expressions conveying a promise, when the thing that they promise is come, are no longer uttered. ...Those sacrifices then, as being but expressions of a promise, have been abrogated. What is that which has been given as its fulfilment? That "Body;" which ye know; which ye do not all of you know; whFch, of you who do know it, I pray God all may not know it unto condemnation. Observe the time when it was said; for the person is Christ our Lord, speaking at one time for His members, at another in His own person. "Sacrifice and offering," said He, "Thou didst not desire." What then? Are we left at this present time without a sacrifice? God forbid!

"But a Body hast Thou perfected for me." It was for this reason that Thou didst not desire the others; that Thou mightest "perfect" this; before Thou "perfectedst" this, Thou didst desire the others. The fulfilment of the promise has done away with the words that express the promise. For if they still hold out a promise, that which was promised is not yet fulfilled. This was promised by certain signs; the signs that convey the promise are done away; because the Substance that was promised is come. We are in this "Body." We are partakers of this "Body." We know that which we ourselves receive; and ye who know it not yet, will know it bye and bye; and when ye come to know it, I pray ye may not receive it unto condemnation. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself." "A Body" hath been "perfected" for us; let us be made perfect in the Body.

13. "Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required." "Then said I, Lo, I come!" (ver. 7). It is time that what "was promised should come;" because the signs, by means of which they were promised, have been put away. And indeed, Brethren, observe these put away; those fulfilled. Let the Jewish nation at this time show me their priest, if they can! Where are their sacrifices? They are brought to an end; they are put away now. Should we at that time have rejected them? We do reject them now; because, if you chose to celebrate them now, it were unseasonable; unfitting at the time; incongruous. You are still making promises; I have already received! There has remained to them a certain thing for them to celebrate; that they might not remain altogether without a sign. ...In such a case then are they; like Cain with his mark. The sacrifices, however, which used to be performed there, have been put away; and that which remained unto them for a sign like that of Cain, hath by this time been fulfilled; and they know it not. They slay the Lamb; they eat the unleavened bread. "Christ has been sacrificed for us, as our Passover." Lo, in the sacrifice of Christ, I recognise the Lamb that was slain! What of the unleavened bread? "Therefore," says he, "let us keep the feast; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of wickedness" (he shows what is meant by "old;" it is "stale" flour; it is sour), "but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." They have continued in the shade; they cannot abide the Sun of Glory. We are already in the light of day. We have "the Body" of Christ, we have the Blood of Christ. If we

have a new life, let us "sing a new song, even a hymn unto our God." "Burnt offerings for sin Thou didst not desire. Then said I, Lo, I come!"

14. "In the head of the Book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will: O my God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within my heart" (ver. 8). Behold! He turns His regards to His members. Behold! He hath Himself "fulfilled the will" of the Father. But in what "beginning of a Book" is it written of Him? Perhaps in the beginning of this Book of Psalms. For why should we seek far for it, or examine into other books for it? Behold! It is written in the beginning of this Book of Psalms! "His will is in the Law of the Lord;" that is, "'O my God, I am willing,' and 'Thy Law is within my heart;'" that is the same as, "And in His Law doth he meditate day and night."

15. "I have well declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation" (ver. 9). He now addresses His members. He is exhorting them to do what He has already done. He has "declared; let us declare also. He has suffered; let us "suffer with Him. He has been glorified; we shall be "glorified with Him. "I have declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. How great an one is that? In all the world. How great is it? Even among all nations. Why among all nations? Because He is "the Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations shall be blessed. Why among all nations? "Because their sound hath gone forth into all lands. "Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that Thou knowest. My lips speak; I will not "refrain" them from speaking. My lips indeed sound audibly in the ears of men; but "Thou knowest" mine heart. "I will not refrain my lips, O Lord; that Thou knowest. It is one thing that man heareth; another that God "knoweth. That the "declaring" of it should not be confined to the lips alone, and that it might not be said of us, "Whatsoever things they say unto you, do; but do not after their works; or lest it should be said to the people, "praising God with their lips, but not with their heart," "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; do thou make audible confession with thy lips; draw nigh with thine heart also.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. In case like unto which that thief was found, who, hanging on the Cross with the Lord, did on the Cross acknowledge the Lord. Others had refused to acknowledge Him while working miracles; this man acknowledged Him when hanging on the Cross. That thief had every other member pierced through; his hands were fastened by the nails; his feet were pierced also; his whole body was fastened to the tree; the body was not disengaged in its other members; the heart and the tongue were disengaged; "with the heart" he "believed; with the tongue" he made "confession. "Remember me, O Lord," he said, "when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. He hoped for the coming of his salvation at a time far remote; he was content to receive it after a long delay; his hope rested on an object far remote. The day, however, was not postponed! The answer was, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise. Paradise hath happy trees! This day hast thou been with Me on "the Tree" of the Cross. This day shalt thou be with Me on "the Tree" of Salvation. ...

16. ”I have not hid my righteousness within my heart” (ver. 10). What is meant by ”my righteousness”? My faith. For, ”the just shall live by faith.” As suppose the persecutor under threat of punishment, as they were once allowed to do, puts you to the question, ”What art thou? Pagan or Christian?” ”A Christian.” That is his ”righteousness.” He believeth; he ”lives by faith.” He doth not ”hide his righteousness within his heart.” He has not said in his heart, ”I do indeed believe in Christ; but I will not tell what I believe to this persecutor, who is raging against me, and threatening me. My God knoweth that inwardly, within my heart, I do believe. He knoweth that I renounce Him not.” Lo! you say that you have this inwardly within your heart! What have you upon your lips? ”I am not a Christian.” Your lips bear witness against your heart. ”I have not hid my righteousness within my heart.” ...

17. ”I have declared Thy Truth and. Thy Salvation.” I have declared Thy Christ. This is the meaning of, ”I have declared Thy Truth and Thy Salvation.” How is ”Thy Truth” Christ? ”I am the Truth.” How is Christ ”His Salvation”? Simeon recognised the infant in His Mother’s hands in the Temple, and said, ”For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation.” The old man recognised the little child; the old man having himself ”become a little child” in that infant, having been renewed by faith. For he had received an oracle from God; and it said this, ”The Lord had said unto him, that he was not to depart out of this life, until he had seen the ”Salvation of God.” This ”Salvation of God” it is a good thing to have shown unto men; but let them cry, ”Show us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy Salvation.” ...

18. ”I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation.” Let us be there; let us also be numbered among the members of this Body: let us not keep back ”the mercy” of the Lord, and ”the Truth” of the Lord. Wouldest thou hear what ”the mercy of the Lord” is? Depart from thy sins; He will forgive thy sins. Wouldest thou hear what ”the truth” of the Lord is? Hold fast righteousness. Thy righteousness shall receive a crown. For mercy is announced to you now; ”Truth” is to be shown unto thee hereafter. For God is not merciful in such a way as not to be just, nor just in such a way as not to be merciful. Does that mercy seem to thee an inconsiderable one? He will not impute unto thee all thy former sins: thou hast lived ill up to this present clay; thou art still living; this day live well; then thou wilt not ”conceal” this ”mercy.” If this is meant by ”mercy,” what is meant by ”truth”? ...

19. ”Remove not Thou Thy mercies far from me, O Lord” (ver. 11). He is turning his attention to the wounded members. Because I have not ”concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation,” from the Unity of the Universal Church, look Thou on Thy afflicted members, look on those who are guilty of sins of omission, and on those who are guilty of sins of commission: and withhold not Thou Thy mercies. ”Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me.” I should not dare to turn from my evil way, were I not assured of remission; I could not endure so as to persevere, if I were not assured of the fulfilment of Thy promise. ...

”Innumerable evils have compassed me about” (ver. 12). Who can number sins? Who can count his own sins, and those of others? A burden under which he was groaning, who said,

”Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults; and from the faults of others, spare Thou Thy servant, O Lord.” Our own are too little; those ”of others” are added to the burden. I fear for myself; I fear for a virtuous brother, I have to bear with a wicked brother; and under such burthen what shall we be, if God’s mercy were to fail? ”But Thou, Lord, remove not afar off.” Be Thou near unto us! To whom is the Lord near? ”Even” unto them that ”are of a broken heart.” He is far from the proud: He is near to the humble. ”For though the Lord is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly.” But let not those that are proud think themselves to be unobserved: for the things that are high, He ”beholdeth afar off.” He ”beheld afar off” the Pharisee, who boasted himself; He was near at hand to succour the Publican, who made confession The one extolled his own merits, and concealed his wounds; the other boasted not of his merits, but laid bare his wounds. He came to the Physician; he knew that he was sick, and that he required to be made whole; he ”dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven: he smote upon his breast.” He spared not himself, that God might spare him; he acknowledged himself guilty, that God might ”ignore” the charge against him. He punished himself, that God might free him from punishment. ...

20. ”Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see.” There is a something for us ”to see;” what prevents us so that we see it not? Is it not iniquity? From beholding this light your eye is prevented perhaps by some humour penetrating into it; perhaps by smoke, or dust, or by something else that has been thrown into it: and you have not been able to raise your wounded eye to contemplate this light of day. What then? Will you be able to lift up your wounded heart unto God? Must it not be firsty healed, in order that thou mayest see? Do you not show your pride, when you say, ”First let me see, and then I will believe”? Who is there who says this? For who that would fain see, says, ”Let me see, and then I will believe”? I am about to manifest the Light unto thee; or rather the Light Itself would fain manifest Itself to thee! To whom? It cannot manifest Itself to the blind. He does not see. Whence is it that he seeth not? It is that the eye is clogged by the multitude of sins. ...

21. ”They are more than the hairs of my head.” He subjects the number of the ”hairs of his head” to calculation. Who is there can calculate the number of the hairs of his head? Much less can he tell the number of his sins, which exceed the number of the hairs of his head. They seem to be minute; but they are many in number. You have guarded against great ones; you do not now commit adultery, or murder; you do not plunder the property of others; you do not blaspheme; and do not bear false witness; those are the weightier kind of sins. You have guarded against great sins, what are you doing about your smaller ones? You have cast off the weight; beware lest the sand overwhelm you. ”And my heart hath forsaken me.” What wonder if thine heart is forsaken by thy God, when it is even ”forsaken” by itself? What is meant by ”faileth me,” ”forsaketh me”? Is not capable of knowing itself. He means this: ”My heart hath forsaken me.” I would fain see God with mine heart, and cannot from the multitude of my sins: that is not enough; mine heart does not even know itself. For no one thoroughly knows himself: let no one presume upon his own state. Was Peter able to comprehend with his own heart the state of his own heart, who said, ”I will be with Thee even unto death”? There was a false presumption in the heart; there was lurking in that

heart at the same time a real fear: and the heart was not able to comprehend the state of the heart. Its state was unknown to the sick heart itself: it was manifest to the physician. That which was foretold of him was fulfilled. God knew that in him which he knew not in himself: because his heart had forsaken him, his heart was unknown to his heart.

22. "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me" (ver. 13). As if he were saying, "'If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.' Be pleased to deliver me. O Lord, look upon me to help me." Look, that is, on the penitent members, members that lie in pain, members that are writhing under the instruments of the surgeon; but still in hope. 23. "Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it" (ver. 14). For in a certain passage he makes an accusation, and says, "I looked upon my right hand, and beheld; and there was no man who sought after my soul;" that is, there was no man to imitate Mine example. Christ in His Passion is the Speaker. "I looked on my right hand," that is, not on the ungodly Jews, but on Mine own right hand, the Apostles,-"and there was no man who sought after My soul." So thoroughly was there no man to "seek after My soul," that he who had presumed on his own strength, "denied My soul." But because a man's soul is sought after in two ways, either in order that you may enjoy his society; or that you may persecute him; therefore he here speaks of others, whom he would have "confounded and ashamed," who are "seeking after his soul." But lest you should understand it in the same way as when he complains of some who did not "seek after his soul," He adds, "to destroy it;" that is, they seek after my soul in order to my death. ...

24. "Let them be turned backward and put to shame that wish me evil." "Turned backwards." Let us not take this in a bad sense. He wishes them well; and it is His voice, who said from the Cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Wherefore then cloth he, say to them, that they should return "backwards"? Because they who before were proud, so that they fell, are now become humble, so that they may rise again. For when they are before, they are wishing to take precedence of their Lord; to be better than He; but if they go behind Him, they acknowledge Him to be better than they; they acknowledge that He ought to go before; that He should precede they follow. Thence He thus rebukes Peter giving Him evil counsel. For the Lord, when about to suffer for our salvation, also foretold what was to happen concerning that Passion itself; and Peter says, "Be it far from Thee," "God forbid it!" "This shall not be!" He would fain have gone before his Lord; would have given counsel to his Master! But the Lord, that He might make him not go before Him, but follow after Him, says, "Get thee behind, Satan!" It is for this reason He said "Satan," because thou art seeking to go before Him, whom thou oughest to follow; but if thou art behind, if thou follow Him, thou wilt henceforth not be "Satan." What then? "Upon this Rock I will build My Church." ...

25. "Let them speedily bear away their own confusion, that say unto me, Well done! Well done!" (ver. 15). They praise you without reason. "A great man! A good man! A man of education and of learning; but why a Christian?" They praise those things in you which you should wish not to be praised; they find fault with that at which you rejoice. But if perhaps

you say, ”What is it you praise in me, O man? That I am a virtuous man? A just man? If you think this, Christ made me this; praise Him.” But the other says, ”Be it far from you. Do yourself no wrong! You yourself made yourself such.” ”Let them be confounded who say unto me, Well done! Well done!” And what follows? ”Let all those that seek Thee, O Lord, rejoice and be glad” (ver. 16). Those who ”seek” not me, but ”Thee;” who say not to me, ”Well done! Well done!” but see me ”glory in Thee,” if I have anything whereof to glory; for ”he who glories, let him glory in the Lord.” ”Let all those who seek Thee, Lord, rejoice and be glad.”

”And say continually, the Lord be magnified.” For even if the sinner becometh righteous, thou shouldest give the glory to ”Him who justifieth the ungodly.” Whether therefore it be a sinner, let Him be praised who calls him to forgiveness; or one already walking in the way of righteousness, let Him be praised who callus him to receive the crown! Let the Name of the Lord be magnified continually by ”such as love Thy salvation.”

”But I” (ver. 17). I for whom they were seeking evil, I whose ”life they were seeking, that they might take it away.” But turn thee to another description of persons. But I to whom they said, ”Well done! Well done!” ”I am poor and needy.” There is nothing in me that may be praised as mine own. Let Him rend my sackcloth in sunder, and cover me with His robe, For, ”Now I live, not I myself; but Christ liveth in me.” If it is Christ that ”liveth in thee,” and all that thou hast is Christ’s, and all that thou art to have hereafter is Christ’s also; what art thou in thyself? ”I am poor and needy.” Now I am not rich, because I am not proud. He was rich who said, ”Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are;” but the publican was poor, who said, ”Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!” The one was belching from his fulness; the other from want was crying piteously, ”I am poor and needy!” And what wouldest thou do, O poor and needy man? Beg at God’s door; ”Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee.” -”As for me, I am poor and needy. Yet the Lord careth for me.”-”Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass.” What canst thou effect for thyself by taking care what canst thou provide for thyself? Let Him who made thee ”care for thee.” He who cared for thee before thou wert, how shall He fail to have a care of thee, now that thou art what He would have thee be? For now thou art a believer, now thou art walking in the ”way of righteousness.” Shall not He have a care for thee, who ”maketh His sun rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”? ...

”Thou art my Help, and my Deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God” (ver. 17). He is calling upon God, imploring Him, fearing lest he should fall away: ”Make no tarrying.” What is meant by ”make no tarrying”? We lately read concerning the days of tribulation: ”Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.” The members of Christ-the Body of Christ extended everywhere-are asking of God, as one single person, one single poor man, and beggar! For He too was poor, who ”though He was rich, yet became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich.” It is He that maketh rich those who are the true poor; and maketh poor those who are falsely rich. He crieth unto Him; ”From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness.” There will come days of

tribulations, and of greater tribulations; they will come even as the Scripture speaks: and as days advance, so are tribulations increased also. Let no one promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. ...

Psalm 41

TO The People, ON The Feast OF The Martyrs. 1. The solemn day of the Martyrs hath dawned; therefore to the glory of the Passion of Christ, the Captain of Martyrs, who spared not Himself, ordering His soldiers to the fight; but first fought, first conquered, that their fighting He might encourage by His example, and aid with His majesty, and crown with His promise: let us hear somewhat from this Psalm pertaining to His Passion. I commend unto you oftentimes, nor grieve I to repeat, what for you is useful to retain, that our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh often Of Himself, that is, in His own Person, which is our Head; often in the person of His Body, which are we and His Church; but so that the words sound as from the mouth of one, that we may understand the Head and the Body to consist together in the unity of integrity, and not be separated the one from the other; as in that marriage whereof it is said, "They two shall be one flesh." If then we acknowledge two in one flesh, let us acknowledge two in one voice. First, that which responding to the reader we have sung, though it be from the middle of the Psalm, from that I will take the beginning of this Sermon.

"Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish" (ver. 5). This is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ: but see if herein are not understood the members also. This was spoken also when our Lord Himself walked in the flesh here on earth. ...When they saw the people go after Him, they said, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish; that is, when we have slain Him, then shall His Name be no more in the earth, nor shall He seduce any, being dead; but by that very slaying of Him shall men understand, that He was but a man whom they followed, that there was in Him no hope of salvation, and shall desert His Name, and it shall no more be. He died, and His Name perished not, but His Name was sown as seed: He died, but He was a grain, which dying, the corn immediately sprang up. When glorified then was our Lord Jesus Christ, began they much more, and much more numerously to trust in Him; then began His members to hear what the Head had heard. Now then our Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven set down, and Himself in us labouring on earth, still spake His enemies, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. For hence stirred up the devil persecutions in the Church to destroy the Name of Christ.

Unless haply ye think, brethren, that those Pagans, when they raged against Christians, said not this among themselves, "to blot out the Name of Christ from the earth. That Christ might die again, not in the Head, but in His Body, were slain also the Martyrs. To the multiplying of the Church availed the Holy Blood poured forth, to help Its seminating came also the death of the Martyrs. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. More and more were the Christians multiplied, nor was it fulfilled which spake the enemies, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Even now also is it spoken. Down sit the Pagans, and compute them the years, they hear their fanatics saying, A time shall come when Christians shall be none, and those idols must be worshipped as before they were worshipped: still say they, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Twice conquered, now the third time be wise! Christ died, His Name has not perished: the Martyrs died, multiplied more is the Church, groweth through all nations the Name of Christ. He who foretold of His own Death, and of His Resurrection, He who foretold of His Martyrs' death, and of their crown, He Himself foretold of His Church things yet to come, if truth He spake twice, has He the third time lied? Vain then is what ye believe against Him; better is it that ye believe in Him, that ye may "understand upon the needy and poor One;

that "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." ...

2. "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One: in the evil day shall the Lord deliver him" (ver. 1). For the evil day will come: will thou, hill thou, come it will: the Day of Judgment will come upon thee, an evil day if thou "understand not the needy and poor. For what now thou wilt not believe, shall be made manifest in the end. But neither shalt thou escape, when it shall be made manifest, because thou believest not, when it is kept secret. Invited art thou, what thou seest not to believe, lest when thou see, thou be put to the blush. "Understand then upon the needy and poor One," that is, Christ: understand in Him the hidden riches, whom poor thou seest. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For thereby in the evil day shall He deliver thee, in that He is God: but in that He is man, and that which in Him is human hath raised to life, and changed for the better, He hath lifted (thee) to heaven. But He who is God, who would have one person in man and with man, could neither decrease nor increase, neither die nor rise again. He died out of man's infirmity, but God dieth not. ...But as we rightly say, Such a man died, though his soul dieth not; so we rightly say, Christ died, though His Divinity dieth not. Wherefore died? Because needy and poor.

Let not His death offend thee, and avert thee from beholding His Divinity. "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Consider also the poor, the needy, the hungry and thirsty, the naked, the sick, the prisoners; understand also upon such poor, for if upon such thou understand, thou understandest upon Him who said, "I was an hungred, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, naked, sick, in prison; so in the evil day shall the Lord deliver thee. ...

3. ”And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy” (ver. 2). The enemy is the devil. Let none think of a man his enemy, when he hears these words. Haply one thought of his neighbour, of him who had a suit with him in court, of him who would take from him his own possession, of him who would force him to sell to him his house. Think not this; but that enemy think of, of whom said the Lord, ”an enemy hath done this. For He it is who suggests that for things earthly he be worshipped, for overthrow the Christian Name this enemy cannot. For he hath seen himself conquered by the fame and praises of Christ, he hath seen, whereas he slew Christ’s Martyrs, that they are crowned, he triumphed over. He hath begun to be unable to persuade men that Christ is nought; and because by reviling Christ, he now with difficulty deceives, by lauding Christ, he endeavours to deceive. Before this what said he? Whom worship ye? A Jew, dead, crucified, a man of no moment, who could not even from himself drive away death. When after His Name he saw running the whole human race, saw that in the Name of the Crucified temples are thrown down, idols are broken, sacrifices abolished; and that all these things predicted in the Prophets are considered by men, by men with wonder astonished, and closing now their hearts against the reviling of Christ;

he clothes himself with praise of Christ, and begins to deter from the faith in another manner. Great is the law of Christ, powerful is that law, divine, ineffable! but who fulfilleth it? In the name of our Saviour, ”tread upon the lion and the dragon. By reviling openly roared the lion; by lauding craftily lurks the dragon. Let them come to the faith, who doubted; and not say, Who fulfilleth it? If on their own strength they presume, they will not fulfil it. Presuming on the grace of God let them believe, presuming (on it) let them come; to be aided come, not to be judged. So live all the faithful in the Name of Christ, each one in his degree fulfilling the commands of Christ, whether married, or celibates and virgins, they live as much as God granteth them to live; neither presume they in their own strength, but know that in Him they ought to glory. ...

4. ”The Lord help him” (ver. 3). But when? Haply in heaven, haply in the life eternal, that so it remain to worship the devil for earthly needs, for the necessities of this life. Far be it! Thou hast ”promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. He came unto thee on earth, by Whom were made heaven and earth. Consider then what He saith, ”The Lord help him, on his bed of pain. The bed of pain is the infirmity of the flesh; lest thou shouldest say, I cannot hold, and carry, and tie up my flesh; thou art aided that thou mayest. The Lord help thee on thy bed of pain. Thy bed did carry thee, thou carriedst not thy bed, but wast a paralytic inwardly; He cometh who saith to thee, ”Take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house. ”The Lord help him on his bed of pain. Then to the Lord Himself He turneth, as though it were asked, Why then, since the Lord helpeth us, suffer we such great ills in this life, such great scandals, such great labours, such disquiet from the flesh and the world? He turneth to God, and as though explaining to us the counsel of His healing, He saith, ”Thou hast turned all his bed inhis infirmity. By the bed is understood anything earthly.

Every soul that is infirm in this life seeketh for itself somewhat whereon to rest, because intensity of labour, and of the soul extended toward God, it can hardly endure perpetually,

somewhat it seeketh on earth whereon to rest, and in a manner with a kind of pausing to recline, as are those things which innocent ones love. ...The innocent man resteth in his house, his family, his wife, his children; in his poverty, his little farm, his orchard planted withhis own hand, in some building fabricated with hisown study; in these rest the innocent. But yet God willing us not to have love but of life eternal, even with these, though innocent delights, mixeth bitterness, that even in these we may suffer tribulation, and so He turneth all our bed in our infirmity. "Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. Let him not then complain, when in these things which he hath innocently, he suffereth some tribulations. He is taught to love the better, by the bitterness of the worse; lest going a traveller to his country, he choose the inn instead of his own home.

5. But why this? Because He "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Why this? Because to men sinning was it said, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread." Therefore because all these chastisements, in which all our bed is turned in our infirmity, man ought to acknowledge that he suffers for sin; let him turn himself, and say what follows: "I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee" (ver. 4). O Lord, by tribulations do Thou exercise me; to be scourged Thou judgest every son whom Thou wilt receive, who sparedst not even the Only-Begotten. He indeed without sin was scourged; but I say, "I have sinned against Thee." ... 6. "Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish" (ver. 5). Of this we have already spoken, and from this began. 7. "And entered in to see" (ver. 6). What Christ suffered, that suffereth also the Church; what the Head suffered, that suffer also the Members. "For the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord." ...

If to Christ's Members thou belongest, come within, cling to the Head. Endure the tares if thou art wheat, endure the chaff if thou art grain. Endure the bad fish within the net if thou art a good fish. Wherefore before the time of winnowing dost thou fly away? Wherefore before the time of harvest, dost thou root up the corn also with thyself? Wherefore before thou art come to the shore, hast thou broken the nets? "They go abroad, and tell it."

8. "All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing" (ver. 7). Against Me all unto the same thing. How much better with me unto the same thing, than against me "unto the same thing." What is, "Against me unto the same thing"? With one counsel, with one conspiring. Christ then speaketh unto thee, Ye consent against Me, consent ye to Me: why against Me? wherefore not with Me? That same thing if ye had always had, ye had not divided you into schisms. For, saith the Apostle, "I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you." "All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing:" against Me do they "devise evil to Me." To themselves rather, for "they have gathered iniquity to themselves;" but therefore to Me, because by their intention they are to be weighed: for not because to do nothing was in their power, to do nothing was in their will. For the devil lusted to extinguish Christ, and Judas would slay Christ; yet Christ slain and rising again, we are made alive, but to the devil and to Judas is rendered the reward of their evil will, not of our salvation. ...The intention wherewith they spake,

not what they spake, did He consider, who related that they spake evil of Him, "Against Me they devised evil to Me." And what evil to Christ, to the Martyrs what evil? All hath God turned to good.

9. "An ungodly word do they set forth against Me" (ver. 8). What sort of ungodly word? Listen to the Head Itself. "Come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Fools! How shall the inheritance be yours? Because ye killed Him? Lo! ye even killed Him; yet shall not the inheritance be yours. "Shall not He that sleepeth add this also, that He rise again"? When ye exulted that ye had slain Him, He slept; for He saith in another Psalm, "I slept." They raged and would slay Me; "I slept." If I had not willed, I had not even slept. "I slept," because "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again." "I laid Me down and slept, and rose up again." Rage then the Jews; be "the earth given into the hands of the wicked," be the flesh left to the hands of persecutors, let them on wood suspend it, with nails transfix it, with a spear pierce it. "Shall He that sleepeth, not add this, that He rise up again?" Wherefore slept He? Because "Adam is the figure of Him that was to come." And Adam slept, when out of his side was made Eve. Adam in the figure of Christ, Eve in the figure of the Church; whence she was called "the mother of all living." When was Eve created? While Adam slept. When out of Christ's side flowed the Sacraments of the Church? While He slept upon the Cross. ...

10. "The man of My peace, in whom I: trusted, which did eat of My bread, hath enlarged his heel against Me" (ver. 9): hath raised up his foot against Me: would trample upon Me. Who is this man of His peace? Judas. And in him did Christ trust, that He said, "in whom I trusted"? Did He not know: him from the beginning? Did He not before he was born know that he would be? Had He not said to all His disciples, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil"? How then trusted He in him, but that He is in His Members, and that because many faithful trusted in Judas, the Lord transferred this to Himself? ..."The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread." How showed He him in His Passion? By the words of His prophecy: by the sop He marked Him out, that it might appear said of him, "Which did eat of My bread." Again, when he came to betray Him, He granted him a kiss, that it might appear said of him, "The man of My peace."

11. "But Thou, O Lord, be merciful unto Me" (ver. 10). This is the person of a servant, this is the person of the needy and poor for, "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One." See, as it was spoken, "Be merciful unto Me, and raise Me up, and I will requite them," so is it done. For the Jews slew Christ, lest they should lose their place. Christ slain, they lost their place. Rooted out of the kingdom were they, dispersed were they. He, raised up, requited them tribulation, He requited them unto admonition, not yet unto condemnation. For the city wherein the people raged, as a ramping and a roaring lion, crying out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," the Jews rooted out therefrom, hath now Christians, by not one Jew is inhabited. There is planted the Church of Christ, whence were rooted out the thorns of the synagogue. For truly this fire blazed "as the fire of thorns." But the Lord was as a green tree. This said Himself, when certain women mourned Christ

as dying. ..."For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry?" When can a green tree be consumed by the fire of thorns? For they blazed as fire among thorns. Fire consumeth thorns, but whatsoever green tree it is applied to, is not easily kindled. ...Yet lest ye think that God the Father of Christ could raise up Christ, that is, the Flesh of His Son, and that Christ Himself, though He be the Word equal with the Father, could not raise up His own Flesh; hear out of the Gospel, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "But," said the Evangelist (lest even after this we should doubt), "He spake of the temple of His Body. Raise Me up, and I will requite them."

12. "By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me" (ver. 11.) Because the Jews did triumph, when they saw Christ crucified; they thought that they had fulfilled their will to do Him hurt: the fruits of their cruelty they saw in effect, Christ hanging on the Cross: they shook their heads, saying, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross." He came not down, who could; His Potency He showed not, but patience taught. For if, on their saying these things, He had come down from the Cross, He would have seemed as it were to yield to them insulting, and not being able to endure reproach, would have been believed conquered: more firm remained He upon the Cross, than they insulting; fixed was He, they wavering. For therefore shook they their heads, because to the true Head they adhered not. He taught us plainly patience. For mightier is that which He did, who would not do what the Jews challenged. For much mightier is it to rise from the sepulchre, than to come down from the Cross. "That Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me." They triumphed then at that time. Christ rose again, Christ was glorified. Now see they in His Name the human race converted: now let them insult, now shake the head: rather now let them fix the head, or if they shake the head, in wonder and admiration let them shake. ...

13. "But as for Me, Thou upholdest Me, because of Mine innocence" (ver. 12). Truly innocence; integrity without sin, requiting without debt, scourging without desert. "Thou upholdest Me because of Mine innocence, and hast made Me strong in Thy sight for ever. Thou hast made Me strong for ever, Thou madest Me weak for a time: Thou hast made Me strong in Thy sight, Thou madest Me weak in sight of men. What then? Praise to Him, glory to Him. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He is the God of Israel, our God, the God of Jacob, the God of the younger son, the God of the younger people. Let none say, Of the Jews said He this, I am not Israel; rather the Jews are not Israel. For the elder son, he is the elder people reprobated; the younger, the people beloved. "The elder shall serve the younger: now is it fulfilled: now, brethren, the Jews serve us, they are as our satchellers, we studying, they carry our books. Hear wherein the Jews serve us, and not without reason. ...With them are the Law and the Prophets, in which. Law, and in which Prophets, Christ is preached.

When we have to do with Pagans, and show this coming to pass in the Church of Christ, which before was predicted of the Name of Christ, of the Head and Body of Christ, lest they think that we have forged these predictions, and from things which have happened, as

though they were future, had made them up, we bring forth the books of the Jews. The Jews forsooth are our enemies, from an enemy's books convince we the adversary. ...If any enemy clamour and say, "Ye for yourselves have forged prophecies; be the books of the Jews brought forth, because the elder shall serve the younger. Therein let them read those predictions, which now we see fulfilled; and let us all say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and all the people shall say, So be it, So be it."

Psalm 42

1. We have undertaken the exposition of a Psalm corresponding to your own ”longings,” on which we propose to speak to you. For the Psalm itself begins with a certain pious ”longing;” and he who sings so, says, ”Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God” (ver. 1). Who is it then that saith this? It is ourselves, if we be but willing! And why ask, who it is other than thyself, when it is in thy power to be the thing which thou art asking about? It is not however one individual, but it is ”One Body;” but ”Christ’s Body is the Church.” Such ”longing” indeed is not found in all who enter the Church: let all however who have ”tasted” the sweetness ”of the Lord,” and who own in Christ that for which they have a relish, think that they are not the only ones; but that there are such seeds scattered throughout ”the field” of the Lord, this whole earth: and that there is a certain Christian unity, whose voice thus speaks, ”Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.” And indeed it is not ill understood as the cry of those, who being as yet Catechumens, are hastening to the grace of the holy Font. On which account too this Psalm is ordinarily chanted on those occasions, that they may long for the Fountain of remission of sins, even ”as the hart for the water-brooks.” Let this be allowed; and this meaning retain its place in the Church; a place both truthful and sanctioned by usage. Nevertheless, it appears to me, my brethren, that such ”a longing” is not fully satisfied even in the faithful in Baptism: but that haply, if they know where they are sojourning, and whither they have to remove from hence, their ”longing” is kindled in even greater intensity.

2. The title then of it is, ”On the end: a Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. We have met withthe sons of Korah in other titles of Psalms: and remember to have discussed and stated already the meaning of this name. Yet we must even now take notice of this title in such a way, that what we have said already should be no prejudice against our saying it again: for all were not present in every place where we said it. Now Korah may have been, as indeed he was, a certain definite person; and have had sons, who might be called ”the sons of Korah; let us however search for the secret of which this is the sacrament, that this name may bring to light the mystery with which it is pregnant. For there is some great mystery in the matter that the name ”sons of Korah” is given to Christians. Why ”sons of Korah”? They are ”sons of the bridegroom, sons of Christ,” Why then does ”Korah” stand for Christ? Because ”Korah” is equivalent to ”Calvaria.” ...Therefore, the ”sons of the bridegroom,” the

sons of His Passion, the sons redeemed by His Blood, the sons of His Cross, who bear on their forehead that which His enemies erected on Calvary, are called ”the sons of Korah; to them is thisPsalm sung as a Psalm for ”understanding. Let then our understanding be roused: and if the Psalm be sung to us, let us follow it with our ”understanding.” ...Run to the brooks;

long after the water-brooks. ”With God is the fountain of Life; a ”fountain” that shall never be dried up: in His ”Light” is a Light that shall never be darkened. Long thou for this light: for a certain fountain, a certain light, such as thy bodily eyes know not; a light to see which the inward eye must be prepared; a fountain, to drink of which the inward thirst is to be kindled. Run to the fountain; long for the fountain; but do it not anyhow, be not satisfied with running like any ordinary animal; run thou ”like the hart. What is meant by ”like the hart”? Let there be no sloth in thy running; run with all thy might: long for the fountain with all thy might. For we find in ”the hart” an emblem of swiftness.

3. But perhaps Scripture meant us to consider in the stag not this point only, but another also. Hear what else there is in the hart. It destroys serpents, and after the killing of serpents, it is inflamed with thirst yet more violent; having destroyed serpents, it runs to ”the water-brooks,” with thirst more keen than before. The serpents are thy vices, destroy the serpents of iniquity; then wilt thou long yet more for ”the Fountain of Truth.” Perhaps avarice whispers in thine ear some dark counsel, hisses against the word of God, hisses against the commandment of God. And since it is said to thee, ”Disregard this or that thing,” if thou prefer working iniquity to despising some temporal good, thou choosest to be bitten by a serpent, rather than destroy it. Whilst, therefore, thou art yet indulgent to thy vice, thy covetousness or thy appetite, when am I to find in thee ”a longing” such as this, that might make thee run to the water-brooks? ...

4. There is another point to be observed in the hart. It is reported of stags ...that when they either wander in the herds, or when they are swimming to reach some other parts of the earth, that they support the burdens of their heads on each other, in such a manner as that one takes the lead, and others follow, resting their heads upon him, as again others who follow do upon them, and others in succession to the very end of the herd; but the one who took the lead in bearing the burden of their heads, when tired, returns to the rear, and rests himself after his fatigue by supporting his head just as did the others; by thus supporting what is burdensome, each in turn, they both accomplish their journey, and do not abandon each other. Are they not a kind of ”harts” that the Apostle addresses, saying, ”Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ”? ...

5. ”My soul is athirst for the living God” (ver. 2). What I am saying, that ”as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so longs my soul after Thee, O God,” means this, ”My soul is athirst for the living God.” For what is it athirst? ”When shall I come and appear before God?” This it is for which I am athirst, to ”come and to appear before Him.” I am athirst in my pilgrimage, in my running; I shall be filled on my arrival. But ”When shall I come?” And this, which is soon in the sight of God, is late to our ”longing.” ”When shall I come and

appear before God?" This too proceeds from that "longing," of which in another place comes that cry, "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Wherefore so? "That I may behold" (he saith) "the beauty of the Lord." "When shall I come and appear before the Lord?" ...

6. "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God?" (ver. 3). My tears (he saith) have been not bitterness, but "my bread." Those very tears were sweet unto me: being athirst for that fountain, inasmuch as I was not as yet able to drink of it, I have eagerly made my tears my meat. For he said not, "My tears became my drink," lest he should seem to have longed for them, as for "the water-brooks:" but, still retaining that thirst wherewith I burn, and by which I am hurried away towards the water-brooks, "My tears became my meat," whilst I am not yet there. And assuredly he does but the more thirst for the water-brooks from making his tears his meat. ..."And they daily say unto me, Where is thy God?" For if a Pagan should say this to me, I cannot retort it upon him, saying, "Where is thine?" inasmuch as he points with his finger to some stone, and says, "Lo, there is my God!" When I have laughed at the stone, and he who pointed to it has been put to the blush, he raises his eyes from the stone, looks up to heaven, and perhaps says, pointing his finger to the Sun, "Behold there my God! Where, I pray, is your God?" He has found something to point out to the eyes of the flesh; whereas I, on my part, not that I have not a God to show to him, cannot show him what he has no eyes to see. For he indeed could point out to my bodily eyes his God, the Sun; but what eyes hath he to which I might point out the Creator of the Sun? ...

7. "I thought on these things, and poured out my soul above myself" (ver. 4). When would my soul attain to that object of its search, which is "above my soul," if my soul were not to "pour itself out above itself"? For were it to rest in itself, it would not see anything else beyond itself; and in seeing itself, would not, for all that, see God. Let then my insulting enemies now say, "Where is thy God?" aye, let them say it! I, so long as I do not "see," so long as my happiness is postponed, make my tears my "bread day and night." Let them still say, "Where is thy God?" I seek my God in every corporeal nature, terrestrial or celestial, and find Him not: I seek His Substance in my own soul, and I find it not, yet still I have thought on these things, and wishing to "see the invisible things of my God, being understood by the things made," I have poured forth my soul above myself, and there remains no longer any being for me to attain to, save my God. For it is "there" is the "house of my God." His dwelling-place is above my soul; from thence He beholds me; from thence He created me; from thence He directs me and provides for me; from thence he appeals to me, and calls me, and directs me; leads me in the way, and to the end of my way. ...

8. For when I was "pouring out my soul above myself," in order to reach my God, why did I do so? "For I will go into the place of Thy Tabernacle." For I should be in error were I to seek for my God without "the place of His tabernacle." "For I will go into the place of Thy wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God."

”I will go,” he says, ”into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God! For there are already many things that I admire in ”the tabernacle. See how great wonders I admire in the tabernacle! For God’s tabernacle on earth is the faithful; I admire in them the obedience of even their bodily members: that in them ”Sin does not reign so that they should obey its lusts; neither do they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but unto the living God in good works. I admire the sight of the bodily members warring in the service of the soul that serves God. ...And wonderful though the tabernacle be, yet when I come to ”the house of God,” I am even struck dumb with astonishment. Of that ”house” he speaks in another Psalm, after he had put a certain abstruse and difficult question to himself (viz., why is it that it generally goes well with the wicked on earth, and ill with the good?), saying, ”I thought to know this; it is too painful for me, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand of the last things. For it is there, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God, is the fountain of ”understanding. There he ”understood of the last things; and solved the question concerning the prosperity of the unrighteous, and the sufferings of the righteous. How does he solve it? Why, that the wicked, when reprieved here, are reserved for punishments without end;

and the good when they suffer here, are being tried in order that they may in the end obtain the inheritance. And it was in the sanctuary of God that he understood this, and ”understood of the last things.” ...For he tells us of his progress, and of his guidance thither; as if we had been saying, ”You are admiring the tabernacle here on earth; how came you to the sanctuary of the house of God? he says, ”In the voice of joy and praise; the sound of keeping holiday. Here, when men keep festival simply for their own indulgence, it is their custom to place musical instruments, or to station a chorus of singers, before their houses, or any kind of music that serves and allures to wantonness. And when these are heard, what do we passers by say? ”What is going on here? And we are told in answer, that it is some festival. ”It is a birthday that is being celebrated” (say they), ”there is a marriage here; that those songs may not appear out of place, but the luxurious indulgence may be excused by the festive occasion. In the ”house of God” there is a never-ending festival: for there it is not an occasion celebrated once, and then to pass away. The angelic choir makes an eternal ”holiday: the presence of God’s face, joy that never fails. This is a ”holiday” of such a kind, as neither to be opened by any dawn, nor terminated by any evening.

From that everlasting perpetual festivity, a certain sweet and melodious strain strikes on the ears of the heart, provided only the world do not drown the sounds. As he walks in this tabernacle, and contemplates God’s wonderful works for the redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity charms his ears, and bears the ”hart” away to ”the water-brooks.”

9. But seeing, brethren, so long as ”we are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord;” and ”the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things;” even though we have some way or other dispersed the clouds, by walking as ”longing” leads us on, and for a brief while have come within reach of that sound, so that by an effort we may catch something from that ”house of God,”

yet through the burden, so to speak, of our infirmity, we sink back to our usual level, and relapse to our ordinary state. And just as there we found cause for rejoicing, so here there will not be wanting an occasion for sorrow. For that hart that made "tears" its "bread day and night," borne along by "longing to the water-brooks" (that is, to the spiritual delights of God), "pouring forth his soul above himself," that he may attain to what is "above" his own soul, walking towards "the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God," and led on by the sweetness of that inward spiritual sound to feel contempt for all outward things, and be borne on to things spiritual, is but a mortal man still; is still groaning here, still bearing about the frailty of flesh, still in peril in the midst of the "offences" of this world. He therefore glances back to himself, as if he were coming from that world; and says to himself, now placed in the midst of these sorrows, comparing these with the things, to see which he had entered in there, and after seeing which he had come forth from thence;

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 5). Lo, we have just now been gladdened by certain inward delights: with the mind's eye we have been able to behold, though but with a momentary glance, something not susceptible of change: why dost thou still "disquiet me, why art thou" still "cast down"? For thou dost not doubt of thy God. For now thou art not without somewhat to say to thyself, in answer to those who say, "Where is thy God?" I have now had the perception of something that is unchangeable; why dost thou disquiet me still? "Hope in God." Just as if his soul was silently replying to him, "Why do I disquiet thee, but because I am not yet there, where that delight is, to which I was, as it were, rapt for a moment? Am I already 'drinking' from this 'fountain' with nothing to fear?" ...Still "Hope in God," is his answer to the soul that disquiets him, and would fain account for her disquiet from the evils with which this world abounds. In the mean while dwell in hope: for "hope that is seen is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

10. "Hope in God." Why "hope"? "For I will confess unto Him." What wilt thou "confess"? "My God is the saving health of my countenance." My "health" (my salvation) cannot be from myself; this it is that I will say, that I will "confess." It is my God that is "the saving health of my countenance." For to account for his fears, in the midst of those things, which he now knows, having come after a sort to the "understanding" of them, he has been looking behind him again in anxiety, lest the enemy be stealing upon him: he cannot yet say, "I am made whole every whir." For having but "the first-fruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." When that "health" (that salvation) is perfected in us, then shall we be living in the house of God for ever, and praising for ever Him to whom it was said, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be praising Thee world without end." This is not so yet, because the salvation which is promised, is not as yet in being; but it is "in hope" that I confess unto God, and say, "My God is the saving health of my countenance." For it is "in hope" that "we are saved; but hope that is seen, is not hope." ...

11. ”My soul is disquieted on account of myself” (ver. 6). Is it disquieted on account of God? It is on my own account it is disquieted. By the Unchangeable it was revived; it is by the changeable it is disquieted. I know that the righteousness of God remaineth; whether my own will remain stedfast, I know not. For I am alarmed by the Apostle’s saying, ”Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Therefore since ”there is no soundness in me for myself,” there is no hope either for me of myself. ”My soul is disquieted on account of myself.” ...”Therefore I remember Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from the little hill of Hermon. From whence did I remember thee? From the ”little hill,” and from the ”land of Jordan. Perhaps from Baptism, where the remission of sins is given. For no one runs to the remission of sins, except he who is dissatisfied with himself; no one runs to the remission of sins, but he who confesses himself a sinner; no one confesses himself a sinner, except by humbling himself before God. Therefore it is from ”the land of Jordan I have remembered thee, and from the hill; observe, not ”of the great hill,” that thou mayest make of the ”little hill” a great one: for ”whoso exalteth himself shall be abased, and whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted. If you would also ask the meanings of the names, Jordan means ”their descent. Descend then, that thou mayest be ”lifted up:

be not lifted up, lest thou be cast down. ”And the little hill of Hermon. Hermon means ”anathematizing. Anathematize thyself, by being displeased with thyself; for if thou art pleased with thyself, God will be displeased with thee. Because then God gives us all good things, because He Himself is good, not because we are worthy of it; because He is merciful, not because we have in anything deserved it; it is from ”the land of Jordan, and from Hermon,” that I remember thee. And because he so remembers with humility, he shall earn his exaltation to fruition, for he is not ”exalted” in himself, who ”glories in the Lord.”

12. ”Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts” (ver. 7). I may perhaps finish the Psalm, aided as I am by your attention, whose fervour I perceive. As for your fatigue in hearing, I am not greatly solicitous, since you see me also, who speak, toiling in the heat of these exertions. Assuredly it is from your seeing me labouring, that you labour with me: for I am labouring not for myself, but for you. ”Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. It was God whom he addressed, who ”remembered him from the land of Jordan and Hermon. It was in wonder and admiration he spake this: ”Abyss calleth unto abyss with the voice of Thy water-spouts. What abyss is this that calls, and to what other abyss? Justly, because the ”understanding” spoken of is an ”abyss. For an ”abyss” is a depth that cannot be reached or comprehended; and it is principally applied to a great body of water. For there is a ”depth,” a ”profound,” the bottom of which cannot be reached by sounding. Furthermore, it is said in a certain passage. ”Thy judgments are a mighty abyss,” Scripture meaning to suggest that the judgments of God are incomprehensible. What then is the ”abyss” that calls, and to what other ”abyss” does it call? If by ”abyss” we understand a great depth, is not man’s heart, do you not suppose, ”an abyss”? For what is there more profound than that ”abyss”?

Men may speak, may be seen by the operations of their members, may be heard speaking in conversation: but whose thought is penetrated, whose heart seen into? What he is inwardly engaged on, what he is inwardly capable of, what he is inwardly doing or what purposing, what he is inwardly wishing to happen, or not to happen, who shall comprehend? I think an "abyss" may not unreasonably be understood of man, of whom it is said elsewhere, "Man shall come to a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. If man then is an "abyss," in what way doth "abyss" call on "abyss"? Does man "call on" man as God is called upon? No, but "calls on" is equivalent to "calls to him. For it was said of a certain person, he calls on death; that is, lives in such a way as to be inviting death; for there is no man at all who puts up a prayer, and calls expressly on death: but men by evil-living invite death. "Deep calls on deep," then, is, "man calls to man. Thus is it wisdom is learnt, and thus faith, when "man calls to man. The holy preachers of God's word call on the "deep: are they not themselves "a deep" also? ...

13. "Deep calleth to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts" I, who tremble all over, when my soul was disquieted on account of myself, feared greatly on account of Thy "judgments." ...Are those judgments slight ones? They are great ones, severe, hard to bear; but would they were all. "Deep calls to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts," in that Thou threatenest, Thou sayest, that there is another condemnation in store even after those sufferings. "Deep calls on deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts." "Whither then shall I go from Thy presence? And whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit?" seeing that deep calls to deep, and after those sufferings severer ones are to be dreaded. 14. "All Thy overhangings and Thy waves are come upon me." The "waves" in what I already feel, the "overhangings" in that Thou denouncest. All my sufferings are Thy waves; all Thy denouncements of judgments are Thy "overhangings." In the "waves" that deep "calleth;" in the "overhangings" is the other "deep" which it "calls to." In this that I suffer are all Thy waves; in the severer punishment that Thou threatenest, all Thy "overhangings" are come unto me. For He who threatens does not let His judgments fall upon us, but keeps them suspended over us. But inasmuch as Thou sittest at liberty, I have thus spoken unto my soul. "Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My God is the saving health of my countenance." The more numerous my sufferings, the sweeter will be Thy mercy.

15. Therefore follows: "The Lord will commend His loving-kindness in the day-time; and in the night-time will He declare it" (ver. 8). In tribulation no man has leisure to hear: attend, when it is well with you; hear, when it is well with you; learn, when you are in tranquillity, the discipline of wisdom, and store up the word of God as you do food. For in tribulation every one must be profiled by what he heard in the time of security. For in prosperity God "commends to thee His mercy," in case thou serve Him faithfully, for He frees thee from tribulation; but it is "in the night" only that He "declares" His mercy to thee, which He "commended" to thee by day. When tribulation shall actually come, He will not leave thee destitute of His help; He will show thee that which He commended to thee in the daytime is true. For it is written in a certain passage, "The mercy of the Lord is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought. "The Lord hath commended His

loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night will He declare it. He does not showy that He is thine Helper, unless tribulation come, from whence thou must be rescued by Him who promised it to thee "in the day-time. Therefore we are warned to be like "the ant.

For just as worldly prosperity is signified by "the day," adversity by the night, so again in another way worldly prosperity is expressed by "the summer," adversity by the winter. And what is it that the ant does? She lays up in summer what will be useful to her in winter. Whilst therefore it is summer, whilst it is well with you, whilst you are in tranquillity, hear the word of the Lord. For how can it be that in the midst of these tempests of the world, you should pass through the whole of that sea, without suffering? How could it happen? To what mortal's lot has it fallen? If even it has been the lot of any, that very calm is more to be dreaded. "The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night-time will He declare it." ..."There is with me prayer unto the God of my life. This I make my business here; I who am the "hart thirsting and longing for the water-brooks," calling to mind the sweetness of that strain, by which I was led on through the tabernacle even to the house of God; whilst this "corruptible body presseth down the soul," there is yet with me "prayer unto the God of my life. For in order to making supplication unto God, I have not to buy aught from places beyond the sea;

or in order that He may hear me, have I to sail to bring from a distance frankincense and perfumes, or have I to bring "calf or ram from the flock. There is "with me prayer to the God of my life. I have within a victim to sacrifice; I have within an incense to place on the altar; I have within a sacrifice wherewith to propitiate my God. "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit. What sacrifice of a "troubled spirit" I have within, hear.

16. "I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up. Why hast Thou forgotten me?" (ver. 9). For I am suffering here, even as if Thou hadst forgotten me. But Thou art trying me, and I know that Thou dost but put off, not take utterly from me, what Thou hast promised me. But yet, "Why hast Thou forgotten me?" So cried our Head also, as if speaking in our name. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" I will say unto God, "Thou art my lifter up; why hast Thou forgotten me?"

17. "Why hast Thou rejected me?" "Rejected" me, that is to say, from that height of the apprehension of the unchangeable Truth. "Why hast Thou rejected me?" Why, when already longing for those things, have I been cast down to these, by the weight and burden of my iniquity? This same voice in another passage said, "I said in my trance" (i.e., in my rapture, when he had seen some great thing or other), "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes." For he compared these things in which he found himself, to those toward which he had been raised; and saw himself cast out far "from the sight of God's eyes," as he speaks even here, "Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones?" Even he, my tempter, the devil; while offences are everywhere on the increase, because of the abundance of which "the love of many is waxing cold." When we see the strong members of the Church generally giving way to the causes of offence, does not Christ's body say, "The enemy breaketh my bones"? For it is the

strong members that are "the bones;" and sometimes even those that are strong sink under their temptations. For whosoever of the body of Christ considers this, does he not exclaim, with the voice of Christ's Body, "Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones?"

You may see not my flesh merely, but even my "bones." To see those who were thought to have some stability, giving way under temptations, so that the rest of the weak brethren despair when they see those who are strong succumbing; how great, my brethren, are the dangers: 18. "They who trouble me cast me in the teeth." Again that voice! "While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" (ver. 10). And it is principally in the temptations of the Church they say this, "Where is thy God?" How much was this cast in the teeth of the Martyrs! Those men so patient and courageous for the name of Christ, how often was it said to them, "Where is your God?" "Let Him deliver you, if He can." For men saw their torments outwardly; they did not inwardly behold their crowns! "They who trouble me cast me in the teeth, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" And on this account, seeing "my soul is disquieted on account of myself," what else should I say unto it than those words:

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 11). And, as it seems to answer, "Wouldest thou not have me disquiet thee, placed as I am here in so great evils? Wouldest thou have me not disquiet thee, panting as I am after what is good, thirsting and labouring as I am for it?" What should I say, but, "Hope thou in God; for I will yet confess unto Him" (ver. 11). He states the very words of that confession; he repeats the grounds on which he fortifies his hope. "He is the health of my countenance, and my God."

Psalm 43

1. This Psalm is a short one; it satisfies the mental cravings of the hearers, without imposing too severe a trial on the hunger of those fasting. Let our soul feed upon it; our soul, which he who sings in this Psalm, speaks of as "cast down;" cast down, I suppose, either in consequence of some fist, or rather in consequence of some hunger he was in. For fasting is a voluntary act; being an-hungered is an involuntary thing. That which is an-hungered, is the Church, is the Body of Christ: and that "Man" who is extended throughout the whole world, of which the Head is above, the limbs below: it is His voice which ought by this time to be perfectly known, and perfectly familiar, to us, in all the Psalms; now chanting joyously, now sorrowing; now rejoicing in hope, now sighing at its actual state, even as if it were our own. We need not then dwell long on pointing out to you, who is the speaker here: let each one of us be a member of Christ's Body; and he will be speaker here. ...

2. "Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation" (ver. 1). I do not dread Thy judgment, because I know Thy mercy. "Judge me, O God," he cries. Now, meanwhile, in this state of pilgrimage, Thou dost not yet separate my place, because I am to live together with the "tares" even to the time of the "harvest:" Thou dost not as yet separate my rain from theirs; my light from theirs: "separate my cause." Let a difference be made between him who believes in Thee, and him who believes not in Thee. Our infirmity is the same; but our consciences not the same:our sufferings the same; but our longings not the same. "The desire of the ungodly shall perish," but as to the desire of the righteous, we might well doubt, if He were not "sure" who promised. The object of our desires is He Himself, who promiseth: He will give us Himself, because He has already given Himself to us; He will give Himself in His immortality to us then immortal, even because He gave Himself in His mortality to us when mortal. ...

3. And since patience is needful in order to endure, until the harvest, a certain distinction without separation, if we may so speak (for they are together with us, and therefore not yet separated; the tares however being still tares, and the corn still corn, and therefore they are already distinct); since then a kind of strength is needful, which must be implored of Him who bids us to be strong, and without whose making us strong, we should not be what He bids us to be; of Him who said, "He that endures unto the end shall be saved," lest the soul's powers should be impaired in consequence of her ascribing any strength to

herself, he subjoins immediately, ”For Thou, O God, art my strength: why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning, while the enemy harasseth me?” (ver. 2). I go mourning: the enemy is harassing me with daily temptations: inspiring either some unlawful love, or some ungrounded cause of fear; and the soul that fights against both of them, though not taken prisoner by them, yet being in danger from them, is contracted with sorrow, and says unto God, ”Why?”

Let her then ask of Him, and hear ”Why?” For she is in the Psalm enquiring the cause of her dejection; saying, ”Why hast Thou cast me off? and why go I mourning?” Let her hear from Isaiah; let the lesson which has just been read, suggest itself to her. ”The spirit shall go forth from me, and every breath have I made. For iniquity have I a little afflicted him; I hid my face from him, and he departed from me sorrowful in the ways of his heart.” Why then didst thou ask, ”Why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning?” Thou hast heard, it was ”for iniquity.” ”Iniquity” is the cause of thy mourning; let ”Righteousness” be the cause of thy rejoicing! Thou wouldest sin; and yet thou wouldest fain not suffer; so that it was too little for thee to be thyself unrighteous, without also wishing Him to be unrighteous, in that thou wouldest fain not be punished by Him. Consider a speech of a better kind in another Psalm. ”It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy righteousnesses.” By being lifted up, I had learned my own iniquities; let me by being ”humbled,” learn ”Thy righteousnesses.” ”Why go I mourning, while the enemy harasses me?” Thou complainest of the enemy. It is true he does harass thee; but it was thou didst ”give place” to him. And even now there is a course open to thee; choose the course of prudence; admit thy King, shut the tyrant out.

4. But in order that she may do this, hear what she says, what she supplicates, what she prays for. Pray thou for what thou hearest; pray for it when thou hearest it; let these words be the voice of us all: ”O send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. They have led me, and brought me on unto Thy holy hill, and into Thy Tabernacles” (ver. 3). For that very ”Light” and ”Truth” are indeed two in name; the reality expressed is but One. For what else is the ”Light” of God, except the ”Truth” of God? Or what else is the ”Truth” of God, except the ”Light” of God? And the one Person of Christ is both of these. ”I am the Light of the world: he that believeth on Me, shall not walk in darkness. ”I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is Himself ”the Light: He is Himself ”the Truth. Let Him come then and rescue us, and ”separate at once our cause from the ungodly nation; let Him deliver us from the deceitful and unjust man,” let him separate the wheat from the tares, for at the time of harvest He will Himself send His Angels, that they may ”gather out of His kingdom all things that offend,” and cast them into flaming fire, while they gather together the corn into the garner. He will send out His ”Light,” and His ”Truth; for that they have already ”brought us and led us to His holy hill, and into His Tabernacles.

We possess the ”earnest; we hope for the prize. ”His holy Hill” is His holy Church. It is that mountain which, according to Daniel’s vision, grew from a very small ”stone,” till it crushed the kingdoms of the earth; and grew to such a size, that it ”filled the face of the

earth. This is the "hill," from which he tells us that his prayer was heard, who says, "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Let no one of those that are without that mountain, hope to be heard unto eternal life. For many are heard in their prayers for many things. Let them not congratulate themselves on being heard; the devils were heard in their prayer, that they might be sent into the swine. Let us desire to be heard unto eternal life, by reason of our longing, through which we say, "Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. That is a "Light" which requires the eye of the heart. For "Blessed" (He saith) "are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. We are now on His Hill, that is, in His Church, and in His Tabernacle. The "tabernacle" is for persons sojourning; the house, for those dwelling in one community. The tabernacle is also for those who are both from home, and also in a state of warfare. When thou hearest of a tabernacle, form a notion of a war; guard against an enemy. But what shall the house be?

"Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be alway praising Thee."

5. Now then that we have been led on even to "the Tabernacle," and are placed on "His holy Hill," what hope do we carry with us? "Then will I go in unto the Altar of God" (ver. 4). For there is a certain invisible Altar on high, which the unrighteous man approaches not. To that Altar he alone draws nigh, who draws nigh to this one without cause to fear. There he shall find his Life, who in this one "separates his cause." "And I will go in unto the Altar of God." From His holy Hill, and from His Tabernacle, from His Holy Church, I will go in unto the Altar of God on High. What manner of Sacrifice is there? He himself who goeth in is taken for a burnt-offering. "I will go in unto the Altar of God." What is the meaning of what he says, "The Altar of my God"?

"Unto God, who makes glad my youth." Youth signifies newness: just as if he said, "Unto God, who makes glad my newness." It is He who makes glad my newness, who hath filled my old estate with mourning. For now "I go mourning" in oldness, then shall "I stand," exulting in newness!

"Yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God." What is the meaning of "praising on the harp," and praising on the psaltery? For he does not always do so with the harp, nor always with the psaltery. These two instruments of the musicians have each a distinct meaning of their own, worthy of our consideration and notice. They are both borne in the hands, and played by the touch; and they stand for certain bodily works of ours. Both are good, if one knows how to play the psaltery, or to play the harp. But since the psaltery is that instrument which has the shell (i.e. that drum, that hollow piece of wood, by straining on which the chords resound) on the upper part of it, whereas the harp has that same concave sounding-board on the lower part, there is to be a distinction made between our works, when they are "upon the harp," when "on the psaltery:" both however are acceptable to God, and grateful to His ear. When we do anything according to God's Commandments, obeying His commands and hearkening to Him, that we may fulfil His injunctions, when we are active and not passive, it is the psaltery that is playing. For so also do the Angels: for they have nothing to suffer. But when we suffer anything of tribulation, of trials, of offences on this

earth (as we suffer only from the inferior part of ourselves; i.e. from the fact that we are mortal, that we owe somewhat of tribulation to our original cause, and also from the fact of our suffering much from those who are not "above"); this is "the harp." For there rises a sweet strain from that part of us which is "below:" we "suffer," and we strike the psaltery, or shall I rather say we sing and we strike the harp. ...

6. And again, in order that he may draw the sound from that sounding-board below, he addresses his soul: he says, "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 5). I am in tribulations, in weariness, in mourning, "Why dost thou disquiet me, O my soul?" Who is the speaker, to whom is he speaking? That it is the soul to which he is speaking, everybody knows: for it is obvious: the appeal is addressed to it directly: "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" The question is as to the speaker. It is not the flesh addressing the soul, surely, since the flesh cannot speak without the soul. For it is more appropriate for the soul to address the flesh, than for the flesh to address the soul. ...We perceive then that we have a certain part, in which is "the image of God;" viz. the mind and reason. It was that same mind that prayed for "God's Light" and "God's Truth." It is the same mind by which we apprehend right and wrong: it is by the same that we discern truth from falsehood. It is this same that we call "understanding;" which "understanding," indeed, is wanting to the brutes. And this "understanding" whoever neglects in himself, and holds it in less account than the other parts of his nature, and casts it off, just as if he had it not, is addressed in the Psalm, "Be ye not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding." It is our "understanding" then that is addressing our soul. The latter is withered away from tribulations, worn out in anguish, made "sorrowful" in temptations, fainting in toils. The mind, catching a glimpse of Truth above, would fain rouse her spirits, and she says, "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul?" ...

7. These expressions, brethren, are safe ones: but yet be watchful in good works. Touch "the psaltery," by obeying the Commandments; touch the harp, by patiently enduring your sufferings. You have heard from Isaiah, "Break thy bread to the hungry;" think not that fasting by itself is sufficient. Fasting chasteneth thine own self: it does not refresh others. Thy distress will profit thee, if thou affordest comfort to others. See, thou hast denied thyself; to whom wilt thou give that of which thou hast deprived thyself? Where wilt thou bestow what thou hast denied thyself? How many poor may be filled by the breakfast we have this day given up? Fast in such a way that thou mayest rejoice, that thou hast breakfasted, while another has been eating; fast on account of thy prayers, that thou mayest be heard in them. For He says in that passage, "Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Here I am," provided thou wilt with cheerful mind "break thy bread to the hungry." For generally this is done by men reluctantly and with murmurs, to rid themselves of the wearisome importunity of the beggar, not to refresh the bowels of him that is needy. But it is "a cheerful giver" that "God loves." If thou givest thy bread reluctantly, thou hast lost both the bread, and the merit of the action. Do it then from the heart: that He "who seeth in secret," may say, "whilst thou art yet speaking, Here I am." How speedily are the prayers of those received, who work righteousness! And this is man's righteousness in this life, fasting, alms, and prayer.

Wouldest thou have thy prayer fly upward to God? Make for it those two wings of alms and fasting. Such may God's "Light" and God's "Truth" find us, that He may find us without cause for fear, when He comes to free us from death, who has already come to undergo death for us. Amen.

Psalm 44

1. This Psalm is addressed "to the sons of Korah," as its title shows. Now Korah is equivalent to the word baldness; and we find in the Gospel that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in "the place of a skull." It is clear then that this Psalm is sung to the "sons of His 'Passion.'" Now we have on this point a most certain and most evident testimony from the Apostle Paul; because that at the time when the Church was suffering under the persecutions of the Gentiles, he quoted from hence a verse, to insert by way of consolation, and encouragement to patience. For that which he inserted in his Epistle, is said here: "For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." Let us then hear in this Psalm the voice of the Martyrs; and see how good is the cause which the voice of the Martyrs pleads, saying, For Thy sake, etc. ...

2. The title then is not simply "To the sons of Korah," but, "For understanding, to the sons of Korah." This is the case also with that Psalm, the first verse of which the Lord Himself uttered on the Cross: "My God, My God, look upon Me; why hast Thou forsaken Me?" For "transferring us in a figure" to what He was saying, and to His own Body (for we are also "His Body," and He is our "Head"), He uttered from the Cross not His own cry, but ours. For God never "forsook" Him: nor did He Himself ever depart from the Father; but it was in behalf of us that He spake this: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" For there follows, "Far from My health are the words of My offences:" and it shows in whose person He said this; for sin could not be found in Him. ...

3. "O God, we have heard with our ears; our fathers have told us the work that Thou didst in their days, and in the days of old" (ver. 1). Wondering wherefore, in these days, He has seemingly forsaken those whom it was His will to exercise in sufferings, they recall the past events which they have heard of from their fathers; as if they said, It is not of these things that we suffer, that our fathers told us! For in that other Psalm also, He said this, "Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and the outcast of the people." They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; have I then hoped, and hast Thou forsaken me? And have I believed upon Thee in vain? And is it in vain that my name has been written in Thy Book, and Thy name has been inscribed on me? What our fathers told us was this:

"Thy hand destroyed the nations; and Thou plantedst them: Thou didst weaken the peoples, and cast them out" (ver. 2). That is to say: "Thou didst drive out 'the peoples' from their own land, that Thou mightest bring 'them' in, and plant them; and mightest by Thy mercy stablish their kingdom." These are the things that we heard from our fathers. But perhaps it was because they were brave, were men of battle, were invincible, were well-disciplined, and warlike, that they could do these things. Far from it. This is not what our fathers told us; this is not what is contained in Scripture. But what does it say, but what follows? "For they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance" (ver. 3). Thy "right hand" is Thy Power: Thine "arm" is Thy Son Himself. And "the light of Thy countenance." What means this, but that Thou wert present with them, in miracles of such a sort that Thy presence was perceived. For when God's presence with us appears by any miracle, do we see His face with our own eyes? No. It is by the effect of the miracle He intimates to man His presence. In fact, what do all persons say, who express wonder at facts of this description? "I saw God present." "But Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance; because Thou pleasedst in them:" i.e. didst so deal with them, that Thou wert well-pleasing in them: that whoso considered how they were being dealt with, might say, that "God is with them of a truth;" and it is God that moves them.

4. "What? Was He then other than now He is?" Away with the supposition. For what follows?

"Thou art Thyself my King and my God. (ver. 4). "Thou art Thyself; for Thou art not changed. I see that the times are changed; but the Creator of times is unchanged. "Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art wont to guide me: to govern me, to save me. "Thou who commandest salvation unto Jacob. What is, "Thou who commandest"? Even though in Thine own proper Substance and Nature, in which Thou art whatsoever Thou art, Thou wast hid from them; and though Thou didst not converse with the fathers in that which Thou art in Thyself, so that they could see Thee "face to face," yet by any created being whatsoever "Thou commandest salvation unto Israel. For that sight of Thee "face to face" is reserved for those set free in the Resurrection. And the very "fathers" of the New Testament too, although they saw Thy mysteries revealed, although they preached the secret things so revealed to them, nevertheless said that they themselves saw but "in a glass, darkly," but that "seeing face to face" is reserved to a future time, when what the Apostle himself speaks of shall have come. "When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. It is against that time then that vision "face to face" is reserved for you, of which John also speaks: "Beloved, we are now the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;

for we shall see Him as He is. Although then at that time our fathers saw Thee not as Thou art, "face to face," although that vision is reserved against the resurrection, yet, even though they were Angels who presented themselves, it is Thou, "Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. Thou art not only present by Thine own Self; but by whatsoever created being Thou

didst appear, it is Thou that dost "command" by them, that which Thou doest by Thine own Self in order to the salvation of Thy servants: but that which they do whom Thou "commandest" it, is done to procure the salvation of Thy servants. Since then Thou art Thyself "my King and my God, and Thou commandest salvation unto Jacob," wherefore are we suffering these things?

5. But perhaps it is only what is past that has been described to us: but nothing of the kind is to be hoped for by us for the future. Nay indeed, it is still to be hoped for. "Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies" (ver. 5). Our fathers then have declared to us a work that Thou didst "in their days, and in the days of old," that Thy hand destroyed the Gentiles: that Thou "didst cast out the peoples; and didst plant them." Such was the past; but what is to be hereafter? "Through Thee we shall winnow away our enemies." A time will come, when all the enemies of Christians will be winnowed away like chaff, be blown like dust, and be cast off from the earth. ...Thus much of the future. "I will not trust in my bow," even as our fathers did not in "their sword. Neither shall my sword help me" (ver. 6).

6. "For Thou hast saved us from our enemies" (ver. 7). This too is spoken of the future under the figure of the past. But this is the reason that it is spoken of as if it were past, that it is as certain as if it were past. Give heed, wherefore many things are expressed by the Prophets as if they were past; whereas it is things future, not past facts that are the subject of prophecy. For the future Passion of our Lord Himself was foretold: and yet it says, "They pierced My hands and My feet. They told all My bones;" not, "They shall pierce," and "shall tell." "They looked and stared upon Me;" not "They shall look and stare upon Me." "They parted My garments among them." It does not say, "They shall part" them. All these things are expressed as if they were past, although they were yet to come: because to God things to come also are as certain as if they were past. ...It is for this reason, in consequence of their certainty, that those things which are yet future, are spoken of as if past. This it is then that we hope. For it is, "Thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us."

7. "In God will we boast all the day long" (ver. 8). Observe how he intermingles words expressive of a future time, that you may perceive that what was spoken of before as in past time was foretold of future times. "In God will we boast all day long; and in Thy name will we confess for ever." What is, "We shall boast"? What, "We shall confess"? That Thou hast "saved us from our enemies;" that Thou art to give us an everlasting kingdom: that in us are to be fulfilled the words, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be always praising Thee."

8. Since then we have the certainty that these things are to be hereafter, and since we have heard from our fathers that those we spoke of were in time past, what is our state at present? "But now Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame" (ver. 9). Thou hast "put us to shame" not before our own consciences, but in the sight of men. For there was a time when Christians were persecuted; when in every place they were outcasts, when in every place it used to be said, "He is a Christian!" as if it conveyed an insult and reproach. Where

then is He, "our God, our King," who "commands salvation unto Jacob"? Where is He who did all those works, which "our fathers have told us"? Where is He who is hereafter to do all those things which He revealed unto us by His Spirit? Is He changed? No. These things are done in order to "understanding, for the sons of Korah." For we ought to "understand" something of the reason, why He has willed we should suffer all these things in the mean time. What "all things"? "But now Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame: and goest not forth, O God, in our powers." We go forth to meet our enemies, and Thou goest not forth with us. We see them: they are very strong, and we are without strength. Where is that might of Thine? Where Thy "right hand," and Thy power? Where the sea dried up, and the Egyptian pursuers overwhelmed with the waves? Where Amalek's resistance subdued by the sign of the Cross? "And Thou, O God, goest not forth in our powers."

9. "Thou hast turned us away backward in presence of our enemies" (ver. 10), so that they are, as it were, before; we, behind; they are counted as conquerors, we as conquered. "And they which hate us spoiled for themselves." What did they "spoil" but ourselves? 10. "Thou has given us like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the nations" (ver. 11). We have been "devoured" by "the nations." Those persons are meant, who, through their sufferings, have by process of assimilation, becomes part of the "body" of the Gentile world. For the Church mourns over them, as over members of her body, that have been devoured. 11. "Thou hast sold Thy people for no price" (ver. 12). For we see whom Thou hast made over; what Thou hast received, we have not seen. "And there was no multitude in their jubilees." For when the Christians were flying before the pursuit of enemies, who were idolaters, were there then held any congregations and "jubilees" to the honour of God? Were those Hymns chanted in concert from the Churches of God, that are wont to be sung in concert in time of peace, and to be sounded in a sweet accord of the brotherhood in the ears of God?

12. "Thou madest us a reproach to our neighbours; a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us" (ver. 13). "Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen" (ver. 14). What is meant by a "similitude"? It is when men in imprecating a curse make a "similitude" of his name whom they detest. "So mayest thou die;" "So mayest thou be punished!" What a number of such reproaches were then uttered! "So mayest thou be crucified!" Even in the present day there are not wanting enemies of Christ (those very Jews themselves), against whom whensoever we defend Christ, they say unto us, "So mayest thou die as He did." For they would not have inflicted that kind of death had they not an intense horror of dying by such a death: or had they been able to comprehend what mystery was contained in it. When the ointment is applied to the eyes of the blind man, he does not see the eye-salve in the physician's hand. For the very Cross was made for the benefit even of the persecutors themselves. Hereby they were healed afterwards; and they believed in Him whom they themselves had slain. "Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen; a shaking of the head among the peoples," a "shaking of the head" by way of insult. "They spake with their lips, they shook the head." This they did to the Lord: this to all His Saints also, whom they were able to pursue, to lay hold of, to mock, to betray, to afflict, and to slay.

13. ”My shame is continually before me; and the confusion of my face has covered me” (ver. 15). ”For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth” (ver. 16): that is to say, from the voice of them that insult over me, and who make it a charge against me that I worship Thee, that I confess Thee! and who make it a charge against me that I bear that name by which all charges against me shall be blotted out. ”For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth,” that is, of him that speaketh against me. ”By reason of the enemy and the persecutor. And what is the ”understanding” conveyed here? Those things which are told us of the time past, will not be done in our case: those which are hoped for, as to be hereafter, are not as yet manifest. Those which are past, as the leading out of Thy people with great glory from Egypt; its deliverance from its persecutors; the guiding of it through the nations, the placing of it in the kingdom, whence the nations had been expelled. What are those to be hereafter? The leading of the people out of this Egypt of the world, when Christ, our ”leader” shall appear in His glory: the placing of the Saints at His right hand; of the wicked at His left; the condemnation of the wicked with the devil to eternal punishment; the receiving of a kingdom from Christ with the Saints to last for ever.

These are the things that are yet to be: the former are what are past. In the interval, what is to be our lot? Tribulations! ”Why so? That it may be seen with respect to the soul that worships God, to what extent it worships God; that it may be seen whether it worships Him ”freely” from whom it received salvation ”freely.” ...What hast thou given unto God? Thou wert wicked, and thou wert redeemed! What hast thou given unto God? What is there that thou hast not ”received” from Him ”freely”? With reason is it named ”grace,” because it is bestowed (gratis, i.e. freely. What is required of thee then is this, ”that thou too shouldest worship ”Him freely; not because He gives thee things temporal, but because He holds out to thee things eternal. ...

14. ”All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee” (ver. 17). What is meant by, ”have not forgotten Thee”? ”Neither have we behaved ourselves frowardly in Thy covenant.”

”Our heart has not turned back; and Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way” (ver. 18). See here is ”understanding,” in that ”our heart has not gone back;” that we have not ”forgotten Thee, have not behaved frowardly in Thy covenant;” placed as we are in great tribulations, and persecutions of the Gentiles. ”Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way.” Our ”goings” were in the pleasures of the world; our ”goings” were in the midst of temporal prosperities. Thou hast taken ”our goings out of Thy way;” and hast shown us how ”strait and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.” What is meant by, ”hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way”? It is as if He said, ”Ye are placed in the midst of tribulation; ye are suffering many things; ye have already lost many things that ye loved in this life: but I have not abandoned you on the way, the narrow way that I am teaching you. Ye were seeking ”broad ways.” What do I tell you? This is the way we go to everlasting life; by the way ye wish to walk, ye are going to death. How ”broad and wide is the road that leads to destruction: and” how ”many there be that find it! How strait and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and” how ”few there be” that walk therein! Who are the few? They who

patiently endure tribulations, patiently endure temptations; who in all these troubles do not ”fall away:” who do not rejoice in the word ”for a season” only; and in the time of tribulation fade away, as on the sun’s arising; but who have the ”root” of ”love,” according to what we have lately heard read in the Gospel. ...

15. ”For Thou hast brought us low in the place of infirmity” (ver. 18): therefore Thou wilt exalt us in the place of strength. ”And the shadow of death has covered us” (ver. 19). For this mortality of ours is but the ”shadow” of death. The true death is condemnation with the devil.

16. ”If we have forgotten the Name of our God. Here is the ”understanding” of the ”sons of Korah. ”And stretched out our hands to a strange God” (ver. 20). ”Shall not God search this out? For He knoweth the secrets of the heart” (ver. 21). He ”knows,” and yet He ”searches them out”? If He knows the secrets of the heart, what do the words, ”Shall not God search it out,” do there? He ”knows” it in Himself; He ”searches it out” for our sakes. For it is for this reason God sometimes ”searches a thing out; and speaks of that becoming known to Himself, which He is Himself making known to thee. He is speaking of His own work, not of His knowledge. We commonly say, ”A gladsome day,” when it is fine. Yet is it the day itself that experiences delight? No: we speak of the day as gladsome, because it fills us with delight. And we speak of a ”sullen sky. Not that there is any such feeling in the clouds, but because men are affected with sullenness at the sight of such an appearance of the skies, it is called sullen for this reason, that it makes us sullen. So also God is said to ”know” when He causes us to know. God says to Abraham, ”Now I know that thou fearest God. Did He then not know it before then? But Abraham did not know himself till then:

for it was in that very trial he came to know himself. ...And God is said to ”know”that which He had caused him to know. Did Peter know himself, when he said to the Physician, ”I will be with Thee even unto death? The Physician had felt his pulse, and knew what was going on within His patient’s soul: the patient knew it not. The crisis of trial came; and the Physician approved the correctness of His opinion: the sick man gave up his presumption. Thus God at once ”knows” it and ”searches it out. ”He knows it already. Why does He ‘search it out’? For thy sake: that thou mayest come to know thine own self, and mayest return thanks to Him that made thee. ”Shall not God search it out?”

17. ”For, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter” (ver. 22). For you may see a man being put to death; you do not know why he is being put to death. God knoweth this. The thing in itself is hid. But some one will say to me, ”See, he is detained in prison for the name of Christ, he is a confessor for the name of Christ.” Why do not heretics also confess the name of Christ, and yet they do not die for His sake?Nay more; let me say it, in the Catholic Church itself, do you think there either are, or have been wanting persons such as would suffer for the sake of glory among men? Were there no such persons, the Apostle would not say, ”Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” He knew therefore that there might be some persons, who did this not from ”charity,” but out of vainglory. It is therefore hid from us; God alone sees

this; we cannot see it. He alone can judge of this, who "knoweth the secrets of the heart." "For," for Thy sake "are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." I have already mentioned that from hence the Apostle Paul had borrowed a text for the encouragement of the Martyrs: that they might not "faint in the tribulations" undergone by them for the name of Christ.

18. "Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" (ver. 23). Who is addressed, and who is the speaker? Would not he be more correctly said to sleep and slumber, who speaks such words as these? He replies to you, I know what I am saying: I know that "He that keepeth Israel doth not sleep:" but yet the Martyrs cry, "Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" O Lord Jesus, Thou wast slain; Thou didst "sleep" in Thy Passion; to us Thou hast now "awaked" from sleep. For "we" know that Thou hast now "awaked" again. To what purpose hast Thou awaked and risen again? The Gentiles that persecute us, think Thee to be dead; do not believe Thee to have risen again. "Arise Thou" then to them also! "Why sleepest Thou," though not to us, yet to them? For if they already believed Thee to have risen again, could they persecute us who believe in Thee? But why do they persecute? "Destroy, slay so and so, whoever have believed in Thee, such an one, who died an ill death!" As yet to them "Thou sleepest;" arise to them, that they may perceive that Thou hast "awaked" again; and may be at rest. Lastly, it has come to pass, while the Martyrs die, and say these things; while they sleep, and "awaken" Christ, truly dead in their sleepings, Christ has, in a certain sense, risen again in the Gentiles; i.e. it becomes believed, that He has risen again; so by degrees they themselves, becoming converted to Christ by believing, collected a numerous body: such as the persecutors dreaded; and the persecutions have come to an end. Why? Because Christ, who before was asleep to them, as not believing, bath risen in the Gentiles. "Arise, and cast us not off for ever!"

19. "Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face:" as if Thou wert not present; as if thou hadst forgotten us? "And forgettest our misery and trouble?" (ver. 24). 20. "For our soul is bowed down to the dust" (ver. 25). Where is it bowed down? "To the dust:" i.e. dust persecutes us. They persecute us, of whom Thou hast said, "The ungodly are not so; but are like the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth." "Our belly hath cleaved to the earth." He seems to me to have expressed the punishment of the extreme of humiliation, in which, when any one prostrates himself, "his belly cleaveth to the earth." For whosoever is humbled so as to be on his knees, has yet a lower degree of humiliation to which he can come: but he who is so humbled, that his "belly cleaveth to the ground," there is no farther humiliation for him. Should one wish to do still farther, it will, after that point, be not bowing him down, but crushing him. Perhaps then he may have meant this We are "bowed down very low" in this dust; there is no farther point to which humiliation can go. Humiliation has now reached its highest point: let mercy then come also. ...

21. "Arise, O Lord, help us" (ver. 26). And indeed, dearly beloved, He has arisen and helped us. For when he awaked (i.e. when He arose again, and became known to the Gentiles) on the cessation of persecutions, even those who had cleaved to the earth were raised up

from the earth, and on performing penance, have been restored to Christ's body, feeble and imperfect though they were: so that in them was fulfilled the text, "Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect; and in Thy book shall they all be written." "Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy Name's sake;" that is to say, freely; for Thy Name's sake, not for the sake of my merits: because Thou hast vouchsafed to do it, not because I am worthy that Thou shouldest do it unto me. For this very thing, that "we have not forgotten Thee;" that "our heart hath not gone back;" that we "have not stretched out our hands to any strange god;" how should we have been able to achieve, except with Thy help? How should we have strength for it, except through Thy appealing to us within, exhorting us, and not forsaking us? Whether then we suffer in tribulations, or rejoice in prosperities, redeem Thou us, not for our merits, but for Thy Name's sake.

Psalm 45

1. This Psalm, even as we ourselves have been singing with gladness together with you, we would beg you in like manner to consider with attention together with us. For it is sung of the sacred Marriage-feast; of the Bridegroom and the Bride; of the King and His people; of the Saviour and those who are to be saved. ...His sons are we, in that we are the ”children of the Bridegroom;” and it is to us that this Psalm is addressed, whose title has the words, ”For the sons of Korah, for the things that shall be changed.”

2. Why need I explain what is meant by, ”for the things that shall be changed”? Every one who is himself ”changed,” recognises the meaning of this. Let him who hears this, ”for the things that shall be changed,” consider what was before, and what is now. And first let him see the world itself to be changed, lately worshipping idols, now worshipping God; lately serving things that they themselves made, now serving Him by whom they themselves were made. Observe at what time the words, ”for the things that shall be changed,” were said. Already by this time the Pagans that are leftare in dread of the ”changed” state of things: and those who will not suffer themselves to be ”changed” see the churches full; the temples deserted; see crowds here, and there solitude They marvel at the things so changed; let them read that they were foretold; let them lend their ears to Him who promised it; let them believe Him who fulfils that promise. But each one of us, brethren, also undergoes a change from ”the old” to ”the new man:” from an infidel to a believer: from a thief to a giver of alms: from an adulterer to a man of chastity; from an evildoer to a doer of good. To us then be sung the words, ”for the things that shall be changed;” and so let the description of Him by whom they were changed, begin.

3. For it goes on, ”For the things that shall be changed, to the sons of Korah for understanding; a song for the beloved.” For that ”beloved” One was seen by His persecutors, but yet not for ”understanding.” For ”had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory.” In order to this ”understanding,” other eyes were required by Him when He said, ”He that seeth Me, seeth My Father also.” Let the Psalm then now sound of Him, let us rejoice in the marriage-feast, and we shall be with those of whom the marriage is made, who are invited to the marriage; and the very persons invited are the Bride herself. For the Church is ”the Bride,” Christ the Bridegroom. There are commonly spoken by balladists certain verses to Bridegrooms and Brides, called Epithalamia. Whatever is sung there, is sung in

honour of the Bride and Bridegroom. Is there then no Bridechamber in that marriage-feast to which we are invited? Whence then does another Psalm say, "He hath set up His tabernacle in the Sun; and He is even as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber." The nuptial union is that of "the Word," and the flesh. The Bridechamber of this union, the Virgin's womb. For the flesh itself was united to the Word: whence also it is said, "Henceforth they are not twain, but one flesh." The Church was assumed unto Him out of the human race: so that the Flesh itself, being united to the Word, might be the Head of the Church: and the rest who believe, members of that Head. ...

4. "Mine heart hath uttered a good word" (ver. 1). Who is the speaker? The Father, or the Prophet? For some understand it to be the Person of the Father, which says, "Mine heart hath uttered a good word," intimating to us a certain unspeakable generation. Lest you should haply think something to have been taken unto Him, out of which God should beget the Son (just as man takes something to himself out of which he begets children, that is to say, an union of marriage, without which man cannot beget offspring), lest then you should think that God stood in need of any nuptial union, to beget "the Son," be says, "Mine heart hath uttered a good word. This very day thine heart, O man, begets a counsel, and requires no wife: by the counsel, so born of thine heart, thou buildest something or other, and before that building subsists, the design subsists; and that which thou art about to produce, exists already in that by which thou art going to produce it; and thou praisest the fabric that as yet is not existing, not yet in the visible form of a building, but on the projecting of a design: nor does any one else praise thy design, unless either thou showest it to him, or he sees what thou hast done. If then by the Word "all things were made," and the Word is of God, consider the fabric reared by the Word, and learn from that building to admire His counsels!

What manner of Word is that by which heaven and earth were made; and all the splendour of the heavens; all the fertility of the earth; the expanse of the sea; the wide diffusion of air; the brightness of the constellations; the light of sun and moon? These are visible things: rise above these also; think of the Angels, "Principalities, Thrones, Dominions, and Powers. All were made by Him. How then were these good things made? Because there was "uttered forth 'a good Word,'" by which they were to be made. ...

5. It proceeds: "I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Is the Father still speaking? If the Father is still speaking, let us enquire how this also can be understood by us, consistently with the true Catholic Faith, "I speak of the things that I have made unto the King. For if it is the Father speaking of His own works to His Son, our "King," what works is the Father to speak of to the Son, seeing that all the Father's works were made by the Son's agency? Or, in the words, "I speak of My works unto the King," does the word, "I speak," itself signify the generation of the Son? I fear whether this can ever be made intelligible to those slow of comprehension: I will nevertheless say it. Let those who can follow me, do so: lest if it were left unsaid, even those who can follow should not be able. We have read where it is said in another Psalm, "God hath spoken once. So often has He spoken by the Prophets, so often by the Apostles, and in these days by His Saints, and does

He say, ”God has spoken once”? How can He have spoken but ”once,” except with reference to His ”Word”?

But as the ”Mine heart hath uttered a good Word,” was understood by us in the other clause of the generation of the Son, it seems that a kind of repetition is made in the following sentence, so that the ”Mine heart hath uttered a good Word,” which had been already said, is repeated in what He is now saying, ”I speak. For what does ”I speak” mean? ”I utter a Word. And whence but from His heart, from His very inmost, does God utter the Word? You yourself do not speak anything but what you bring forth from your ”heart,” this word of yours which sounds once and passes away, is brought forth from no other place: and do you wonder that God ”speaks” in this manner? But God’s ”speaking” is eternal. You are speaking something at the present moment, because you were silent before: or, look you, you have not yet brought forth your word; but when you have begun to bring it forth, you as it were ”break silence; and bring into being a word, that did not exist before. It was not so God begat the ”Word. God’s ”speaking” is without beginning, and without end: and yet the ”Word” He utters is but ”One. Let Him utter another, if what He has spoken shall have passed away. But since He by whom it is uttered abideth, and That which is uttered abideth;

and is uttered but once, and has no end, that very ”once” too is said without beginning, and there is no second speaking, because that which is said once, does not pass away. The words ”Mine heart hath uttered a good Word,” then, are the same thing with, ”I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Why then, ”I speak of the things which I have made”? Because in the Word Itself are all the works of God. For whatever God designed to make in the creation already existed in ”the Word; and would not exist in the reality, had it not existed in the Word, just as with you the thing would not exist in the building, had it not existed in your design: even as it is said in the Gospel: ”That which was made in Him was life. That which was made then was in existence; but it had its existence in the Word: and all the works of God existed there, and yet were not as yet ”works. ”The Word” however already was, as this ”Word was God, and was with God: and was the Son of God, and One God with the Father. ”I speak of the things I have made unto the King. Let him hear Him ”speaking,” who apprehends ”the Word: and let him see together with the Father the Everlasting Word; in whom exist even those things that are yet to come: in whom even those things that are past have not passed away.

These ”works” of God are in ”the Word,” as in the Word, as in the Only-Begotten, as in the ”Word of God.”

6. What follows then? ”My tongue is the pen of a writer writing rapidly. What likeness, my brethren, what likeness, I ask, has the ”tongue” of God with a transcriber’s pen? What resemblance has ”the rock” to Christ? What likeness does the ”lamb” bear to our Saviour, or what ”the lion” to the strength of the Only-Begotten? Yet such comparisons have been made; and were they not made, we should not be formed to a certain extent by these visible things to the knowledge of the ”Invisible One: So then with this mean simile of the pen; let

us not compare it to His excellent greatness, so let us not reject it with contempt. For I ask, why He compares His "tongue" to "the pen of a writer writing rapidly"? But how swiftly soever the transcriber writes, still it is not comparable to that swiftness of which another Psalm says, "His word runneth very swiftly. But it appears to me (if human understanding may presume so far) that this too may be understood as spoken in the Person of the Father: "My tongue is the pen of a writer. Inasmuch as what is spoken by the "tongue," sounds once and passes away, what is written, remains; seeing then that God uttereth "a Word," and the Word which is uttered does not sound once and pass away, but is uttered and yet continues, God chose rather to compare this to words written than to sounds. But what He added, saying, "of one writing swiftly," stimulates the mind unto "understanding.

Let it however not slothfully rest here, thinking of transcribers, or thinking of some kind of quick shorthand writers: if it be this it sees in the passage, it will be resting there. Let it think swiftly what is the meaning of that word "swiftly. The "swiftly" of God is such that nothing exceeds in swiftness. For in writings letter is written after letter; syllable after syllable; word after word: nor do we pass to the second except when the first is written out. But there nothing can exceed the swiftness, where there are not several words; and yet there is not anything omitted: since in the One are contained all things.

7. Lo! now then that Word, so uttered, Eternal, the Co-eternal Offspring of the Eternal, will come as "the Bridegroom;" "Fairer than the children of men" (ver. 2). "Than the children of men." I ask, why not than the Angels also? Why did he say, "than the children of men," except because He was Man? Lest you should think "the Man Christ" to be any ordinary man, he says, "Fairer than the children of men." Even though Himself "Man," He is "fairer than the children of men;" though among the children of men, "fairer than the children of men:" though of the children of men, "fairer than the children of men." "Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips." "The Law was given by Moses. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ." ... 8. There have not been wanting those who preferred understanding all the preceding passage also of the Prophet's own person; and would have even this verse, "Mine heart hath uttered forth a good word," understood as spoken by the Prophet, supposed to be uttering a hymn. For whoever utters a hymn to God, his heart is, as it were, "uttering forth a good word," just ashis heart who blasphemes God, is uttering forth an evil word. So that even by what follows, "I speak of the things which I have made unto theKing," he meant to express that man's chief workwas but to praise God. To Him it belongs to satisfy thee, by His beauty; to thee to praise Himwith thanksgiving. ...

9. "My tongue is the pen of a writer writing quickly." There have been persons who have understood the Prophet to have been describing in this manner what he was writing; and therefore to have compared his tongue to "the pen of a writer writing quickly:" but that he chose to express himself in the words "writing quickly," to signify, that he was writing of things which were to come "quickly;" that "writing quickly" should be understood to be equivalent to "writing things that are quick;" i.e. writing things thatwould not long tarry. For God did not tarry long to manifest Christ. How quickly is that perceived to have rolled

by, which is acknowledged to be already past! Call to mind the generations before thee; thou wilt find that the making of Adam is but a thing of yesterday. So do we read that all things have gone on from the very beginning: they were therefore done "quickly." The day of Judgment also will be here "quickly." Do thou anticipate its "quick" coming. It is to come "quickly;" do thou become converted yet more "quickly." The Judge's face will appear: but observe thou what the Prophet says, "Let uscome before" (let us "prevent") "His face with confession."

10. "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty" (ver. 3). What is meant by "Thy sword, but "Thy word"? It was by that sword He scattered His enemies; by that sword he divided the son from the father, "the daughter from the mother, the daughter-in-law from the mother-in-law." We read these words in the Gospel, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." And, "In one house shall five be divided against each other; three against two, and two against three;" i.e. "the father against the son, the daughter against the mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law." By what "sword," but that which Christ brought, was this division wrought? And indeed, my brethren, we see this exemplified daily. Some young man is minded to give himself up to God's service; his father is opposed to it; they are "divided against each other:" the one promises an earthly inheritance, the other loves an heavenly; the one promises one thing, the other prefers another. The father should not think himself wronged: God alone is preferred to him. And yet he is at strife with the son, who would fain give himself to God's service. But the spiritual sword is mightier to separate them, than the ties of carnal nature to bind them together. This happens also in the case of a mother against her daughter; still more also in that of a daughter-in-law against a mother-in-law. For sometimes in one house mother-in-law and daughter-in law are found orthodox and heretical respectively. And where that sword is forcibly felt, we do not dread the repetition of Baptism. Could daughter be divided against mother; and could not daughter-in-law be divided against mother-in-law? ...

11. What does he mean to express by the "thigh"? The flesh. Whence those words, "A prince shall not depart from Judah; and a lawgiver from his thighs"? Did not Abraham himself (to whom was promised the seed in which "all the nations of the earth were to be blessed"), when he sent his servant to seek and to bring home a wife for his son, being by faith fully persuaded, that in that, so to speak, contemptible seed was contained the great Name; that is, that the Son of God was to come of the seed of Abraham, out of all the children of men; did not he, I say, cause his servant to swear unto him in this manner, saying, "Put thy hand under my thigh," and so swear; as if he had said, "Put thy hand on the altar, or on the Gospel, or on the Prophet, or on any holy thing." "Put" (he says) "thy hand under my thigh;" having full confidence, not ashamed of it as unseemly, but understanding therein a truth. "With Thy beauty and Thy glory." Take to Thee that righteousness, in which Thou art at all times beautiful and glorious. "And speed on, and proceed prosperously, and reign" (ver. 4). Do we not see it so? Is it not already come to pass? He has "sped on; has proceeded prosperously, and He reigns ;" all nations are subdued unto Him. What a thing was it to see that "in the Spirit," of which same thing it is now in our power to experience in the reality!

At the time when these words were said, Christ did not yet "reign" thus; had not yet sped on, nor "proceeded prosperously." They were then being preached, they have now been fulfilled: in many things we have God's promise fulfilled already; in some few we have to claim its fulfilment yet.

12. "Because of truth, meekness, and righteousness." Truth was restored unto us, when "the Truth sprung out of the earth: and Righteousness looked out from heaven." Christ was presented to the expectation of mankind, that in Abraham's Seed "all nations should be blessed." The Gospel has been preached. It is "the Truth." What is meant by "meekness"? The Martyrs have suffered; and the kingdom of God has made much progress from thence, and advanced throughout all nations; because the Martyrs suffered, and neither "fell away," nor yet offered resistance; confessing everything, concealing nothing; prepared for everything, shrinking from nothing. Marvellous "meekness"! This did the body of Christ, by its Head it learned. He was first "led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, even so opened not His mouth;" meek to that degree, that while hanging on the Cross, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Why because of "righteousness"? He will come also to judge, and to "render to every man according to his works." He spake "the truth;" He patiently endured unrighteousness: He is to bring "righteousness" hereafter.

13. "And Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously." We shall be guided on by His right hand: He by His own. For He is God, we mortal men. He was led on by His own right hand; i.e. by His own power. For the power which the Father hath, He hath also; the Father's immortality He hath also; He hath the Father's Divinity, the Fathers Eternity, the Father's Power. Marvellously will His right hand lead Him on, performing the works of God; undergoing human sufferings, overthrowing the evil wills of men by His own goodness. Even now, He is being led on even to places where as yet He is not; and it is His own right hand that is leading Him on. For that is leading Him thither which He has Himself bestowed upon His Saints. "Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously."

14. "Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful" (ver. 5); words that pierce the heart, that kindle love. Whence in the Song of Songs it is said, "I am wounded with love. For she speaks of being "wounded with love; that is, of being in love, of being inflamed with passion, of sighing for the Bridegroom, from whom she received the arrow of the Word. "Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful; both piercing, and effective; "sharp, most powerful. "The peoples shall fall under Thee. Who have "fallen"? They who were "wounded" have also "fallen. We see the nations subdued unto Christ; we do not see them "fall. He explains where they "fall," viz. "in the heart. It was there they lifted themselves up against Christ, there they "fall" down before Christ. Saul was a blasphemer of Christ: he was then lifted up, he prays to Christ, "he is fallen," he is prostrate before Him: the enemy of Christ is slain, that the disciple of Christ may live! By an arrow launched from heaven, Saul (not as yet Paul, but still Saul), still lifted up, still not yet prostrate, is wounded in "the heart: he received the arrow, he fell "in heart. For though he fell prostrate on his face, it was not there that he

fell down in heart: but it was there where he said aloud, ”Lord, what dost Thou bid me do? But just now thou weft going to bind the Christians, and to bring them to punishment:

and now thou sayest unto Christ, ”What dost Thou bid me do? O arrow sharp and most mighty, by whose stroke ”Saul” fell, so as to become ”Paul. As it was with him, so was it also with ”the peoples; consider the nations, observe their subjection unto Christ. ”The peoples” (then) ”shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies; that is, in the heart of Thine enemies. For it is Him that he calls King, Him that he recognises as King. ”The peoples shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies. They were ”enemies” before; they have been stricken by thine arrows: they have fallen before Thee. Out of enemies they have been made friends: the enemies are dead, the friends survive. This is the meaning of, ”for those which shall be changed. We are seeking to ”understand” each single word, and each separate verse; yet so far only are we to seek for their ”understanding,” as to leave no one to doubt that they are spoken of Christ.

15. ”Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (ver. 6). Because God has ”’blessed Thee’ for ever,” on account of the ”grace poured over Thy lips. Now the throne of the Jewish Kingdom was a temporal one; belonging to those who were under the Law, not to those who were under ”grace: He came to ”redeem those who were under the Law,” and to place them under ”Grace. His ”Throne is for ever and ever. Why? for that first throne of the Kingdom was but a temporal one: whence then have we a ”throne for ever and ever”? Because it is God’s throne. O divine Attribute of Eternity! for God could not have a temporal throne. ”Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever-a sceptre of direction is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. ”The sceptre of direction” is that which directs mankind: they were before crooked, distorted; they sought to reign for themselves: they loved themselves, loved their own evil deeds: they submitted not their own will to God; but would fain have bent God’s will to conformity with their own lusts. For the sinner and the unrighteous man is generally angry with God, because it rains not! and yet would have God not be angry with himself, because he is profligate. And it is pretty much for this very reason that men daily sit, to dispute against God: ”This is what He ought to have done: this He has not well done. Thou forsooth seest what thou doest; He knows not what He does!

It is thou that art crooked! His ways are right. When wilt thou make the crooked coincide with the straight? It cannot be made to coincide with it. Just as if you were to place a crooked stick on a level pavement; it does not join on to it; it does not cohere; it does not fit into the pavement. The pavement is even in every part: but that is crooked; it does not fit into that which is level. The will of God then is ”equal,” thine own is ”crooked: it is because thou canst not be conformed unto it, that it seems ”crooked” unto thee: rule thou thyself by it; seek not to bend it to thine own will: for thou canst not accomplish it; that is at all times ”straight”! Wouldest thou abide in Him? ”Correct thou thyself; so will the sceptre of Him who rules thee, be unto thee ”a rule of direction. Thence is He also called King,s from ”ruling. For that is no ”ruler” that does not correct. Hereunto is our King a King of ”right

ones. Just as He is a Priest (Sacerdos) by sanctifying us, so is He our King, our Ruler, by "ruling" us. ...

16. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity" (ver. 7). See there "the rod of direction" described. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. Draw near to that "rod; let Christ be thy King: let Him "rule" thee with that rod, not crush thee with it. For that rod is "a rod of iron; an inflexible rod. "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Some He rules; others He "breaks in pieces: He "rules" them that are spiritual: He "breaks in pieces" them that are carnal. ...Would He so loudly declare that He was about to smite thee, if He wished to smite thee? He is then holding back His hand from the punishment of thine offences; but do not thou hold back. Turn thou thyself to the punishment of thine offences: for unpunished offences cannot be: punishment therefore must be executed either by thyself, or by Him: do thou then plead guilty, that He may reprieve thee. Consider an instance in that penitential Psalm: "Hide Thy face from my sins. Did he mean "from me"? No: for in another passage he says plainly, "Hide not Thy face from me. "Turn" then "Thy face from my sins. I would have Thee not see my sins. For God's "seeing" is animadverting upon. Hence too a Judge is said to "animadvert" on that which he punishes; i.e. to turn his mind on it, to bend it thereon, even to the punishment of it, inasmuch as he is the Judge.

So too is God a Judge. "Turn Thou Thy face from my sins. But thou thyself, if thou wouldest have God turn "His face" from them, turn not thine own face from them. Observe how he proposes this to God in that very Psalm: "I acknowledge," he says, "my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. He would fain have that which he wishes to be ever before his own eyes, not be before God's eyes. Let no one flatter himself with fond hopes of God's mercy. His sceptre is "a sceptre of righteousness. Do we say that God is not merciful? What can exceed His mercy, who shows such forbearance to sinners; who takes no account of the past in all that turn unto Him? So love thou Him for His mercy, as still to wish that He should be truthful. For mercy cannot strip Him of His attribute of justice: nor justice of that of mercy. Meanwhile during the time that He postpones thy punishment, do not thou postpone it.

17. "Therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee. It was for this reason that He anointed thee, that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate iniquity. And observe in what way he expresses himself. "Therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee: i.e. "God hath anointed Thee, O God. "God" is "anointed" by God. For in the Latin it is thought to be the same case of the noun repeated: in the Greek however there is a most evident distinction; one being the name of the Person addressed; and one His who makes the address, saying, "God hath anointed Thee. "O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee," just as if He were saying, "Therefore hath Thy God, O God, anointed Thee. Take it in that sense, understand it in that sense; that such is the sense is most evident in the Greek. Who then is the God that is "anointed" by God? Let the Jews tell us; these Scriptures are common to us and them. It was God, who was anointed by God: you hear of an "Anointed" one; understand it to mean "Christ. For the name of "Christ" comes from "chrism; this name by which He is called "Christ" expresses

”unction: nor were kings and prophets anointed in any kingdom, in any other place, save in that kingdom where Christ was prophesied of, where He was anointed, and from whence the Name of Christ was to come. It is found nowhere else at all: in no one nation or kingdom. God, then, was anointed by God;

with what oil was He anointed, but a spiritual one? For the visible oil is in the sign, the invisible oil is in the mystery; the spiritual oil is within. ”God” then was ”anointed” for us, and sent unto us; and God Himself was man, in order that He might be ”anointed: but He was man in such a way as to be God still. He was God in such a way as not to disdain to be man. ”Very man and very God; in nothing deceitful, in nothing false, as being everywhere true, everywhere ”the Truth” itself. God then is man; and it was for this cause that ”God” was ”anointed,” because God was Man, and became ”Christ.”

18. This was figured in Jacob’s placing a stone at his head, and so sleeping. The patriarch Jacob had placed a stone at his head: sleeping with that stone at his head, he saw heaven opened, and a ladder from heaven to earth, and Angels ascending and descending; after this vision he awaked, anointed the stone, and departed. In that ”stone” he understood Christ; for that reason he anointed it. Take notice what it is whereby Christ is preached. What is the meaning of that anointing of a stone, especially in the case of the Patriarchs who worshipped but One God? It was however done as a figurative act: and he departed. For he did not anoint the stone, and come to worship there constantly, and to perform sacrifice there. It was the expression of a mystery; not the commencement of sacrilege. And notice the meaning of ”the stone. ”The Stone which the builders refused, this is become the head of the corner. Notice here a great mystery. The ”Stone” is Christ. Peter calls Him ”a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God. And the stone is set at ”the head,” because ”Christ is the Head of the man. And ”the stone” was anointed, because ”Christ” was so called from His being anointed. And in the revelation of Christ, the ladder from earth to heaven is seen, or from heaven to earth, and the Angels ascending and descending.

What this means, we shall see more clearly, when we have quoted the testimony from the Lord Himself in the Gospel. You know that Jacob is the same as Israel. For when he wrestled with the Angel, and ”prevailed,” and had been blest by Him over whom he prevailed, his named was changed, so that he was called ”Israel; just as the people of Israel ”prevailed” against Christ, so as to crucify Him, and nevertheless was (in those who believed in Christ) blest by Him over whom it prevailed. But many believed not; hence the halting of Jacob. Here we have at once, blessing and halting. Blessing on those who became believers; for we know that afterward many of that people did believe: Halting on the other hand in those who believed not. And because the greater part believed not, and but few believed, therefore that a halting might be produced, He touched ”the breadth of his thigh. What is meant by the breadth of the thigh? The great multitude of his descendants. ...

19. ”God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee.” We have been speaking of God, who was ”anointed;” i.e. of Christ. The name of Christ could not be more clearly expressed than by His being called ”God the Anointed.” In the same way in which He was ”beautiful before the children

of men," so is He here "anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows." Who then are His "fellows"? The children of men; for that He Himself (as the Son of Man) became partaker of their mortality in order to make them partakers of His Immortality.

20. "Out of Thy garments is the smell of myrrh, amber, and cassia" (ver. 8). Out of Thy garments is perceived the smell of fragrant odours. By His garments are meant His Saints, His elect, His whole Church, which he shows forth, as His garment, so to speak; His robe "without spot and wrinkle," which on account of its spots He has "washed" in His blood; on account of its "wrinkles" extended on His Cross. Hence the sweet savour which is signified by certain perfumes there mentioned. Hear Paul, that "least of the Apostles" (that "hem of that garment," which the woman with the issue of blood touched, and was healed), hear him saying: "We are a sweet savour of Christ, in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. He did not say, "We are a sweet savour in them that are saved, and a foul savour in them that are lost: but, as far as relates to ourselves, "we are a sweet savour both in them that are saved, and in them that perish." ...They who loved him were saved by the odour of "sweet savour; they who envied him, perished by means of that "sweet savour. To them that perished then he was not a foul "savour," but a "sweet savour. For it was for this very reason they the more envied him, the more excellent that grace was which reigned in him: for no man envies him who is unhappy.

He then was glorious in the preaching of God's Word, and in regulating his life according to the rule of that "rod of direction; and he was loved by those who loved Christ in him, who followed after and pursued the odour of sweet savour; who loved the friend of the bridegroom: that is to say, by the Bride Herself, who says in the Song of Songs, "We will run after the sweet savour of thy perfumes. But the others, the more they beheld him invested with the glory of the preaching of the Gospel, and of an irreproachable life, were so much the more tortured with envy, and found that sweet savour prove death to them.

21. "Out of thy ivory palaces, whereby kings' daughters have made Thee glad." Choose whichever you please, "ivory" palaces, or "magnificent," or "royal" palaces, it is out of these that the kings' daughters have made Christ glad. Would you understand the spiritual sense of "ivory palaces"? Understand by them the magnificent houses, and tabernacles of God, the hearts of the Saints; and by these self-same "kings" those who rule their flesh; who bring into subjection to themselves the rebellious commonalty of human affections, who chastise the body, and reduce it to bondage: for it is from these that the daughters of kings have made Him glad. For all the souls that have been born through their preaching and evangelizing are "daughters of kings:" and the Churches, as the daughters of Apostles, are daughters of kings. For He is "King of kings;" they themselves kings, of whom it was said, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." They preached the "Word of Truth;" and begat Churches not for themselves, but for Him. ...Therefore as "raising up seeds to their brother," to as many as they begat, they gave the name not of "Paulians" or "Petrians," but of "Christians." Observe whether that sense is not wakefully kept in these verses. For when he said, "out of the ivory palaces, he spake of mansions royal, ample,

honourable, peaceful, like the heart of the Saints; he added, "Whereby the kings' daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour." They are indeed daughters of kings. daughters of thine Apostles, but still "in Thine honour:" for they raised up seed to their brother. Hence Paul, when he saw those whom he had raised up unto his Brother, running after his own name, exclaimed, "Was Paul crucified for you?" ...No; for he says, "Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

"The daughters of kings have made Thee glad in Thine honour." Keep, hold fast this "in Thine honour." This is meant by having "a wedding garment;" seeking His honour, His glory. Understand moreover by "kings' daughters" the cities, which were founded by kings, and have received the faith: and out of the ivory palaces (palaces rich, the proud, the lifted up). "Kings' daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour;" in that they sought not the honour of their founders, but have sought Thine honour. Show me at Rome a temple of Romulus held in so great honour as I can show you the Monument of Peter. In Peter, who is honoured but He who died for us? For we are followers of Christ, not followers of Peter. And even if we were born from the brother of Him that is dead, yet are we named after the name of Him who is dead. We were begotten by the one, but begotten to the other. Behold, Rome, Carthage, and several other cities are the daughters of kings, and yet have they "made glad the King in His honour:" and all these make up one single Queen.

22. What a nuptial song! Behold in the midst of songs full of rejoicing, comes forth the Bride herself. For the Bridegroom was coming. It was He who was being described: it was on Him all our attention was fixed. "Upon Thy right hand did stand the Queen" (ver. 9). She which stands on the left is no Queen. For there will be one standing on "the left" also, to whom it will be said, "Go into everlasting fire." But she shall stand on the right hand, to whom it will be said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." On Thy right hand did stand the Queen, "in a vesture of gold, clothed about with divers colours." What is the vesture of this Queen? It is one both precious, and also of divers colours: it is the mysteries of doctrine in all the various tongues: one African, one Syrian, one Greek, one Hebrew, one this, and one that; it is these languages that produce the divers colours of this vesture. But just as all the divers colours of the vesture blend together in the one vesture, so do all the languages in one and the same faith. In that vesture, let there be diversity, let there be no rent. See we have "understood" the divers colours of the diversity of tongues; and the vesture to refer to unity: but in that diversity itself, what is meant by the "gold"? Wisdom itself. Let there be any diversity of tongues you please, but there is but one "gold" that is preached of: not a different gold, but a different form of that gold. For it is the same Wisdom, the same doctrine and discipline that every language preaches. In the languages there is diversity; gold in the thoughts.

23. The Prophet addresses this Queen (for he delights in singing to her), and moreover each one of us, provided, however, we know where we are, and endeavour to belong to that body, and do belong to it in faith and hope, being united in the membership of Christ. For it is us whom he addresses, saying, "Hearken, O daughter, and behold" (ver. 10), as being one

of the "Fathers" (for they are "daughters of kings"), although it be a Prophet, or although it be an Apostle that is addressing her; addressing her, as a daughter, for we are accustomed to speak in this way, "Our fathers the Prophets, our fathers the Apostles;" if we address them as "fathers," they may address us as children: and it is one father's voice addressing one daughter. "Hearken, O daughter, and see." "Hear" first; afterward "see." For they came to us with the Gospel; and that has been preached to us, which as yet we do not see, and which on hearing of it we believed, which by believing it, we shall come to see: even as the Bridegroom Himself speaks in the Prophet, "A people whom I have not known served me. In the hearing of me with the ear it obeyed me." What is meant by on "hearing of me with the ear"? That they did not "see." The Jews saw Him, and crucified Him; the Gentiles saw Him not, and believed. Let the Queen who comes from the Gentiles come in "the vesture of gold, clothed with divers colours;" let her come from among the Gentiles clad in all languages, in the unity of Wisdom: let it be said unto her, "Hearken, O daughter, and see." If thou wilt not hear, thou shalt not "see." ...

"And incline thine ear." It is not enough to "hearken;" hearken with humility: bow down thine ear. "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." There was a certain "people," and a certain house of thy father, in which thou wast born, the people of Babylon, having the devil for thy king. Whencesoever the Gentiles came, they came from their father the devil; but they have renounced their sonship to the devil. "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house." He, in making thee a sinner, begat thee loathsome: the Other, in that "He justifies the ungodly," begetteth thee again in beauty. 24. "For the King hath greatly desired thy beauty" (ver. 11). What "beauty" is that, save that which is His own work? "Greatly desired the beauty"-Of whom? Of her the sinner, the unrighteous, the ungodly, such as she was with her "father," the devil, and among her own "people"? No, but hers of whom it is said, "Who is this that cometh up made white?" She was not white then at the first, but was "made" white afterwards. For "though your sins shall be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow." "The king has greatly desired thy beauty." What King is this? "For He is the Lord thy God." Now consider whether thou oughtest not to forego that thy father, and thy own people, and to come to this King, who is thy God? Thy God is "thy King," thy "King" is also thy Bridegroom. Thou weddest to thy King, who is thy God: being endowed by Him, being adorned by Him; redeemed by Him, and healed by Him. Whatever thou hast, wherewith to be pleasing to Him, thou hast from Him.

25. "And the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts" (ver. 12). It is that selfsame "King, who is thy God," that the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. The daughters of Tyre are the daughters of the Gentiles; the part standing for the whole. Tyre, a city bordering on this country, where the prophecy was delivered, typified the nations that were to believe in Christ. Thence came that Canaanitish woman, who was at first called "a dog; for that ye may know that she was from thence, the Gospel speaks thus. "He departed into the parts of Tyre and Sidon, and behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts," with all the rest that is related there. She who at first, at the house of her "father," and among her "own people," was but "a dog," who by coming to, and crying after that "King,"

was made beautiful by believing in Him, what did she obtain to hear? "O woman, great is thy faith. "The King has greatly desired thy beauty. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. With what gifts? Even so would this King be approached, and would have His treasuries filled: and it is He Himself who has given us that wherewith they may be filled, and may be filled by you. Let them come (He says) and "worship Him with gifts. What is meant by "with gifts"? ..."Give alms, and all things are clean unto you.

Come with gifts to Him that saith, "I will have mercy rather than sacrifice. To that Temple that existed aforetime as a shadow of that which was to come, they used to come with bulls, and rams, and goats, with every different kind of animal for sacrifice: that with that blood one thing should be done, and another be typified by it. Now that very blood, which all these things used to figure, hath come: the King Himself hath come, and He Himself would have your "gifts. What gifts? Alms. For He Himself will judge hereafter, and will Himself hereafter account "gifts" to certain persons "Come" (He says), "ye blessed of My Father. Why? "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat," etc. These are the gifts with which the daughters of Tyre worship the King; for when they said, "When saw we Thee? He who is at once above and below (whence those "ascending" and "descending" are spoken of), said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me."

26. ..."The rich among the people shall entreat Thy face." Both they who shall entreat that face, and He whose face they will entreat, are all collectively but one Bride, but one Queen, mother and children belonging all together unto Christ, belonging unto their Head. ... 27. "All the glory of her, the King's daughter, is from within" (ver. 13). Not only is her robe, outwardly, "of gold, and of divers colours;" but He who loved her beauty, knew her to be also beautiful within. What are those inward charms? Those of conscience. It is there Christ sees; it is there Christ loves her: it is there He addresses her, there punishes, there crowns. Let then thine alms be done in secret; for "all the glory of her, the King's daughter, is from within." "With fringes of gold, clothed with divers colours" (ver. 14). Her beauty is from within; yet in the "fringes of gold" is the diversity of languages: the beauty of doctrine. What do these avail, if them be not that beauty "from within"? "The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her." It has been fulfilled indeed. The Church has believed; the Church has been formed throughout all nations. And to what a degree do virgins now seek to find favour in the eyes of that King! Whence are they moved to do so? Even because the Church preceded them. "The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her. Her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee." For they that are brought unto Him are not strangers, but her "near kinswomen," that belong to her. And because he had said, "unto the King," he says, turning the discourse to Him, "her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee."

28. "With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought and shall be led into the Temple of the King" (ver. 15). The "Temple of the King" is the Church itself: it is the Church itself that enters into "the Temple of the King." Whereof is that Temple constructed? Of the men who enter the Temple? Who but God's "faithful" ones are its "living stones"? "They shall be led into the Temple of the King." For there are virgins without the Temple of the King,

the nuns among the heretics: they are virgins, it is true; but what will that profit them, unless they be led into the "Temple of the King"? The "Temple of the King" is in unity: the "Temple of the King" is not ruinous, is not rent asunder, is not divided. The cement of those living stones is "charity."

29. "Instead of thy fathers, children are born to thee" (ver. 16). Nothing can be more manifest. Now consider the "Temple of the King" itself, for it is on its behalf he speaks, on account of the unity of the body that is spread throughout all the world: for those very persons who have chosen to be virgins, cannot find favour with the King unless they be led into the Temple of the King. "Instead of thy fathers, are thy children born to thee. It was the Apostles begat thee.: they were "sent: they were the preachers: they are "the fathers. But was it possible for them to be with us in the body for ever? Although one of them said, "I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: to abide in the flesh is necessary for your sakes. It is true he said this, but how long was it possible for him to remain here? Could it be till this present time, could it be to all futurity? Is the Church then left desolate by their departure? God forbid. "Instead of thy fathers, children have been born to thee. What is that? The Apostles were sent to thee as "fathers," instead of the Apostles sons have been born to thee: there have been appointed Bishops. For in the present day, whence do the Bishops, throughout all the world, derive their origin? The Church itself calls them fathers; the Church itself brought them forth, and placed them on the thrones of "the fathers.

Think not thyself abandoned then, because thou seest not Peter, nor seest Paul: seest not those through whom thou wert born. Out of thine own offspring has a body of "fathers" been raised up to thee. "Instead of thy fathers, have children been born to thee. Observe how widely diffused is the "Temple of the King," that "the virgins that are not led to the Temple of the King," may know that they have nothing to do with that marriage. "Thou shall make them princes over all the earth. This is the Universal Church: her children have been made "princes over all the earth: her children have been appointed instead of the "fathers. Let those who are cut off own the truth of this, let them come to the One Body: let them be led into the Temple of the King. God hath established His Temple everywhere: hath laid everywhere "the foundations of the Prophets and Apostles. The Church has brought "forth sons; has made them "instead of her fathers" to be "princes over all the earth."

30. "They shall be mindful of thy name in every generation and generation; therefore shall the peoples confess unto Thee" (ver. 17). What does it profit then to "confess" indeed and yet to confess out of "the Temple"? What does it profit to pray, and yet not to pray on the Mount? "I cried," says he, "unto the Lord with my voice: and He heard me out of His holy hill." Out of what "hill"? Out of that of which it is said, "A city set upon a hill cannot be hid." Of what "hill"? Out of that hill which Daniel saw "grow out of a small stone, and break all the kingdoms of the earth; and cover all the face of the earth." There let him pray, who hopes to receive: there let him ask, who would have his prayer heard: there let him confess, who wishes to be pardoned. "Therefore shall the peoples confess unto thee for ever, world without end." For in that eternal life it is true indeed there will no longer be the mourning

over sins: but yet in the praises of God by that everlasting City which is above, there will not be wanting a perpetual confession of the greatness of that happiness. For to that City itself, to which another Psalm sings, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God," to her who is the very Bride of Christ, the very Queen, a "King's daughter, and a King's consort;" ...the peoples shall for this very cause confess even to herself; the hearts of all, now enlightened by perfect charity, being laid bare, and made manifest, that she may know the whole of herself most completely, who here is, in many parts of her, unknown to herself. ...

Psalm 46

1. It is called, "A Psalm, to the end, for the sons of Korah, for things secret." Secret is it then; but He Himself, who in the place of Calvary was crucified, ye know, hath rent the veil, that the secrets of the temple might he discovered. Furthermore since the Cross of our Lord was a key, whereby things closed might be opened; let us trust that He will be with us, that these secrets may be revealed. What is said, "To the end," always ought to be understood of Christ. For "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." But The End He is called, not because He consumeth, but because He perfecteth. For ended call we the food which is eaten, and ended the coat which is woven, the former to consumption, the latter to perfection. Because then we have not where to go farther when we have come to Christ, Himself is called the end of our course. Nor ought we to think, that when we have come to Him, we ought to strive any further to come also to the Father. For this thought Philip also, when he said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." When he said, "It sufficeth us," he sought the end of satisfaction and perfection. Then said He, "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip: be that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." In Him then have we the Father, because He is in the Father, and the Father in Him, and He and His Father are One.

2. "Our God is a refuge and strength" (ver. 1). There are some refuges wherein is no strength, whereto when any fleeth, he is more weakened than strengthened. Thou fleest, for example, to some one greater in the world, that thou mayest make' thyself a powerful friend; this seemeth to thee a refuge. Yet so great are this world's uncertainties, and so frequent grow the ruins of the powerful day by day, that when to such refuge thou art come, thou beginnest to fear more than ever therein. ...Our refuge is not such, but our refuge is strength. When thither we have fled, we shall be firm.

3. "A helper in tribulations, which find us out too much. Tribulations are many, and in every tribulation unto God must we flee; whether it be a tribulation in our estate, or in our body's health, or about the peril of those dearest to us, or any other thing necessary to the sustaining of this life, refuge ought there to be none at all to a Christian man, other than his Saviour, other than his God, to whom when he has fled, he is strong. For he will not in himself be strong, nor will he to himself be strength, but He will be his strength, who has become his refuge. But, dearly beloved, among all tribulations of the human soul is no

greater tribulation than the consciousness of sin. For if there be no wound herein, and that be sound within man which is called conscience, wherever else he may suffer tribulation, thither will he flee, and there find God. ...Ye see, dearly beloved, when trees are cut down and proved by the carpenters, sometimes in the surface they seem as though injured and rotten; but the carpenter looks into the inner marrow as it were of the tree, and if within he find the wood sound, he promises that it will last in a building; nor will he be very anxious about the injured surface, when that which is within he declares sound. Furthermore, to man anything more inward than conscience is not found;

what then profits it, if what is without is sound, and the marrow of conscience has become rotton? These are close and vehement overmuch, and as this Psalm saith, too great tribulations; yet even in these the Lord hath become a helper by forgiving sin. For the consciences of the ungodly hateth nothing save indulgence; for if one saith he hath great tribulations, being a confessed debtor to the treasury, when he beholdeth the narrowness of his estate, and seeth that he cannot be solvent; if on account of the distrainers every year hanging over him, he saith that he suffereth great tribulations, and doth not breathe freely except in hope of indulgence, and that in things earthly; how much more the debtor of penalties out of the abundance of sins: when shall he pay what he owes out of his evil conscience, when if he pay, he perisheth? For to pay this debt, is to undergo the penalties. Remaineth then that of His indulgence, we may be secure, get so that, indulgence received, we return not again to contract debts. ...

4. Now then, such security received, what say they? "Therefore will not we fear, when the earth shall be confounded" (ver. 2). Just before anxious, suddenly secure; out of too great tribulations set in great tranquillity. For in them Christ was sleeping, therefore were they tossed: Christ awoke (as but now we heard out of the Gospel), He commanded the winds, and they were still. Since Christ is in each man's heart by faith, it is signified to us, that his heart as a ship in this world's tempest is tossed, who forgetteth his faith: as though Christ sleeping it is tossed, but Christ awaking cometh tranquillity. Nay, the Lord Himself, what said He? "Where is your faith?" Christ aroused, aroused up faith, that what had been done in the ship, might be done in their hearts. "A helper in tribulations, which found us out too much." He caused that therein should be great tranquillity.

5. See what tranquillity: "Therefore will not we fear when the earth shall be confounded, and the mountains shall be carried into the heart of the sea. Then we shall find not fear. Let us seek mountains carried, and if we can find, it is manifest that this is our security. The Lord truly said to His disciples, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be Thou removed, and be Thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done. Haply "to this mountain," He said of Himself; for He is called a Mountain: "It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest. But this Mountain is placed above other mountains; because the Apostles also are mountains, supporting this Mountain. Therefore followeth, "In the last days the Mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, established in the top of the mountains. Therefore passeth It the tops of all mountains, and

on the top of all mountains is It placed; because the mountains are preaching The Mountain. But the sea signifieth this world, in comparison of which sea, like earth seemed the nation of the Jews. For it was not covered over with the bitterness of idolatry, but, like dry land, was surrounded with the bitterness of the Gentiles as with sea. It was to be, that the earth be confounded, that is, that nation of the Jews;

and that the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea, that is, first that great Mountain established in the top of the mountains. For He deserted the nation of the Jews, and came among the Gentiles. He was carried from the earth into the sea. Who carrying Him? The Apostles, to whom He had said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed,and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done: that is, through your most faithful preaching it shall come to pass, that this mountain, that is, I Myself, be preached among the Gentiles, be glorified among the Gentiles, be acknowledged among the Gentiles, and that be fulfilled which was predicted of Me, "A people whom I have not known shall serve Me." ...

6. "The waters thereof roared, and were troubled" (ver. 3): when the Gospel was preached, "What is this? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods:" this the Athenians; but the Ephesians, with what tumult would they have slain the Apostles, when in the theatre, for their goddess Diana, they made such an uproar, as to be shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Amidst which waves and roaring of the sea, feared not they who to that refuge had fled. Nay, the Apostle Paul would enter in to the theatre, and was kept back by the disciples, because it was necessary that he should still abide in the flesh for their sakes. But yet, "the waters thereof roared, and were troubled: the mountains shook at the mightiness thereof." Whose might? The sea's? or rather God's, of whom was said, "refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us out too much?" For shaken were the mountains, that is, the powers of this world. For one thing are the mountains of God, another the mountains of the world: the mountains of the world, they whose head is the devil, the mountains of God, they whose Head is Christ. But by these mountains were shaken those mountains. Then gave they their voices against Christians, when the mountains were shaken, the waters roaring; for the mountains were shaken, and there was made a great earthquake, with quaking of the sea. But against whom this? Against the City founded upon a rock. The waters roar, the mountains shake, the Gospel being preached. What then, the City of God? Hear what followeth.

7. "The streams of the river make glad the City of God" (ver. 4). When the mountains shake, when the sea rages, God deserteth not His City, by the streams of the river. What are these streams of the river? That overflowing of the Holy Spirit, of which the Lord said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his bosom shall flow rivers of living water. These rivers then flowed out of the bosom of Paul, Peter, John, the other Apostles, the other faithful Evangelists. Since these rivers flowed from one river, many "streams of the river make glad the City of God. For that ye might know this to be said of the Holy Spirit, in the same Gospel next said the Evangelist, "But this spake

He of the Spirit, which they that were to believe on Him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Jesus being glorified after His Resurrection, glorified after His Ascension, on the day of Pentecost came the Holy Spirit, and filled the believers, who spake with tongues, and began to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Hence was the City of God made glad, while the sea was troubled by the roaring of its waters, while the mountains were confounded, asking what they should do, how drive out the new doctrine, how root out the race of Christians from the earth. Against whom?

Against the streams of the river making glad the City of God. For thereby showed He of what river He spake; that He signified the Holy Spirit, by "the streams of the river make glad the City of God. And what follows? "The Most High hath sanctified His tabernacle: since then there followeth the mention of Sanctification, it is manifest that these streams of the river are to be understood of the Holy Spirit, by whom is sanctified every godly soul believing in Christ, that it may be made a citizen of the City of God.

8. "God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved" (ver. 5). Let the sea rage, the mountains shake; "God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved." What is, "in the midst of her"? That God stands in any one place, and they surround Him who believe in Him? Then is God circumscribed by place; and broad that which surroundeth, narrow that which is surrounded? God forbid. No such thing imagine of God, who is contained in no place, whose seat is the conscience of the godly: and so is God's seat in the hearts of men, that if man fall from God, God in Himself abideth, not falleth like one not finding where to be. For rather doth He lift up thee, that thou mayest be in Him, than so lean upon thee, as if thou withdraw thyself, to fall. Himself if He withdraw, fall wilt thou: thyself if thou withdraw, fall will not He. What then is, "God is in the midst of her"? It signifieth that God is equal to all, and accepteth not persons. For as that which is in the middle has equal distances to all the boundaries, so God is said to be in the middle, because He consulteth equally for all. "God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved." Wherefore shall she not be moved? Because God is in the midst of her. He is "the Helper in tribulations that have found us out too much. God shall help her with His Countenance." What is, "with His Countenance"? With manifestation of Himself. How manifests God Himself, so as that we see His Countenance? I have already told you; ye have learned God's Presence; we have learned it through His works. When from Him we receive any help so that we cannot at all doubt that it was granted to us by the Lord, then God's Countenance is with us.

9. "The heathen are troubled" (ver. 6). And how troubled? why troubled? To cast down the City of God, in the midst whereof is God? To overthrow the tabernacle sanctified, which God helpeth with His Countenance? No: with a wholesome trouble are the heathen now troubled. For what followeth? "And the kingdoms are bowed. Bowed, saith He, are the kingdoms; not now erected that they may rage, but bowed that they may adore. When were the kingdoms bowed? When that came to pass which was predicted in another Psalm, "All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him. What cause made the kingdoms to bow? Hear the cause. "The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved.

The fanatics of idolatry, like frogs in the marshes, clamoured, the more tumultuously, the more sordidly, in filth and mire. And what is the brawling of frogs to the thunder of the clouds? For out of them "the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved: He thundered out of His clouds. And what are His clouds? His Apostles, His preachers, by whom He thundered in precepts, lightened in miracles. The same are clouds who are also mountains: mountains for their height and firmness, clouds for their rain and fruitfulness. For these clouds watered the earth, of which it was said, "The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. For it is of those clouds that He threateneth a certain barren vineyard, whence the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea;

"I will command," saith He, "the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. This was fulfilled in that which I have mentioned, when the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; when it was said, "It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken first to you; but seeing ye put it from you, we turn to the Gentiles; then was fulfilled, "I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. The nation of the Jews hath just so remained as a fleece dry upon the ground. For this, ye know, happened in a certain miracle, the ground was dry, the fleece only was wet, yet rain in the fleece appeared not. So also the mystery of the New TeStament appeared not in the nation of the Jews. What there was the fleece, is here the veil. For in the fleece was veiled the mystery. But on the ground, in all the nations open lieth Christ's Gospel; the rain is manifest, the Grace of Christ is bare, for it is not covered with a veil. But that the rain might come out of it, the fleece was pressed. For by pressure they from themselves excluded Christ, and the Lord now from His clouds raineth on the ground, the fleece hath remained dry. But of them then "the Most High gave His Voice," out of those clouds; by which Voice the kingdoms were bowed and worshipped.

10. "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up" (ver. 7). Not any man, not any power, not, in short, Angel, or any creature either earthly or heavenly, but "the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up." He who sent Angels, came after Angels, came that Angels might serve Him, came that men He might make equal to Angels. Mighty Grace! If God be for us, who can be against us? "The Lord of Hosts is with us." What Lord of Hosts is with us? "If" (I say) "God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things." Therefore be we secure, in tranquillity of heart nourish we a good conscience with the Bread of the Lord. "The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up." However great be thy infirmity, see who taketh thee up. One is sick, a physician is called to him. His own taken-up, the Physician calleth the sick man. Who hath taken him up? Even He. A great hope of salvation; a great Physician hath taken him up. What Physician? Every Physician save He is man: every Physician who cometh to a sick man, another day can be made sick, beside Him. "The God of Jacob is our taker up." Make thyself altogether as a little child, such as are taken up by their parents. For those not taken up, are exposed; those taken up are nursed. Thinkest thou God hath so taken thee up, as when an infant thy mother took thee up? Not so, but to eternity. For thy voice is in that Psalm, "My father and my mother forsake me, but the Lord hath taken me up."

11. ”Come and see the works of the Lord” (ver. 8). Now of this taking up, what hath the Lord done? Consider the whole world, come and see. For if thou comest not, thou seest not; if thou seest not, thou believest not; if thou believest not, thou standest afar off: if thou believest thou comest, if thou believest thou seest. For how came we to that mountain? Not on foot? Is it by ship? Is it on the wing? Is it on horses? For all that pertain to space and place, be not concerned, trouble not thyself, He cometh to thee. For out of a small stone He hath grown, and become a great mountain, so that He hath filled all the face of the earth. Why then wouldest thou by land come to Him, who filleth all lands? Lo, He hath already come: watch thou. By growing He waketh even sleepers; if yet there is not in them so deep sleep, as that they be hardened even against the mountain coming; but they hear, ”Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. For it was a great thing for the Jews to see the stone. For the stone was yet small: and small they deservedly despised it, and despising they stumbled, and stumbling they were broken; remains that they be ground to powder. For so was it said of the stone, ”Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken;

but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. It is one thing to be broken, another to be ground to powder. To be broken is less than to be ground to powder: but none grindeth He coming exalted, save whom He brake lying low. For now before His coming He lay low before the Jews, and they stumbled at Him, and were broken; hereafter shall He come in His Judgment, glorious and exalted, great and powerful, not weak to be judged, but strong to judge, and grind to powder those who were broken stumbling at Him. For ”A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence,” is He to them that believe not. Therefore, brethren, no wonder if the Jews acknowledged not Him, whom as a small stone lying before their feet they despised. They are to be wondered at, who even now so great a mountain will not acknowledge. The Jews at a small stone by not seeing stumbled; the heretics stumble at a mountain. For now that stone hath grown, now say we unto them, Lo, now is fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel, ”The stone that was small became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Wherefore stumble ye at Him, and go not rather up to Him? Who is so blind as to stumble at a mountain? Came He to thee that thou shouldest have whereat to stumble, and not have whereto to go up? ”Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. Isaiah saith this:

”Come ye, and let us go up. What is, ”Come ye, and let us go up”? ”Come ye,” is, Believe ye. ”Let us go up,” is, Let us profit. But they will neither come, nor go up, nor believe, nor profit. They bark against the mountain. Even now by so often stumbling on Him they are broken, and will not go up, choosing always to stumble. Say we to them, ”Come ye, and see the works of the Lord: what ”prodigies He hath set forth through the earth. Prodigies are called, because they portend something, those signs of miracles which were done when the world believed. And what thereafter came to pass, and what did they portend?

12. ”He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth” (ver. 9). This not yet see we fulfilled: yet are there wars, wars among nations for sovereignty; among sects, among Jews,

Pagans, Christians, heretics, are wars, frequent wars, some for the truth, some for falsehood contending. Not yet then is this fulfilled, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; but haply it shall be fulfilled. Or is it now also fulfilled? In some it is fulfilled; in the wheat it is fulfilled, in the tares it is not yet fulfilled. What is this then, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth"? Wars He calleth whereby it is warred against God. But who warreth against God? Ungodliness. And what to God can ungodliness do? Nothing. What doth an earthen vessel dashed against the rock, however vehemently dashed? With so much greater harm to itself it cometh, with how much the greater force it cometh. These wars were great, frequent were they. Against God fought ungodliness, and earthen vessels were dashed in pieces, even men by presuming on themselves, by too much prevailing by their own strength. This is that, the shield whereof Job also named concerning one ungodly. "He runneth against God, upon the stiff neck of his shield. What is, "upon the stiff neck of his shield"? Presuming too much upon his own protection. Were they such who said, "God is our refuge and strength, a Helper in tribulations which have found us out too much"?

or in another Psalm, "For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. When one learneth that in himself he is nothing, and help in himself has none, arms in him are broken in pieces, wars are made to cease. Such wars then destroyed that Voice of the Most High out of His holy clouds, whereby the earth was moved, and the kingdoms were bowed. These wars hath He made to cease unto the end of the earth. "He shall break the bow, and dash in pieces the arms, and burn the shield with fire. Bow, arms, shield, fire. The bow is plots; arms, public warfare; shields, vain presuming of self-protection: the fire wherewith they are burned, is that whereof the Lord said, "I am come to send fire on the earth; of which fire saith the Psalm, "There is nothing hid from the heat thereof. This fire burning, no arms of ungodliness shall remain in us, needs must all be broken, dashed in pieces, burned. Remain thou unharmed, not having any help of thine own; and the more weak thou art, having no arms thine own, the more He taketh thee up, of whom it is said, "The God of Jacob is our taker up." ...But when God taketh us up, doth He send us away unarmed? He armeth us, but with other arms, arms Evangelical, arms of truth, continence, salvation, faith, hope, charity. These arms shall we have, but not of ourselves: but the arms which of ourselves we had, are burnt up:

yet if by that fire of the Holy Spirit we are kindled, whereof it is said, "He shall burn the shields with fire; thee, who didst wish to be powerful in thyself, hath God made weak, that He may make thee strong in Him, because in thyself thou wast made weak.

13. What then followeth? "Be still. To what purpose? "And see that I am God" (ver. 10). That is, Not ye, but I am God. I created, I create anew; I formed, I form anew; I made, I make anew. If thou couldest not make thyself, how canst thou make thyself anew? This seeth not the contentious tumult of man's soul; to which contentious tumult is it said, "Be still. That is, restrain your souls from contradiction. Do not argue, and, as it were, arm against God. Else yet live thy arms, not yet burned up with fire. But if they are burned,"Be still; because ye have not wherewith tofight. But if ye be still in yourselves, and from Me seek

all, who before presumed on yourselves, then shall ye "see that I am God. "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Just before I said, by the name of earth is signified the nation of the Jews, by the name of sea the other nations. The mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; the nations are troubled, the kingdoms are bowed; the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our taker up" (ver. 11). Miracles are done among the heathen, full filled is the faith of the heathen; burned are the arms of human presumption. Still are they, in tranquillity of heart, to acknowledge God the Author of all their gifts.

And after this glorifying, doth He yet desert the people of the Jews? of which saith the Apostle, "I say unto you, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. That is, until the mountains be carried hither, the clouds rain here, the Lord here bows the kingdoms with His thunder, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And what thereafter? "And so all Israel shall be saved. Therefore, here too observing the same order, "I will be exalted" (saith He) "among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth; that is, both in the sea, and in the earth, that now might all say what followeth: "the God of Jacob is our taker up."

Psalm 47

1. The title of the Psalm goeth thus. ”To the end: for the sons of Korah: a Psalm of David himself. These sons of Korah have the title also of some other Psalms, and indicate a sweet mystery, insinuate a great Sacrament: wherein let us willingly understand ourselves, and let us acknowledge in the title us who hear, and read, and as in a glass set before us behold who we are. The sons of Korah, who are they? ...Haply the sons of the Bridegroom. For the Bridegroom was crucified in the place of Calvary. Recollect the Gospel, where they crucified the Lord, and ye will find Him crucified in the place of Calvary. Furthermore, they who deride His Cross, by devils, as by beasts, are devoured. For this also a certain Scripture signified. When God’s Prophet Elisha was going up, children called after him mocking, ”Go up thou bald head, Go up thou bald head: but he, not so much in cruelty as in mystery, made those children to be devoured by bears out of the wood. If those children had not been devoured, would they have lived even till now? Or could they not, being born mortal, have been taken off by a fever? But so in them had no mystery been shown, whereby posterity might be put in fear. Let none then mock the Cross of Christ. The Jews were possessed by devils, and devoured;

for in the place of Calvary, crucifying Christ, and lifting on the Cross, they said as it were with childish sense, not understanding what they said, ”Go up, thou bald head. For what is, ”Go up”? ”Crucify Him, Crucify Him. For childhood is set before us to imitate humility, and childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness. To imitate humility, childhood was set before us by the Lord, when He called children to Him, and because they were kept from Him, He said, ”Suffer them to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The example of childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness by the Apostle, ”Brethren, be not children in understanding: and again he proposeth it to imitate, ”Howbeit in malice be ye children, that in understanding ye may be men. ”For the sons of Korah” the Psalm is sung; for Christians then is it sung. Let us hear it as sons of the Bridegroom, whom senseless children crucified in the place of Calvary. For they earned to be devoured by beasts; we to be crowned by Angels. For we acknowledge the humility of our Lord, and of it are not ashamed. We are not ashamed of Him called in mystery ”the bald” (Calvus), from the place of Calvary. For on the very Cross whereon He was insulted, He permitted not our forehead to be bald; for with His own Cross He marked it. Finally, that ye may know that these things are said to us, see what is said.

2. ”O clap your hands, all ye nations” (ver. 1). Were the people of the Jews all the nations? No, but blindness in part is happened to Israel, that senseless children might cry, ”Calve,” ”Calve;” and so the Lord might be crucified in the place of Calvary, that by His Blood shed He might redeem the Gentiles, and that might be fulfilled which saith the Apostle, ”Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” Let them insult, then, the vain, and foolish, and senseless, and say, ”Calve,” ”Calve;” but ye redeemed by His Blood which was shed in the place of Calvary, say, ”O clap your hands, all ye nations;” because to you hath come down the Grace of God. ”O clap your hands.” What is ”O clap”? Rejoice. But wherefore with the hands? Because with good works. Do not rejoice with the mouth while idle with the hands. If ye rejoice, ”clap your hands.” The hands of the nations let Him see, who joys hath deigned to give them. What is, the hands of the nations? The acts of them doing good works. ”O clap your hands, all ye nations shout unto God with the voice of triumph.” Both with voice and with hands. If with the voice only it is not well, because the hands are slow; if only with the hands it is not well, because the tongue is mute. Agree together must the hands and tongue. Let this confess, these work. ”Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.”

3. ”For the Lord Most High is terrible” (ver. 2). The Most High in descending made like one ludicrous, by ascending into Heaven is made terrible. ”A great King over all the earth.” Not only over the Jews; for over them also He is King. For of them also the Apostles believed and of them many thousands of men sold their goods, and laid the price at the Apostles’ feet, and in them was fulfilled what in the title of the Cross was written, ”The King of the Jews.” For He is King also of the Jews. But ”of the Jews” is little. ”O clap your hands, all ye nations: for God is the King of all the earth.” For it sufficeth not Him to have under Him one nation: therefore such great price gave He out of His side, as to buy the whole world.

4. ”He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet” (ver. 3). Which subdued, and to whom? Who are they that speak? Haply Jews? Surely, if Apostles; surely, if Saints. For under these God hath subdued the people and the nations, that to-day are they honoured among the nations, who by their own citizens earned to be slain: as their Lord was slain by His citizens, and is honoured among the nations; was crucified by His own, is adored by aliens, but those by a price made His own. For therefore bought He us, that aliens from Him we might not be. Thinkest thou then these are the words of Apostles, ”He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet”? I know not. Strange that Apostles should speak so proudly, as to rejoice that the nations were put under their feet, that is, Christians under the feet of Apostles. For they rejoice that we are with them under the feet of Him who died for us. For under Paul’s feet ran they, who would be of Paul, to whom He said, ”Was Paul crucified for you?” What then here, what are we to understand? ”He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet.” All pertaining to Christ’s inheritance are among ”all the nations,” and all not pertaining to Christ’s inheritance are among ”all the nations:” and ye see so exalted in Christ’s Name is Christ’s Church, that all not yet believing in Christ lie under the feet of Christians. For what numbers now run to the Church; not yet being Christians, they ask aid of the Church; to be succoured by

us temporally they are willing, though eternally to reign with us as yet they are unwilling. When all seek aid of the Church, even they who are not yet in the Church, hath He not "subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet"?

5. "He hath chosen an inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom He loved" (ver. 4). A certain beauty of Jacob He hath chosen for our inheritance. Esau and Jacob were two brothers; in their mother's womb both struggled, and by this struggle their mother's bowels were shaken; and while they two were yet therein, the younger was elected and preferred to the elder, and it was said, "Two peoples are in thy womb, and the elder shall serve the younger. Among all nations is the elder, among all nations the younger; but the younger is in good Christians, elect, godly, faithful; the elder in the proud, unworthy, sinful, stubborn, defending rather than confessing their sins: as was also the very people of the Jews, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness. But for that it is said, "The elder shall serve the younger; it is manifest that under the godly are subdued the ungodly, under the humble are subdued the proud. Esau was born first, and Jacob was born last; but he who was last born, was preferred to the first-born, who through gluttony lost his birthright. So thou hast it written, He longed for the pottage, and his brother said to him, If thou wilt that I give it thee, give me thy birthright. He loved more that which carnally he desired, than that which spiritually by being born first he had earned: and he laid aside his birthright, that he might eat lentils.

But lentils we find to be the food of the Egyptians, for there it abounds in Egypt. Whence is so magnified the lentil of Alexandria, that it comes even to our country, as if here grew no lentil. Therefore by desiring Egyptian food he lost his birthright. So also the people of the Jews, of whom it is said, "in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt. They desired in a manner the lentil, and lost their birthright.

6. "God is gone up with jubilation" (ver. 5). Even He our God, the Lord Christ, is gone up with jubilation; "the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. "Is gone up: whither, save where we know? Whither the Jews followed Him not, even with their eyes. For exalted on the Cross they mocked Him, ascending into Heaven they did not ,see Him. "God hath gone up with jubilation. What is jubilation, but admiration of joy which cannot be expressed in words? As the disciples in joy admired, seeing Him go into Heaven, whom they had mourned dead; truly for the joy, words sufficed not: remained to jubilate what none could express. There was also the voice of the trumpet, the voice of Angels. For it is said, "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Angels preached the ascension of the Lord: they saw the Disciples, their Lord ascending, tarrying admiring, confounded, nothing speaking, but in heart jubilant: and now was the sound of the trumpet in the clear voice of the Angels, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this is Jesus. As if they knew not that it was the same Jesus. Had they not just before seen Him before them? Had they not heard Him speaking with them? Nay, they not only saw the figure of Him present, but handled also His limbs. Of themselves then knew they not, that it was the same Jesus?

But they being by very admiration, from joy of jubilation, as it were transported in mind, the Angels said, "that same is Jesus. As though they said, If ye believe Him, this is that same Jesus, whom crucified, your feet stumbled, whom dead and buried, ye thought your hope lost. Lo, this is the same Jesus. He hath gone up before you, "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven. His Body is removed indeed from your eyes, but God is not separated from your hearts: see Him going up, believe on Him absent, hope for Him coming; but yet through His secret Mercy, feel Him present. For He who ascended into Heaven that He might be removed from your eyes, promised unto you, saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Justly then the Apostle so addressed us, "The Lord is at hand; be careful for nothing. Christ sitteth above the Heavens; the Heavens are far off, He who there sitteth is near. ...

7. "Sing praises to our God, sing praises" (ver. 6). Whom as Man mocked they, who from God were alienated. "Sing praises to our God." For He is not Man only, but God. Man of the seed of David, God the Lord of David, of the Jews having flesh. "Whose" (saith the Apostle) "are the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." Of the Jews then is Christ, but according to the flesh. But who is this Christ who is of the Jews according to the flesh? "Who is over all, God blessed for ever." God before the flesh, God in the flesh, God with the flesh. Nor only God before the flesh, but God before the earth whence flesh was made; nor only God before the earth whereof flesh was made, but even God before the Heaven which was first made; God before the day which was first made; God before Angels; the same Christ is God: for "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

8. "For God is the King of all the earth" (ver. 7). What? And before was He not God of all the earth? Is He not God of both heaven and earth, since by Him surely were all things made? Who can say that He is not his God? But not all men acknowledged Him their God; and where He was acknowledged, there only, so to say, He was God. "In Judah is God known." Not yet was it said to the sons of Korah, "O clap your hands, all ye nations." For that God known in Judah, is King of all the earth: now by all He is acknowledged, for that is fulfilled which Isaiah saith, "He is thy God who hath delivered thee, the God of the whole earth shall He be called." "Sing ye praises with understanding." He teacheth us and warneth us to sing praises with understanding, not to seek the sound of the ear, but the light of the heart. The Gentiles, whence ye were called that ye might be Christians, adored gods made with hands, and sang praises to them, but not with understanding. If they had sung with understanding, they had not adored stones. When a man sensible sang to a stone insensible, did he sing with understanding? But now, brethren, we see not with our eyes Whom we adore, and yet correctly we adore. Much more is God commended to us, that with our eyes we see Him not. If with our eyes we saw Him, haply we might despise. For even Christ seen, the Jews despised; unseen, the Gentiles adored.

9. "God shall reign over all nations" (ver. 8). Who reigned over one nation, "shall reign" (saith He) "over all nations. When this was said, God reigned over one nation. It was a

prophecy, the thing was not yet shown. Thanks be to God, we now see fulfilled what before was prophesied. A written promise God sent unto us before the time, the time fulfilled He hath repaid us. "God shall reign over all nations," is a promise. "God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What then was promised to come, now being fulfilled, is acknowledged and held. "God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What is His Holy Seat? Haply saith one, The Heavens, and he understandeth well. For Christ hath gone up, as we know, with the Body, wherein He was crucified, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; thence we expect Him to come to judge the quick and the dead. "God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. The Heavens are His Holy Seat. Wilt thou also be His Seat? think not that thou canst not be; prepare for Him a place in thy heart. He cometh, and willingly sitteth. The same Christ is surely "the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God: and what saith the Scripture of Wisdom Herself? The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. If then the soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom, be thy soul righteous, and thou shalt be a royal seat of Wisdom.

And truly, brethren, all men who live well, who act well, converse in godly charity, doth not God sit in them, and Himself command? Thy soul obeyeth God sitting in it, and itself commandeth the members. For thy soul commandeth thy members, that so may move the foot, the hand, the eye, the ear, and itself commandeth the members as its servants, but yet itself serveth its Lord sitting within. It cannot well rule its inferior, unless its superior it have not disdained to serve.

10. "The princes of the peoples are gathered together unto the God of Abraham" (ver. 9). The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. True it is, God said this, and thereupon the Jews prided themselves, and said, "We are Abraham's children; " priding themselves in their father's name, carrying his flesh, not holding his faith; by seed cleaving to Him, in manners degenerating. But the Lord, what said He to them so priding themselves? "If ye are Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham. Again ..."The princes of the peoples: the princes of the nations: not the princes of one people, but the princes of all people have "gathered together unto the God of Abraham. Of these princes was that Centurion too, of whom but now when the Gospel was read ye heard. For he was a Centurion having honour and power among men, he was a prince among the princes of the peoples. Christ coming to him, he sent his friends to meet Him, nay unto Christ truly passing over to him he sent his friends, and asked that He would heal his servant who was dangerously sick. And when the Lord would come, he sent to Him this message: "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof, but say in a word only, and my servant shall be healed. "For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers. See how he kept his rank!

first he mentioned that he was under another, and afterwards that another was under him. I am under authority, and I am in authority; both under some I am, and over some I am. ...As though he said, If I being set under authority command those who are under me, Thou who art set under no man's authority, canst not Thou command Thy creature, since all things were made by Thee, and without Thee was nothing made. "Say," then, said he, "in

a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof." ...Admiring at his faith, Jesus reprobates the Jews' misbelief. For sound to themselves they seemed, whereas they were dangerously sick, when their Physician not knowing theyslew. Therefore when He reprobated, and repudiated their pride what said he? "I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west," not belonging to the kindred of Israel: many shall come to whom He said, "O clap your hands, all ye nations; "and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Abraham begat them not of his own flesh; yet shall they come and sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, and be his sons. Whereby his sons? Not as born of his flesh, but by following his faith. "But the children of the kingdom," that is, the Jews, "shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

They shall be condemned to outer darkness who are born of the flesh of Abraham, and they shall sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, who have imitated Abraham's faith.

11. And what they who belonged to the God of Abraham? "For the mighty gods of the earth are greatly lifted up." They who were gods, the people of God, the vineyard of God, whereof it is said, "Judge betwixt Me and My vineyard," shall go into outer darkness, shall not sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are not gathered unto the God of Abraham. Wherefore? "For the mighty gods of the earth;" they who were mighty gods of the earth, presuming upon earth. What earth? Themselves; for every man is earth. For to man was it said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But man ought to presume upon God, and thence to hope for help, not from himself. For the earth raineth not upon itself, nor shineth for itself; but as the earth from heaven expecteth rain and light, so man from God ought to expect mercy and truth. They then, "the mighty gods of the earth, were greatly lifted up," that is, greatly prided themselves: they thought no physician necessary for themselves, and therefore remained in their sickness, and by their sickness were brought down even to death. The natural branches were broken off that the humble wild olive tree might be grafted in. Hold we fast then, brethren, humility, charity, godliness: since we are called, on their proving reprobate, even by their example let us fear to pride ourselves.

Psalm 48

1. The title of this Psalm is, ”A song of praise, to the sons of Korah, on the second day of the week.” Concerning this what the Lord deigneth to grant receive ye like sons of the firmament. For on the second day of the week, that is, the day after the first which we call the Lord’s day, which also is called the second week-day, was made the firmament of Heaven. ...The second day of the week then we ought not to understand but of the Church of Christ: but the Church of Christ in the Saints, the Church of Christ in those who are written in Heaven, the Church of Christ in those who to this world’s temptations yield not. For they are worthy of the name of ”firmament.” The Church of Christ, then, in those who are strong, of whom saith the Apostle, ”We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak,” is called the firmament. Of this it is sung in this Psalm. Let us hear, acknowledge, associate, glory, reign. For Her called firmament, hear also in the Apostolic Epistles, ”the pillar and firmament of the truth.” ...

2. ”Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised” (ver. 1). ...That is, ”in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. This is the city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid: this is the candle which is not hidden under a bushel, to all known, to all proclaimed. Yet are not all men citizens thereof, but they in whom ”great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. What then is that city: let us see whether perhaps, since it is said, ”In the city of our God, in His holy mountain,” we ought not to enquire for this mountain where also we may be heard. ...What then is that mountain, brethren? One is it with great care to be enquired for, with great solicitude investigated, with labour also to be occupied and ascended. But if in any part of the earth it is, what shall we do? Shall we go abroad out of our own country, that to that mountain we may arrive? Nay, then we are abroad, when in it we are not. For that is our city, if we are members of the King, who is the head of the same city. ...For there was a certain corner-stone contemptible, whereat the Jews stumbled, cut out of a certain mountain without hands, that is, coming of the kingdom of the Jews without hands, because human operation went not with Mary of whom was born Christ.

But if that stone, when the Jews stumbled thereat, had remained there, thou hadst not had whither to ascend. But what was done? What saith the prophecy of Daniel? What but that the stone grew, and became a great mountain? How great? So that it filled the whole face of the earth. By growing, then, and by filling the whole face of the earth, that mountain came

to us. Why then seek we the mountain as though absent, and not as being present ascend to it; that in us the Lord may be "great, and greatly to be praised"?

3. Further, ...when he had said, "in the city of our God, in His holy mountain," what added he? "Spreading abroad the joys of the whole earth, the mountains of Sion" (ver. 2). Sion is one mountain, why then "mountains"? Is it that to Sion belonged also those which came from the other side, so as to meet together on the Corner Stone, and become two walls, as it were two mountains, one of the circumcision, the other of the uncircumcision; one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles: no longer adverse, although diverse, because from different sides, now in the corner not even diverse. "For He is our peace, who hath made both one. The same Corner Stone "which the builders rejected, is become the Head Stone of the corner. The mountain hath joined in itself two mountains; one house there is, and two houses; two, because coming from different sides; one, because of the Corner Stone, wherein both are joined together. Hear also this, "the mountains of Sion: the sides of the North are the city of the great King." ...See the Gentiles; "the sides of the North: the sides of the North are joined to the city of the great King. The North is wont to be contrary to Sion: Sion forsooth is in the South, the North over against the South. Who is the North, but He who said, "I will sit in the sides of the North, I will be like the Most High"?

The devil had held dominion over the ungodly, and possessed the nations serving images, adoring demons; and all whatsoever them was of human kind anywhere throughout the world, by cleaving to Him, had become North. But since He who binds the strong man, taketh away his goods, and maketh them His own goods; men delivered from infidelity and superstition of devils, believing in Christ, are fitted on to that city, have met in the corner that wall that cometh from the circumcision, and that was made the city of the great King, which had been the sides of the North. Therefore also in another Scripture is it said, "Out of the North come clouds of golden colour: great is the glory and honour of the Almighty. For great is the glory of the physician, when from being despaired of the sick recovers. "Out of the North come clouds," and not black clouds, not dark clouds, not lowering, but "of golden colour. Whence but by grace illumined through Christ? See, "the sides of the North are the city of the great King." ...

4. Let the Psalm then follow, and say, "God shall be known in her houses." Now in her "houses," because of the mountains, because of the two walls, because of the two sons. "God shall be known in her houses," but he commendeth grace, therefore he added, "when He shall take her up." For what would that city have been, unless He had taken her up? Would it not immediately have fallen, unless it had such foundation? For "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Let none then glory in his own merits; but "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." ...The Lord then hath taken up this city, and is known therein, that is, His grace is known in that city: for whatever that city hath, which glorieth in the Lord, it hath not of itself. For because of this it is said, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

5. ”For, lo, the kings of the earth are gathered together” (ver. 3). Behold now those sides of the North, see how they come, see how they say, ”Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord: and He will teach us His way, and we will walk in it. ”And have come together in one. In what one, but :hat ”corner-stone”? ”They saw it, and so they marvelled” (ver. 4). After their marvelling at the miracles and glory of Christ, what followed? ”They were troubled, they were moved” (ver. 5), ”trembling took hold upon them. Whence took trembling hold upon them, but from the consciousness of sins? Let them run then, king after a king; kings, let them acknowledge the King. Therefore saith He elsewhere, ”Yet have I been set by Him a King upon His holy hill of Sion.” ...A King then was heard of, set up in Sion, to Him were delivered possessions even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Kings behoved to fear lest they should lose the kingdom, lest the kingdom be taken from them. As wretched Herod feared, and for the Child slew the children. But fearing to lose his kingdom, he deserved not to know the King. Would that he too had adored the King with the Magi: not by ill-seeking the kingdom, slain the Innocents, and perished guilty. For as concerning him, he destroyed the Innocents: but as for Christ, even a Child, the children dying for Him did He crown.

Therefore behoved kings to fear when it was said, ”Yet have I been set a King by Him upon His holy sill of Sion,” and inheritance. to the uttermost parts of the earth shall He give Him, who set Him up King. ...Thence also this is said to them, ”Understand now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. And what did they? ”There pains as of a woman in travail. What are the pains ”as of a woman in travail,” but the pangs of a penitent? See the same conception of pain and travail: ”Of Thy fear” (saith Isaiah) ”we have conceived, we have travailed of the Spirit of salvation. So then the kings conceived from the fear of Christ, that by travailing they brought forth salvation by believing on Him whom they had feared. ”There pains as of a woman in travail: when of travail thou hearest, expect a birth. The old man travaileth, but the new man is born.

6. ”With a strong wind Thou shalt break the ships of Tarshish” (ver. 6). Briefly understood, this is, Thou shalt overthrow the pride of the nations. But where in this history is mentioned the overthrowing of the pride of the nations? Because of ”the ships of Tarshish. Learned men have enquired for Tarshish a city, that is, what city was signified by this name: and to some it has seemed that Cilicia is called Tarshish, because its metropolis is called Tarsus. Of which city was the Apostle Paul, being born in Tarsus of Cilicia. But some have understood by it Carthage, being haply sometimes so named, or in some language so signified. For in the Prophet Isaiah it is thus found: ”Howl, ye ships of Carthage. But in Ezekiel by some interpreters the word is translated Carthage, by some Tarshish: and from this diversity it can be understood that the same which was called Carthage, is called Tharsus. But it is manifest, that in the beginning of its reign Carthage flourished with ships, and so flourished, that among other nations they excelled in trafficking and navigation. For when Dido, flying from her brother, escaped to the parts of Africa, where she built Carthage, the ships which had been prepared for commerce in his country she had taken with her for her flight, the

princes of the country consenting to it; and the same ships also when Carthage was built failed not in traffic.

And hence that city became too proud, so that justly by its ships may be understood the pride of the nations, presuming on things uncertain, as on the breath of the winds. Now let none presume on full sails, and on the seeming fair state of this life, as of the sea. Be our foundation in Sion: there ought we to be stablished, not to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine. Whoso then by the uncertain things of this life had been puffed up, let them be overthrown, and be all the pride of the nations subjected to Christ. who shall "with a strong wind break all the ships of Tarshish: not of any city, but of "Tarshish. How "with a strong wind"? With very strong fear. For so all pride feared Him that shall judge, as on Him humble to believe, lest Him exalted it should fear.

7. "As we have heard, so have we seen" (ver. 7). Blessed Church! at one time thou hast heard, at another time thou hast seen. She heard in promises, seeth in performance: heard in Prophecy, seeth in the Gospel. For all things which are now fulfilled were before prophesied. Lift up thine eyes then, and stretch them over the world; see now His "inheritance even to the uttermost parts of the earth: see now is fulfilled what was said, "All kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him: see fulfilled what was said, "Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth. See Him whose feet and hands were pierced with nails, whose bones hanging on the tree were counted, upon whose vesture lots were cast: see reigning whom they saw hanging; see sitting in Heaven whom they despised walking on earth: see thus fulfilled, "All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. Seeing all this, exclaim with joy, "As we have heard, so have we seen. Justly the Church herself is so called out of the Gentiles. ...They to whom the Prophets were not sent, first heard and understood the Prophets: they who first heard not, afterwards hearing marvelled. They remained behind to whom they were sent, carrying the books, understanding not the truth: having the tables of the Testament, and not holding the inheritance.

But we, ..."As we have heard, so have we seen. And where hearest thou? where seest thou? "In the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God. God hath founded it for ever. Let not heretics insult, divided into parties, let them not exalt themselves who say, "Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there. Whoso saith, "Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there," inviteth to parties. Unity God promised. The kings are gathered together in one, not dissipated through schisms. But haply that city which hath held the world, shall sometime be overthrown? Far be the thought! "God hath founded it for ever. If then God hath founded it for ever, why fearest thou lest the firmament should fall?

8. "We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy people" (ver. 8). Who have received, and where received? Hath not the same Thy people received Thy mercy. If Thy people hath received Thy mercy, how then, "in the midst of Thy people"? As if they who received were one party, they in the midst of whom they received another. A great mystery, but yet welt known. When hence also, that is, out of these verses, hath been extracted and

brought forth what ye know; it will be not ruder, but sweeter. Now forsooth all are reckoned the people of God, who carry His Sacraments, but not all belong to His Mercy. All forsooth receiving the Sacrament of the Baptism of Christ, are called Christians, but not all live worthily of that Sacrament. There are some of whom saith the Apostle, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Yet on account of this form of godliness they are named among God's people. As to the floor, until the corn is threshed, belongs not the wheat only, but the chaff. But will it also belong to the garner? In the midst then of an evil people is a good people, which hath received the Mercy of God. He liveth worthily of the Mercy of God who heareth, and holdeth, and doeth what the Apostle saith, "We beseech you that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain.

Whoso then receiveth not the Grace of God in vain, the same receiveth not only the Sacrament, but also the Mercy of God as well. ...So those who have the Sacraments, and have not good manners, are both said to be of God, and not of God; are both said to be His, and to be strangers: His because of His own Sacraments, strangers because of their own vice. So also strange daughters: daughters, because of the form of godliness; strange, because of their loss of virtue. Be the lily there; let it receive the Mercy of God: hold fast the root of a good flower, be not ungrateful for soft rain coming from heaven. Be thorns ungrateful, let them grow by the showers: for the fire they grow, not for the garner. In the midst of Thy people not receiving Thy mercy, we have received Thy mercy. For" He came unto His own, and His own received Him not," yet, in the midst of them, "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." ...

9. For when he had said, "We have received Thy mercy in the midst of Thy people," he signified that there is a people not receiving the mercy of God, in the midst of whom some do receive the mercy of God: and then lest it should occur to men that there are so few, as to be nearly none, how did He console them in the words following? "According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth" (ver. 9). What is this? ...That is, as Thou art known through all the earth, so Thou art also praised through all the earth, nor are there wanting who now praise Thee through all the earth. But they praise Thee who live well. For, "According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise," not in a part, but "unto the ends of the earth." "Thy right hand is full of righteousness." That is, many are they also who shall stand at Thy right hand. Not only shall they be many who shall stand at Thy left hand, but there also shall be a full heap set at Thy right hand.

10. "Let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord" (ver. 10). O mount Zion, O daughters of Judah, ye labour now among tares, among chaff, among thorns ye labour: yet be glad because of God's judgments. God erreth not in judgment. Live ye separate, though separate ye were not born; not vainly hath a voice gone forth from your mouth and heart, "Destroy not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." He shall winnow with such art, carrying in His hand a fan, that not one grain of wheat shall fall into the heap of chaff prepared to be burned, nor one beard of chaff pass to the heap to be laid up in the garner. Be glad, O ye daughters of Judaea, because of the

judgments of God that erreth not, and do not yet judge rashly. To you let it belong to collect, to Him let it belong to separate. But think not that the "daughters of Judah" are Jews. Judah is confession; all the sons of confession are all the sons of Judah. For "salvation is of the Jews," is nothing else than that Christ is of the Jews. This saith also the Apostle, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Be such a Jew; glory in the circumcision of the heart, though thou hast not the circumcision of the flesh. Let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord.

11. "Walk about Zion, and embrace her" (ver. 11). Be it said to them who live ill, in the midst of whom is the people, which hath received the mercy of God. In the midst of you is a people living well, "Walk about Zion." But how? "embrace her." Not with scandals, but with love go round about her: that so those who live well in the midst of you ye may imitate, and by imitation of them, be incorporate with Christ, whose members they are. "Walk about Zion, go round about her: speak in the towers thereof." In the height of her bulwarks, set forth the praises thereof.

12. "Set your hearts upon her might" (ver. 12). Not that ye may have the form of godliness. deny the power thereof, but, "upon her might set your hearts. Speak ye in her towers. What is the might of this city? Whoso would understand the might of this city, let him understand the force of love. That is a virtue which none conquereth. Love's flame no waves of the world, no streams of temptation, extinguish. Of this it is said, "Love is strong as death. For as when death cometh, it cannot be resisted; by whatever arts, whatever medicines, you meet it; the violence of death can none avoid who is born mortal; so against the violence of love can the world do nothing. For from the contrary the similitude is made of death; for as death is most violent to take away, so love is most violent to save. Through love many have died to the world, to live to God; by this love inflamed, the martyrs, not pretenders, not puffed up by vain-glory, not such as they of whom it is written, "Though I give. my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," but men whom truly a love of Christ and of the truth led on to this passion; what to them were the temptations ofthe tormentors? Greater violence had the eyes of their weeping friends, than the persecutions of enemies. For how many were held by their children, that they might not suffer?

to how many did their wives fall upon their knees, that they might not be left widows? How many have their parents forbidden to die; as we know and read in the Passion of the Blessed Perpetua! All this was done; but tears, however great, and with whatever force flowing, when did they extinguish the ardour of love? This is the mightof Sion, to whom elsewhere it is said, "Peace. be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces."

13. What here understand we, "Set your hearts upon her might, and distribute her houses"? That is, distinguish house from house. Do not confound. For there is a house having the form of godliness, and not having godliness;but there is a house having both form and godliness. Distribute, confound not. But then ye distribute and confound not, when ye "set your hearts

upon her might; that is, when through love ye are made spiritual. Then ye will not judge rashly, then ye will see that the evil harms not the good as long as we are in this floor. ”Distribute her houses. There can be also another understanding. The two houses, one coming of the circumcision, one of the uncircumcision, it is commanded the Apostles to distribute. For when Saul was called, and made the Apostle Paul, agreeing in unity with his fellow Apostles, he so with thorn determined, that they should go to the circumcision, he to the uncircumcision. By that dispensation of their Apostleship, they distributed the houses of the city of the great King; and meeting in the corner, divided the Gospel in dispensation, in love united it. And truly this is rather to be understood; for it followeth and showeth that it is here said to the preachers, ”distribute her houses: that ye may tell it to the generation following: that is, that even to us, who were to comeafter them, their dispensation of the Gospel should reach: For not for those only they laboured, with whom they lived in the earth;

nor the Lord for those Apostles only to whom He deigned to show Himself alive after His Resurrection, but for us also. For to them He spake, and signified us when He spake, ”Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Were they then to be here alway, even to the end of the world? Also He said, ”Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word. Therefore He considereth us, because He suffered on account of us. Justly then it is said, ”That ye may tell it to the generation following.”

14. Tell what? ”For this is God, even our God” (ver. 13). The earth was seen, the earth’s Creator was not seen; the flesh was held, God in the flesh was not acknowledged. For the flesh was held by those from whom had been taken the same flesh, for of the seed of Abraham was the Virgin Mary. At the flesh they stayed, the Divinity they did not understand. O Apostles, O mighty city, preach thou on the towers, and say, ”This is God, even our God. So, even so as He was despised, as He lay a stone before the feet of the stumbling, that He might humble the hearts of the confessing; even so, ”This is God, even our God. Certainly He was seen, as was said, ”Afterward did He show Himself upon earth, and conversed with men. ”This is God, even our God. He is also Man, and who is there will know Him? ”This is God, even our God. But haply for a time as the false gods. For because they can be called gods, but cannot be so, for a time they are even called so. For what saith the Prophet, or what warneth He to be said to them? This shall ye say to them, ”The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from those that are under the heavens. He is not such a god: for our God is above all gods. Above all what gods?

”For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. The same then is our God. ”This is God, even our God. For how long? ”For ever and ever: He shall role us for ever. If He is our God, He is also our King. He protecteth us, being our God, lest we die; He ruleth us, being our King, lest we fall. But by ruling us He doth not break us; for whom He ruleth not, He breaketh. ”Thou shalt rule them,” saith He, ”with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. But there are whom He ruleth not; these He spareth

not, as a potter's vessel dashing them in pieces. By Him then let us wish to be ruled and delivered, "for He is our God for ever and ever, and He shall rule us for ever."

Psalm 49

The First Part.

1. ..."Hear ye these things, all ye nations" (ver. 1). Not then you only who are here. For of what power is our voice so to cry out, as that all nations may hear? For Our Lord Jesus Christ hath proclaimed it through the Apostles, hath proclaimed it in so many tongues that He. sent; and we see this Psalm, which before was only repeated in one nation, in the Synagogue of the Jews, now repeated throughout the whole world, throughout all Churches; and that fulfilled which is here spoken of, "Hear ye these words,all ye nations." ...Of whom ye are: "With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. This He seemeth to have repeated a second time, lest to have said "hear," before, were too little. What I say, he saith, "hear, with ears ponder," that is, hear not cursorily. What is, "with ears ponder"? It is what the Lord said, "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear: for as all who were in His presence must have had ears, what ears did He require save those of the heart, when He said, "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear"? The same ears also this Psalm doth smite. "With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. Perhaps there is here some distinction. We ought not indeed to narrow our view, but there is no harm in explaining even this view of the sense.

Perhaps there is some difference between the saying, "all nations," and the saying, "all ye that dwell in the world. For perchance he would have us understand the expression, "dwell in," with a further meaning, so as to take all nations for all the wicked, but the dwellers of the world all the just. For he doth inhabit who is not held fast: but he that is occupied is inhabited, and doth not inhabit. Just as he doth possess whatever he hath, who is master of his property: but a master is one who is not held in the meshes of covetousness: while he that is held fast by covetousness is the possessed, and not the possessor. ...

2. Therefore let even the ungodly hear: "Hear ye this, all ye nations." Let the just also hear, who have not heard to no purpose, and who rather rule the world than are ruled by the world: "with ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world."

3. And again he saith, "both all ye earthborn, and sons of men" (ver. 2). The expression "earthborn" he cloth refer to sinners; the expression "sons of men" to the faithful and righteous. Ye see then that this distinction is observed. Who are the "earthborn"? The children of the earth. Who are the children of the earth? They who desire earthly inheritances. Who

are the ”sons of men”? They who appertain to the Son of Man. We have already before explained this distinction to your Sanctity, and have concluded that Adam was a man, but not the son of man; that Christ was the Son of Man, but was God also. For whosoever pertain to Adam, are ”earthborn: whosoever pertain to Christ, are ”sons of men. Nevertheless, let all hear, I withhold my discourse from no one. If one is ”earthborn,” let him hear, because of the judgment: another is a ”son of man,” let him hear for the kingdom’s sake. ”The rich and poor together. Again, the same words are repeated. The expression ”rich” refers to the ”earthborn; but the word ”poor” to the ”sons of men. By the ”rich” understand the proud, by the ”poor” the humble. ...He saith in another Psalm, ”The poor shall eat and be satisfied. How hath he commended the poor? ”The poor shall eat and be satisfied. What eat they? That Food which the faithful know. How shall they be satisfied? By imitating the Passion of their Lord, and not without cause receiving their recompense.

”The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and they shall praise the Lord who seek Him. What of the rich? Even they eat. But how eat they? ”All the rich upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. He said not, ”Have eaten and are satisfied; but, ”have eaten and worshipped. They worship God indeed, but they will not display brotherly humaneness. These eat and worship; those eat and are filled: yet both eat. Of the eater what he eateth is required: let him not be forbidden by the distributor to eat, but let him be admonished to fear him who doth require his account. Let these words then be heard by sinners and righteous, nations, and those who inhabit the world, ”earthborn and sons of men, the rich and the poor together: not divided, not separated. That is for the time of the harvest to do, the hand of the winnower will effect that Now together let rich and poor hear, let goats and sheep feed in the same pasture, until He come who shall separate the one on His right hand, the other on His left. Let them all hear together the teacher, lest separated from one another they hear the voice of the Judge.

4. And what is it they are now to hear? ”My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my hear understanding” (ver. 3). And this repetition is perhaps made, lest perchance if he had said only ”my mouth,” thou shouldest suppose that one spake to thee who had understanding but in his lips. For many have understanding in their lips, but have not in their heart, of whom the Scripture saith, ”This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.” What saith he then who speaketh to thee? when he hath said, ”My mouth shall speak of wisdom,” in order that thou mayest know that what is poured forth from the mouth floweth from the bottom of the heart, he hath added, ”And the meditation of my heart of understanding.”

5. ”I will incline mine ear to the parable, I will show my proposition upon the harp” (ver. 4). ...And why ”to a parable”? Because ”now we see through a glass darkly,” as saith the Apostle; ”whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For our vision is not yet that face to face, where there are no longer parables, where there no longer are riddles and comparisons. Whatever now we understand we behold through riddles. A riddle is a dark parable which it is hard to understand. Howsoever a man may cultivate his heart

and apply himself to apprehend mysteries, so long as we see through the corruption of this flesh, we see but in part. ...But as He was seen by those who believed, and by those who crucified Him, when He was judged; so will He be seen, when He shall have begun to be judge, both by those whom He shall condemn, and by those whom He shall crown. But that vision of divinity, which He hath promised to them that love Him, when He saith, "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and he that loveth Me keepeth My commandments, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him: this the ungodly shall not see. This manifestation is in a certain way familiar: He keepeth it for His own, He will not show it to the ungodly. Of what sort is the vision itself? Of what sort is Christ? Equal to the Father.

Of what sort is Christ? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For this vision we sigh now, and groan so long as we sojourn here; to this vision we shall be brought home at the last, this vision now we see but darkly. If then we see now darkly, let us "incline our ear to the parable," and then let us "show our proposition upon the harp: let us hear what we say, do what we enjoin.

6. And what hath he said? "And wherefore shall I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me" (ver. 5). He beginneth something obscurely. Therefore he ought the rather to fear if the iniquity of his heel shall compass him. Nay, for let not man fear, he saith, who hath not power to escape. For example, he who feareth death, what shall he do to escape death? Let him tell me how he is to escape what Adam oweth, he who is born of Adam. But let him consider that he is born of Adam, and hath followed Christ, and ought to pay what Adam oweth, and obtain what Christ hath promised. Therefore, he who feareth death can no wise escape: but he who feareth the damnation which the ungodly shall hear, "Go ye into everlasting fire," hath an escape. Let him not fear then. For why should he fear? Will the iniquity of his heel compass him? If then he avoid "the iniquity of his heel," and walk in the ways of God, he shall not come to the evil day: the evil day, the last day, shall not be evil to him. ...Now while they live, let them take heed to themselves, let them put away iniquity from their heel: let them walk in that way, let them walk in the way of which He saith Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life:

" and let them not fear in the evil day, for He giveth them safety who became "The Way. Therefore let them avoid the iniquity of their heel. With the heel a man slippeth. Let your Love observe. What was said by God to the Serpent? "She shall mark thy head, and thou shalt mark her heel. The devil marketh thy heel, in order that when thou slippest he may overthrow thee. He marketh thy heel, do thou mark his head. What is his head? The beginning of an evil suggestion. When he beginneth to suggest evil thoughts, then do thou thrust him away before pleasure ariseth, and consent followeth; and so shalt thou avoid his head, and he shall not grasp thy heel. But wherefore said He this to Eve? Because through the flesh man doth slip. Our flesh is an Eve within us. "He that loveth his wife," he saith, "loveth himself. What meaneth "himself"? He continueth, and saith, "For no man ever yet hath hated his own flesh. Because then the devil would make us slip through the flesh, just as he made that man Adam to slip, through Eve; Eve is bidden to mark the head of the devil,

because the devil marketh her heel. "If then the iniquity of our heel shall compass us, why fear we in the evil day," since being converted to Christ we are able not to do iniquity; and there will be nothing to compass us, and we shall joy and not sorrow in the last day?

7. But who are they whom the "iniquity of their heel shall compass"? "They who trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory" (ver. 6). Therefore such sins will I avoid, and the "iniquity of my heel" shall never compass me. What is avoiding such sins? Let us not trust in our own virtue, let us not glory in the abundance of our own riches, but let us glory in Him who hath promised to us, being humble, exaltation, and hath threatened condemnation to men exalted; and then iniquity of our heel shall never compass us.

8. There are some who rely on their friends, others rely on their virtue, others on their riches. This is the presumption of mankind which relieth not on God. He hath spoken of virtue, he hath spoken of riches, he speaketh of friends. "Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem?" (ver. 7). Dost thou expect that man shall redeem thee from the wrath to come? If brother redeem thee not, shall man redeem thee? Who is the brother, who if He hath not redeemed thee, no man will redeem? It is He who said after His resurrection, "Go, tell My brethren." Our Brother He hath willed to be: and when we say to God, "Our Father," this is manifested in us. For he that saith to God, "Our Father;" saith to Christ, "Brother." Therefore let him that hath God for his Father and Christ for his Brother, not fear in the evil day. "For the iniquity of his heel shall not compass him;" for he relieth not on his virtue, nor glorieth in the abundance of his riches, nor vaunteth himself of his powerful friends. Let him rely on Him who died for him, that he might not die eternally: who for his sake was humbled, in order that he might be exalted; who sought him ungodly, in order that He might be sought by him faithful. Therefore if He redeem not, shall man redeem? Shall any man redeem, if the Son of man redeem not? If Christ redeem not, shall Adam redeem? "Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem?"

9. "He shall not give to God his propitiation, and the price of the redemption of his soul" (ver. 8). He trusteth in his virtue, and in the abundance of his riches doth glory, who "shall not give to God his propitiation : that is, satisfaction whereby he may prevail with God for his sins: "nor the price of the redemption of his soul," who relieth on his virtue, and on his friends, and on his riches. But who are they that give the price of the redemption of their souls? They to whom the Lord saith, "Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. They give the price of the redemption of their soul who cease not to do almsdeeds. So those whom the Apostle chargeth by Timothy he would not have to be proud, lest they should glory in the abundance of their riches. Lastly, what they possessed he would not have to grow old in their hands: but that something should be made of it to be for the price of the redemption of their souls. For he saith, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded: nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. And as if they had said, "What shall we then make of our riches? he continueth, "Let them be

rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," and they will not lose that. How know we?

Hear what followeth. "Let them lay up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life. So shall they give the price of the redemption of their soul. And our Lord counselleth this: "Make for yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. where thief approacheth not, neither moth corrupteth. God would not have thee lose thy wealth, but He hath given thee counsel to change the place thereof. Let your love understand. Suppose thy friend were just now to enter thy house, and find thou hadst placed thy store of grain in a damp place, and he knew the natural proneness of grain to decay, which thou perchance knewest not, he would give thee counsel of this sort, saying, "Brother, thou art losing what with great toil thou hast gathered, thou hast placed it in a damp place, in a few days this grain will decay. "And what am I to do, brother? "Raise it into a higher place.

Thou wouldest hearken to thy friend suggesting that thou shouldest raise grain from a lower to a higher chamber, and dost thou not hearken to Christ charging thee to lift thy treasure from earth to heaven, where not what thou keepest in store may be paid to thee, but that thou mayest keep in store earth, mayest receive heaven, mayest keep in store things mortal, mayest receive things everlasting, that while thou lendest Christ to receive at thy hands but a small loan upon earth, He may repay thee a great recompense in Heaven? Nevertheless, they whom "the iniquity of their heel shall compass," because they trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory, and rely on human friends who are able to help them in nothing, "shall not give to God their propitiation, and the price of the redemption of their souls."

10. And what hath he said of such a man? "Yea, he hath laboured for ever, and shall live till the end" (ver. 9). His labour shall be without end, his life shall have an end. Wherefore saith he, "He shall live till the end"? Because such men think life to be nought but daily enjoyments. So when many poor and needy men of our times, unstable, and not looking to what God doth promise them for their labours, see rich men in daily feastings, in the splendour and glitter of gold and of silver, they say what? "These are the only people; they really live! This is a saying, be it said no longer: we both warn you, and it remains to warn you, that it be said by fewer persons than it would be said, if we had not warned you. For we do not presume to say that we so say these words, as that it be not said, but that it be said by fewer persons: for it will be said even unto the end of the world. It is too little that he saith, "he liveth; he addeth and saith, he thundereth thinkest thou that he alone liveth? Let him live! his life will be ended: because he giveth not the price of the redemption of his soul, his life will end, his labour will not end. "He laboured for ever, and shall live till the end. How shall he live till the end?

As he lived that was "clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," who, being proud and puffed up, spurned the man full of sores lying before his gate, whose sores the dogs licked, and who longed for the crumbs which fell from his table. What did

those riches profit him? Both changed places: the one was borne from the rich man's gate into Abraham's bosom, the other from his rich feasts was cast into the fire; the one was in peace, the other burned; the one was sated, the other thirsted; the one had laboured till the end, but he lived for ever; the other had lived till the end, but he laboured for ever. And what did it profit the rich man, who asked, while lying in torments in hell, that a drop of water should be poured upon his tongue from the finger of Lazarus, saying, "For I am burning here in this flame," and it was not granted to him? One longed for the drop from the finger, as the other had for the crumbs from the rich man's table; but the labour of the one is ended, and the life of the other is ended: the labour of this is for ever, the life of that is for ever. We who labour perchance here on the earth, have not our life here: and shall not be so placed hereafter, for our life shall be Christ for ever:

while they who "will" have their life here, shall labour for ever and live till the end.

11. "For he shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying" (ver. 10). The man who laboured for ever and shall live till the end, "shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying. What is this? He shall not comprehend what death is, whenever he shall have seen wise men dying. For he saith to himself, "this fellow, for all he was wise and dwelled with wisdom and worshipped God with piety, is he not dead? Therefore I will enjoy myself while I live; for if they that are wise in other respects, could do anything, they would not have died. Just as the Jews saw Christ hanging on the Cross and despised Him, saying, "If this Man were the Son of God, He would come down from the Cross: not seeing what death is. If they had seen what death is; if they had seen, I say, He died for a time, that He might live again for ever: they lived for a time, that they might die for ever. But because they saw Him dying, they saw not death, that is to say, they understood not what was very death. What say they even in Wisdom? "Let us condemn Him with a most shameful death, for by His own sayings He shall be respected; for if he is indeed the Son of God, He will deliver Him from the hands of His adversaries: He will not suffer His Son to die, if He is truly His Son.

But when they saw themselves insulting Him upon the Cross, and Him not descending from the Cross, they said, He was indeed but a Man. Thus was it spoken: and surely He could have come down from the Cross, He that could rise again from the tomb: but He taught us to bear with those who insult us; He taught us to be patient of the tongues of men, to drink now the cup of bitterness, and afterwards to receive everlasting salvation. ...

12. "The imprudent and unwise shall perish together. Who is "the imprudent"? He that looketh not out for himself for the future. Who is "the unwise"? He that perceiveth not in what evil case he is. But do thou perceive in what evil case thou art now, and look out that thou be in a good case for the future. By perceiving in what evil case thou art, thou wilt not be unwise: by looking out for thyself for the future, thou wilt not be imprudent. Who is he that looketh out for himself? That servant to whom his master gave what he should expend, and afterwards said to him, "Thou canst not be my steward, give an account of thy stewardship; and who answered, "What shall I do? I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed; had,

nevertheless, by even his master's goods made to himself friends, who might receive him when he was put out of his stewardship. Now he cheated his master in order that he might get to himself friends to receive him: fear not thou lest thou be cheating, the Lord Himself exhorteth thee to do so: He saith Himself to thee, "Make to thyself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Perhaps what thou hast got, thou hast gotten of unrighteousness: or perhaps this very thing is unrighteousness, that thou hast and another hath not, thou aboundest and another needeth. Of this mammon of unrighteousness, of these richeswhich the unrighteous call riches, make to thyself friends, and thou shalt be prudent:

thou art gaining for thyself, and art not cheating. For now thou seemest to lose it. Wilt thou lose it if thou place it in a treasury? For boys, my brethren, no sooner find some money, wherewith to buy something, than they put it in a money-box, which they open not until afterwards: do they, because they see not what they have got, on that account lose it? Fear not: boys put in a money-box, and are secure: dost thou place it in the hand of Christ, and fear? Be prudent, and provide for thyself against the future in Heaven. Be therefore prudent, copy the ant, as saith the Scripture: "Store in summer, lest thou hunger in winter; the winter is the last day, the day of tribulation; the winter is the day of offences and of bitterness: gather what may be there for thee for the future: but if thou doest not so, thou wilt perish both imprudent and unwise.

13. But that rich man too died, and a like funeral was made for him. See to what men have brought themselves: they regard not what a wicked life he led while he lived, but what pomp followed him when he died! O happy he, whom so many lament! But the other lived in such sort, that few lament. For all ought to lament a man living so sadly. But there is the funeral train; he is received in a costly tomb, he is wound in costly robes, he is buried in perfumes and spices. Secondly, what a monument he hath! How marbled! Doth he live in that same monument? He is therein dead. Men deeming these to be good things, have strayed from God, and have not sought the true good things, and have been deceived with the false. To this end see what followeth. He who gave not the price of the redemption of his soul, who understood not death, because he saw wise men dying, he became imprudent and unwise, in order that he might die with them. And how shall they perish, who "shall leave their riches to aliens"? ...

14. But do those same aliens indeed serve them who are called their own? Hear in what they serve them, observe how they are ridiculed why hath he said, "to strangers"? Because they can do them no good. Nevertheless, wherein do they seem to themselves to do good? "And their tombs shall be their house for ever" (ver. 11). Now because these tombs are erected the tombs are a house. For often thou hearest a rich man saying, I have a house of marble which I must quit, and I think not for myself of an eternal house, where I shall alway be. When he thinketh to make for himself a monument of marble or of sculpture, he is deeming as it were of an eternal house: as if therein this rich man would abide! If he would abide there, he would not burn in hell. We must consider that the place where the spirit of an evil doer abideth, is not where the mortal body is laid: but "their tombs shall

be their house for ever. Their dwelling places are from generation to generation. ”Dwelling places” are wherein they abode for a season: ”house” is wherein they will abide as it were for ever, that is to say, their tombs. Thus they leave their dwelling places, where they abode while they lived, to their families, and they pass as it were to everlasting houses, to their tombs. What profit to them are ”their dwelling places, from generation to generation”?

Now suppose a generation and generation are sons, grandsons there will be, and great grandsons; what do their dwelling places, what do they profit them? What? Hear: ”they shall invoke their names in their lands. What is this? They shall take bread and wine to their tombs, and there they shall invoke the names of the dead. Dost thou consider how loudly was invoked the name of the rich man after his death, when men drank them drunk at his monument, and there came down not one drop upon his own burning tongue? Men minister to their own belly, not to the ghosts of their friends. The souls of the dead nothing doth reach, but what they have done of themselves while alive: but if they have done nought of themselves while alive, nothing doth reach them dead. But what do the survivors? They will but ”invoke their names in their lands.”

15. ”And man though he was in honour perceived not, he was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them” (ver. 12). ...They ought, on the contrary, to have made ready for themselves an eternal house in good works, to have made ready for themselves everlasting life, to have sent before them expenditure, to have followed their works, to have ministered to a needy companion, to have given to him with whom they were walking, not to have despised Christ covered with sores before their gate, who hath said, ”Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” However, ”man being in honour hath not understood.” What is, ”being in honour”? Being made after the image and likeness of God, man is preferred to beasts. For God hath not so made man as He made a beast: but God hath made man for beasts to minister to: is it to his strength then, and not to his understanding? Nay. But he ”understood not;” and he who was made after the image of God, ”is compared to the beasts without sense, and is made like unto them.” Whence it is said elsewhere, ”Be ye not like to horse and mule, in which there is no understanding.”

16. ”This their own way is an offence to them” (ver. 13). Be it an offence to them, not to thee. But when will it be so to thee too? If thou thinkest such men to be blessed. If thou perceivest that they be not blessed, their own way will be an offence to themselves; not to Christ, not to His Body, not to His members. ”And afterwards they shall bless with their mouth.” What meaneth, ”Afterwards they shall bless with their mouth”? Though they have become such, that they seek nothing but temporal goods, yet they become hypocrites: and when they bless God, with lips they bless, and not with heart. Christians like these, when to them eternal life is commended, and they are told, that in the name of Christ they ought to be despisers of riches, do make grimaces in their hearts: and if they dare not do it with open face, lest they blush, or lest they should be rebuked by men, yet they do it in heart, and scorn; and there remaineth in their mouth blessing, and in their heart cursing.

The Second Part.

1. "Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd" (ver. 14). Whose? Of those whose way is a stumbling-block to themselves. Whose? Of those who mind only things present, while they think not of things future: of those who think not of any life, but of that which must be called death. Not without cause, then, like sheep in hell, have they death to their shepherd. What meaneth, "they have death to their shepherd"? For is death either some thing or some power? Yea, death is either the separation of the soul from the body, or a separation of the soul from God, and that indeed which men fear is the separation of the soul from the body: but the real death, which men do not fear, is the separation of the soul from God. And ofttimes when men fear that which doth separate the soul from the body, they fall into that wherein the soul is separated from God. This then is death. But how is "death their shepherd"? If Christ is life, the devil is death. But we read in many places in Scripture, how that Christ is life. But the devil is death, not because he is himself death, but because through him is death. For whether that (death) wherein Adam fell was given man to drink by the persuasion of him:

or whether that wherein the soul is separated from the body, still they have him for the author thereof, who first falling through pride envied him who stood, and overthrew him who stood with an invisible death, in order that he might have to pay the visible death. They who belong to him have death to their shepherd: but we who think of future immortality, and not without reason do wear the sign of the Cross of Christ on the forehead, have no shepherd but life. Of unbelievers death is the shepherd, of believers life is the shepherd. If then in hell are the sheep, whose shepherd is death, in heaven are the sheep, whose shepherd is life. What then? Are we now in heaven? In heaven we are by faith. For if not in heaven, where is the "Lift up your heart"? If not in heaven, whence with the Apostle Paul, "For our conversation is in heaven"? In body we walk on earth, in heart we dwell in heaven. We dwell there, if thither we send anything which holdeth us there. For no one dwelleth in heart, save where thought is: but there his thought is, where his treasure is. He hath treasured on earth, his heart doth not withdraw from earth: he hath treasured in heaven, his heart from heaven doth not come down: for the Lord saith plainly, "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also."

2. They, then, whose shepherd is death, seem to flourish for a time, and the righteous to labour: but why? Because it is yet night. What meaneth, it is night? The merits of the righteous appear not, and the felicity of the unrighteous hath, as it were, a name. So long as it is winter, grass appeareth more verdant than a tree. For grass flourisheth through the winter, a tree is as it were dry through the winter: when in summer time the sun hath come forth with greater heat, the tree, which seemed dry through the winter, is bursting with leaves, and putteth forth fruits, but the grass withereth: thou wilt see the honour of the tree, the grass is dried. So also now the righteous labour, before that summer cometh. There is life in the root, it doth not yet appear in the branches. But our root is love. And what saith the Apostle? That we ought to have our root above, in order that life may be our

shepherd, because our dwelling ought not to quit heaven, because in this earth we ought to walk as if dead; so that living above, below we may be dead; not so as that being dead above, we may live below. ...Our labour shall appear in the morning, and there shall be fruit in the morning: so that they that now labour shall hereafter reign, and they that now boast them and are proud, shall hereafter be brought under. For what followeth? "Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd; and the righteous shall reign over them in the morning."

3. Endure thou the night, yearn for the morning. Think not because the night hath life, the morning too hath not life. Doth then he that sleepeth live, and he that riseth live not? Is not he that sleepeth more like death? And who are they that sleep? They whom the Apostle Paul rouseth, if they choose but to awake. For to certain he saith, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." They then that are lightened by Christ watch now, but the fruit of their watchings appeareth not yet: in the morning it shall appear, that is, when doubtful things of this world shall have passed away. For these are very night: for do they not appear to thee like darkness? ...But they on whom men have trampled, and who were ridiculed for believing, shall hear from Life Itself, whom they have for shepherd, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Therefore the righteous" shall reign over them," not now, but "in the morning." Let no one say, Wherefore am I a Christian? I rule no one, I would rule the wicked. Be not in haste, thou shalt reign, but "in the morning." "And the help of them shall grow old in hell from their glory." Now they have glory, in hell they shall grow old. What is "the help of them"? Help from money, help from friends, help from their own might. But when a man shall be dead, "in that day shall perish all his thoughts." How great glory he seemed to have among men, while he lived, so great oldness and decay of punishments shall he have, when he shall be dead in hell.

4. "Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul" (ver. 15). Behold the voice of one hoping in the future: "Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul." Perhaps it is the voice of one still wishing to be relieved from oppression. Some one is in prison, he saith, "God shall redeem my soul:" some one is in bond, "God shall redeem my soul:" some one is suffering peril by sea, is being tossed by waves and raging tempests, what saith he? "God shall redeem my soul." They would be delivered for the sake of this life. Not such is the voice of this man. Hear what followeth: "God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He shall have received me." He is speaking of this redemption, which Christ now showeth in Himself. For He hath descended into hell, and hath ascended into heaven. What we have seen in the Head we have found in the Body. For what we have believed in the Head, they that have seen, have themselves told us, and by themselves we have seen: "For we are" all "one body." But are they better that hear, we worse to whom it hath been told? Not so saith The Life Itself, Our Shepherd Himself. For He rebuketh a certain disciple of His, doubting and desiring to handle His scars, and when he had handled the scars and had cried out, saying, "My Lord and my God," seeing His disciple doubting, and looking to the whole world about to believe, "Because thou hast seen Me," He saith, "thou hast believed: blessed are they that see not, and believe." "But God shall redeem my soul from the land of hell, when He hath

received me." Here then what? Labour, oppression, tribulation, temptation: expect nothing else. Where joy? In future hope. ...

5. ...Perchance thy heart saith, Wretch that I am, I suppose to no purpose I have believed, God doth not regard things human. God therefore doth awaken us: and He saith what? "Fear not, though a man have become rich" (ver. 16). For why didst thou fear, because a man hath become rich? Thou didst fear that thou hadst believed to no purpose, that perchance thou shouldest have lost the labour for thy faith, and the hope of thy conversion: because perchance there hath come in thy way gain with guilt, and thou couldest have been rich, if thou hadst seized upon that same gain with the guilt, and neededst not have laboured; and thou, remembering what God hath threatened, hast refrained from guilt, and hast contemned the gain: thou seest another man that hath made gain by guilt, and hath suffered no harm; and thou fearest to be good. "Fear not," saith the Spirit of God to thee, "though a man shall have become rich." Wouldest thou not have eyes but for things present? Things future He hath promised, who hath risen again; peace in this world, and repose in this life, He hath not promised. Every man doth seek repose; a good thing he is seeking, but not in the proper region thereof he is seeking it. There is no peace in this life; in Heaven hath been promised that which on earth we are seeking: in the world to come hath been promised that which in this world we are seeking.

6. "Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house he multiplied. Wherefore "fear not"? "For when he shall die, he shall not receive anything" (ver. 17). Thou seest him living, consider him dying. Thou markest what he hath here, mark what he taketh with him. What cloth he take with him? He hath store of gold, he hath store of silver, numerous estates, slaves: he dieth, these remain, he knoweth not for whom. For though he leaveth them for whom he will, he keepeth them not for whom he will. For many have gained even what was not left them, and many have lost what was left them. All these things then remain, and he taketh with him what? Perhaps some one saith, He taketh that with him in which he is wound, and that which is expended upon him for a costly and marble tomb. to erect a monument, this he taketh with him. I say, not even this. For these things are presented to him without his feeling them. If thou deckest a man sleeping and not awake, he hath the decorations with him on the couch perhaps the decorations are resting upon the body of him as he lieth, and perhaps he seeth himself in tatters during sleep. What he feeleth is more to him than what he feeleth not Though even this when he shall have awaked will not be: yet to him sleeping, that which he saw in sleep was more than that which he felt not.

Why then, brethren, should men say to themselves, Let money be spent at my death: why do I leave my heirs rich? Many things will they have of mine, let me too have something of my own for my body. What shall a dead body have? what shall rotting flesh have? what shall flesh not feeling have? If that rich man had anything, whose tongue was dry, then man hath something of his own. My brethren, do we read in the Gospel, that this rich man appeared in the fire with all-silken and fine-linen coverings? Was he of such sort in hell as he was

in feastings at table? When he thirsted and desired a drop, all those things were not there. Therefore man carrieth not with him anything, nor doth the dead take with him that which the burial taketh. For where feeling is, there is the man; where is no feeling, the man is not. There lieth fallen the vessel which contained the man, the house which held the man. The body let us call the house, the spirit let us call the inhabitant of the house. The spirit is tormented in hell: what doth it profit him, that the body lieth in spices and perfumes, wound in costly linens? just as if the master of the house should be sent into banishment, and thou shouldest garnish the walls of his house.

He in banishment is in need, and doth faint with hunger, he scarce findeth to himself one hovel where he may snatch a sleep, and thou sayest, "Happy is he, for his house hath been garnished. Who would not judge that thou wast either jesting or wast mad? Thou dost garnish the body, the spirit is tormented. Give something to the spirit, and ye have given something to the dead man. But what wilt thou give him, when he desired one drop, and received not? For the man scorned to send before him anything. Wherefore scorned? "because this their way is a stumbling-block to them. He minded not any but the present life, he thought not but how he might be buried, wound in costly vestments. His soul was taken from him, as the Lord saith: "Thou fool,this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? And that is fulfilled which this Psalm saith: "Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house be multiplied: for when he shall die he shall not receive anything, nor shall his glory descend together with him."

7. Let your love observe: "For his soul shall be blessed in his life" (ver. 18). As long as he lived he did well for himself. This all men say, but say falsely. It is a blessing from the mind of the blesser, not from the truth itself. For what sayest thou? Because he ate and drank, because he did what he chose, because he feasted sumptuously, therefore he did well with himself. I say, he did ill for himself. Not I say, but Christ. He did ill for himself. For that rich man, when he feasted sumptuously every day, was supposed to do well with himself: but when he began to burn in hell, then that which was supposed to be well was found to be ill. For what he had eaten with men above, he digested in hell beneath. Unrighteousness I mean, brethren, on which he used to feast. He used to eat costly banquets with the mouth of flesh, with his heart's mouth he used to eat unrighteousness. What he ate with his heart's mouth with men above, this he digested amid those punishments in the places beneath. And verily he had eaten for a time, he digested ill for everlasting. Is then unrighteousness eaten? perhaps some one saith: what is it that he saith? Unrighteousness eaten? It is not I that say: hear the Scripture: "As a sour grape is vexation to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is unrighteousness to them that use it.

For he that shall have eaten unrighteousness, that is, he that shall have had unrighteousness wilfully, shall not be able to eat righteousness. For righteousness is bread. Who is bread? "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Himself is the bread of our heart. ...Is then even righteousness eaten? If it were not eaten, the Lord would not have

said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Therefore "since his soul shall be blessed in life," in life it "shall" be blessed, in death it shall be tormented. ...

8. "He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good." Be not of such sort, brethren: see ye how that to this end we say these words, to this end we sing, to this end we treat, to this end toil-do not these things. Your business doth prove you: sometimes in your business ye hear the truth, and ye blaspheme. The Church ye blaspheme. Wherefore? Because ye are Christians. "If so it be, I betake myself to Donatus's party: I will be a heathen." Wherefore? Because thou hast eaten bread, and the teeth are in pain. When thou sawest the bread itself, thou didst praise; thou beginnest to eat, and the teeth are in pain; that is, when thou wast hearing the Word of God thou didst praise: when it is said to thee, "Do this," thou blasphemest: do not so ill: say this, "The bread is good, but I cannot eat it." But now if thou seest with the eyes, thou praisest: when thou beginnest to close the teeth thou sayest, "Bad is this bread, and like him that made it." So it cometh to pass that thou confessest to God, when God doeth thee good and thou liest when thou singest, "I will alway bless God, His praise is ever in my mouth." How alway? If alway gain, alway He is blessed if sometime there is loss, He is not blessed, but blasphemed. Forsooth thou blessest alway, forsooth His praise is ever in thy mouth! Thou wilt be such as just now he describeth: "He will confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good."

9. "He shall enter even unto the generations of his fathers" (ver. 19): that is, he shall imitate his fathers. For the unrighteous, that now are, have brothers, have fathers. Unrighteous men of old, are the fathers of the present; and they that are now unrighteous, are the fathers of unrighteous posterity: just as the fathers of the righteous, the righteous of old, are the fathers of the righteous that now are; and they that now are, are the fathers of them that are to be. The Holy Spirit hath willed to show that righteousness is not evil when men murmur against her: but these men have their father from the beginning, even to the generation of their fathers. Two men Adam begat, and in one was unrighteousness, in one was righteousness: unrighteousness in Cain, righteousness in Abed Unrighteousness seemed to prevail over righteousness, because Cain unrighteous slew Abel righteous in the night. Is it so in the morning? Nay, "but the righteous shall reign over them in the morning." The morning shall come, and it shall be seen where Abel is, and where Cain. So all men who are after Cain, and so all who are after Abel, even unto the end of the world. "He shall enter even unto the generations of his fathers: even to eternity he shall not see light." Because even when he was here, he was in darkness, taking pleasure in false goods, and not loving real goods: even so he shall go hence into hell: from the darkness of his dreams the darkness of torments shall receive him. Therefore, "even to eternity he shall not see light."

But wherefore this? What he hath written in the middle of the Psalm, the same also he hath writ at the end: "Man, though he was in honour, understood not, was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them" (ver. 20). But ye, brethren, consider that ye be men made after the image and likeness of God. The image of God is within, is

not in the body; is not in these ears which ye see, and eyes, and nostrils, and palate, and hands, and feet; but is made nevertheless: wherein is the intellect, wherein is the mind, wherein the power of discovering truth, wherein is faith, wherein is your hope, wherein your charity, there God hath His Image: there at least ye perceive and see that these things pass away; for so he hath said in another Psalm, "Though man walketh in an image, yet he is disquieted in vain: he heapeth up treasures, and knoweth not for whom he shall gather them." Be not disquieted, for of whatsoever kind these things be, they are transitory, if ye are men who being in honour understand. For if being men in honour ye understand not, ye are compared to the beasts without sense, and are made like to them.

Psalm 50

1. How much availeth the Word of God to us for the correction of our life, both regarding His rewards to be expected, and His punishments to be feared, let each one measure in himself; and let him put his conscience without deceit before His eyes, and not flatter himself in a danger so great: for ye see that even our Lord God Himself doth flatter no one: though He comforteth us by promising His blessings, and by strengthening our hope; yet them that live ill and despise His word He assuredly spareth not. Let each one examine himself, while it is time, and let him see where he is, and either persevere in good, or be changed from evil. For as he saith in this Psalm, not any man whatever nor any angel whatever, but, "The Lord, the God of gods, hath spoken" (ver. 1). But in speaking, He hath done what? "He hath called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down." He that "hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down," is Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "the Word made Flesh," in order that He might dwell in us. Our Lord Jesus Christ then is the "God of gods;" because by Himself were all things made, and without Himself was nothing made. The Word of God, if He is God, is truly the God of gods; but whether He be God the Gospel answereth, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And if all things were made by Himself, as He saith in the sequel, then if any were made gods, by Himself were they made. For the one God was not made, and He is Himself alone truly God. But Himself the only God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, is one God.

2. But then who are those gods, or where are they, of whom God is the true God? Another Psalm saith, "God hath stood in the synagogue of gods, but in the midst He judgeth gods. As yet we know not whether perchance any gods be congregated in heaven, and in their congregation, for this is "in the synagogue," God hath stood to judge. See in the same Psalm those to whom he saith, "I have said, Ye are gods, and children of the Highest all; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. It is evident then, that He hath called men gods, that are deified of His Grace, not born of His Substance. For He doth justify, who is just through His own self, and not of another; and He doth deify who is God through Himself, not by the partaking of another. But He that justifieth doth Himself deify, in that by justifying He doth make sons of God. "For He hath given them power to become the sons of God. If we have been made sons of God, we have also been made gods: but this is the effect of Grace adopting, not of nature generating. For the only Son of God, God, and one

God with the Father, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was in the beginning the Word, and the Word with God, the Word God.

The rest that are made gods, are made by His own Grace, are not born of His Substance, that they should be the same as He, but that by favour they should come to Him, and be fellow-heirs with Christ. For so great is the love in Him the Heir, that He hath willed to have fellow-heirs. What covetous man would will this, to have fellow-heirs? But even one that is found so to will, will share with them the inheritance, the sharer having less himself, than if he had possessed alone: but the inheritance wherein we are fellow-heirs of Christ, is not lessened by multitude of possessors, nor is it made narrower by the number of fellow-heirs: but is as great for many as it is for few, as great for individuals as for all. "See," saith the Apostle, "what love God hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and be, the sons of God. And in another place, "Dearly beloved, we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We are therefore in hope, not yet in substance. "But we know," he saith, "that when He shall have appeared, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The Only Son is like Him by birth, we like by seeing. For we are not like in such sort as He, who is the same as He is by whom He was begotten: for we are like, not equal: He, because equal, is therefore like.

We have heard who are the gods that being made are justified, because they are called the sons of God: and who are the gods that are not Gods, to whom the God of gods is terrible? For another Psalm saith, "He is terrible over all gods. And as if thou shouldest enquire, what gods? He saith, "For all the gods of the nations are devils. To the gods of the nations, to the devils, terrible: to the gods made by Himself, to sons, lovely. Furthermore, I find both of them confessing the Majesty of God, both the devils confessed Christ, and the faithful confessed Christ. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," said Peter. "We know who Thou art, Thou art the Son of God," said the devils. A like confession I hear, but like love I find not; nay even here love, there fear. To whom therefore He is lovely, the same are sons; to whom He is terrible, are not sons; to whom He is lovely, the same He hath made gods; those to whom He is terrible He doth prove not to be gods. For these are made gods, those are reputed gods; these Truth maketh gods, those error doth so account.

3. "The God," therefore, "of gods, the Lord hath spoken" (ver. 1). Hath spoken many ways. By Angels He hath Himself spoken, by Prophets He hath Himself spoken, by His own mouth He hath Himself spoken, by His faithful He doth Himself speak, by our lowliness, when we say anything true, He doth Himself speak. See then, by speaking diversely, many ways, by many vessels, by many instruments, yet He doth Himself sound everywhere, by touching, moulding, inspiring: see what He hath done. For "He hath spoken, and hath called the world. What world? Africa, perhaps! for the sake of those that say, the Church of Christ is the portion of Donatus. Africa indeed alone He hath not called, but even Africa He hath not severed. For He that "hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down," leaving out no parts that He hath not called, in His calling hath found Africa. Let it rejoice therefore in unity, not pride itself in division. We say well, that the voice of the

God of gods hath come even into Africa, hath not stayed in Africa. For "He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. There is no place where may lurk the conspiracies of heretics, they have no place wherein they may hide themselves under the shadow of falsehood; for "there is none that can hide himself from the heat thereof. He that hath called the world, hath called even the whole world:

He that hath called the world, hath called as much as He hath formed. Why do false christs and false prophets rise up against me? why is it that they strive to ensnare me with captious words, saying, "Lo! here is Christ, Lo! He is there! " I hear not them that point out portions: the God of gods hath pointed out the whole: "He" that "hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down," hath redeemed the whole; but hath condemned them that lay false claim to portions.

4. But we have heard the world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down: whence doth He begin to call, who hath called? This thing also hear ye: "Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty" (ver. 2). Evidently the Psalm doth agree with the Gospel, which saith, "Throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Hear, "Throughout all nations: He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Hear, "Beginning at Jerusalem: "Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty. Therefore, "He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down," agreeth with the words of the Lord, who saith," It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations. For all nations are from the rising of the sun unto the going down. But that, "Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty," that thence beginneth the beauty of His Gospel, that thence He began to be preached, being "beautiful in form beyond the sons of men," agreeth with the words of the Lord, who saith, "Beginning at Jerusalem. New things are in tune with old, old things with new: the two Seraphim say to one another," Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. The two Testaments are both in tune, and the two Testaments have one voice:

let the voice of the Testaments in tune be heard, not that of pretenders disinherited. This thing then hath the God of gods done, "He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, His semblance going before out of Sion. For in that place were His disciples, who received the Holy Ghost sent from heaven on the fiftieth day after His resurrection. Thence the Gospel, thence the preaching, thence the whole world filled, and that in the Grace of Faith.

5. For when the Lord Himself had come, because He came to suffer, He came hidden: and though He was strong in Himself, He appeared in the flesh weak. For He must needs appear in order that He might not be perceived; be despised, in order that He might be slain. There was semblance of glory in divinity, but it lay concealed in flesh. "For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. So then He walked hidden among the Jews, among His enemies, doing marvels, suffering ills, until He was hanged on the tree, and the Jews seeing Him hanging both despised Him the more, and before the Cross wagging their heads they said, "If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. Hidden then

was the God of gods, and He gave forth words more out of compassion for us than out of His own majesty. For whence, unless assumed from us, were those words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me? But when hath the Father forsaken the Son, or the Son the Father? Are not Father and Son one God? Whence then, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me," save that in the Flesh of infirmity there was acknowledged the voice of a sinner? For as He took upon Him the likeness of the flesh of sin," why should He not take upon Him the voice of sin?

Hidden then was the God of gods, both when He walked among men, and when He hungered, and when He thirsted, and when fatigued He sat, and when with wearied body He slept, and when taken, and when scourged, and when standing before the judge, and when He made answer to him in his pride, "Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it had been given thee from above; and while led as a victim "before His shearer He opened not His mouth," and while crucified, and while buried, He was always hidden God of gods. What took place after He rose again? The disciples marvelled, and at first believed not, until they touched and handled. But flesh had risen, because flesh had been dead: Divinity which could not die, even still lay hid in the flesh of Him rising. Form could be seen, limbs held, scars handled: the Word by whom all things were made, who doth see? who doth hold? who doth handle? And yet "the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us. And Thomas, that was holding Man, understood God as he was able. For when he had handled the scars, he cried out, "My Lord, and my God. Yet the Lord was showing that form, and that flesh, which they had seen upon the Cross, which had been laid in the sepulchre. He stayed with them forty days. ...But what was said to Thomas handling? "Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and believe. We are foretold.

That world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down seeth not, and believeth. Hidden then is the God of gods, both to those among whom He walked, and to those by whom He was crucified, and to those before whose eyes He rose, and to us who believe on Him in heaven sitting, whom we have not seen on earth walking. But even if we were to see, should we not see that which the Jews saw and crucified? It is more, that not seeing we believe Christ to be God, than that they seeing deemed Him only to be man. They in a word by thinking evil slew, we by believing well are made alive.

6. What then, brethren? This God of gods, both then hidden, and now hidden, shall He ever be hidden? Evidently not: hear what followeth: "God shall come manifest" (ver. 3). He that came hidden, shall come manifest. Hidden He came to be judged, manifest He shall come to judge: hidden He came that He might stand before a judge, manifest He shall come that He may be judge even of judges: "He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent. But why? Is He now silent? And whence are all the words that we say? whence those precepts? whence those warnings? whence that trumpet of terror? He is not silent, and is silent: is not silent from warning, is silent from avenging: is not silent from precept, is silent from judgment. For He suffereth sinners daily doing evil things, not caring for God, not in their conscience, not in heaven, not in earth: all these things escape Him not, and universally

He doth admonish all; and whenever He chastiseth any on earth, it is admonition, not yet condemnation. He is silent then from judgment, He is hidden in heaven, as yet He intercedeth for us: He is long-suffering to sinners, not putting forth His wrath, but awaiting penitence. He saith in another place: "I have held my peace, shall I always hold my peace? When then He shall not hold His peace, "God shall come manifest. What God? "Our God. And the God Himself, who is our God: for he is not God, who is not our God.

For the gods of the nations are devils: the God of Christians is very God. Himself shall come, but "manifest," not still to be mocked, not still to be buffeted and scourged: He shall come, but "manifest," not still to be smitten with a reed upon the head, not still to be crucified, slain, buried: for all these things God being hidden hath willed to suffer. "He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent."

7. But that He shall come to judgment, the following words teach. "Fire shall go before Him. Do we fear? Be we changed, and we shall not fear. Let chaff fear the fire: what doth it to gold? What thou mayest do is now in thy power, so thou mayest not experience, for want of being corrected, that which is to come even against thy will. For if we might so bring it about, brethren, that the day of judgment should not come; I think that even then it were not for us to live ill. If the fire of the day of judgment were not to come, and over sinners there impended only separation from the face of God, in whatever affluence of delights they might be, not seeing Him by whom they were created, and separated from that sweetness of His ineffable countenance, in whatever eternity and impunity of sin, they ought to bemoan themselves. But what shall I say, or to whom shall I say? This is a punishment to lovers, not to despisers. They that have begun to feel in any degree the sweetness of wisdom and truth, know what I say, how great a punishment it is to be only separated from the face of God: but they that have not tasted that sweetness, if not yet they yearn for the face of God, let them fear even fire; let punishments terrify those, whom rewards win not. Of no value to thee is what God promiseth, tremble at what He threateneth.

The sweetness of His presence shall come; thou art not changed, thou art not awakened, thou sighest not, thou longest not: thou embracest thy sins and the delights of thy flesh, thou art heaping stubble to thyself, the fire will come. "Fire shall burn in His presence. This fire will not be like thy hearth-fire, into which nevertheless, if thou art compelled to thrust thy hand, thou wilt do whatsoever he would have thee who doth threaten this alternative. If he say to thee, "write against the life of thy father, write against the lives of thy children, for if thou do not, I thrust thy hand into thy fire: thou wilt do it in order that thy hand be not burned, in order that thy member be not burned for a time, though it is not to be ever in pain. Thine enemy threateneth then but so light an evil, and thou doest evil; God threateneth eternal evil, and doest thou not good? To do evil not even menaces should compel thee: from doing good not even menaces should deter thee. But by the menaces of God, by menaces of everlasting fire, thou art dissuaded from evil, invited to good. Wherefore doth it grieve thee, except because thou believest not? Let each one then examine his heart, and see what faith doth hold there. If we believe a judgment to come, brethren, let us live

well. Now is time of mercy, then will be time of judgment. No one will say, "Call me back to my former years.

Even then men will repent, but will repent in vain: now let there be repentance, while there is fruit of repentance; now let there be applied to the roots of the tree a basket of dung, sorrow of heart and tears; lest He come and pluck up by the roots. For when He shall have plucked up, then the fire is to be looked for. Now, even if the branches have been broken, they can again be grafted in; then, "every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. "Fire shall burn in His presence."

8. "And a mighty tempest round about Him" (ver. 3). "A mighty tempest," in order to winnow so great a floor. In this tempest shall be that winnowing whereby from the saints shall be put away everything impure, from the faithful every unreality; from godly men and them that fear the Word of God, every scorner and every proud man. For now a sort of mixture doth lie there, from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Let us see then how He will do that is to come, what He will do with that tempest which "shall be a mighty tempest round about Him." Doubtless this tempest is to make a sort of separation. It is that separation which they waited not for, who brake the nets, before they came to land. But in this separation there is made a sort of distinction between good men and bad men. There be some that now follow Christ with lightened shoulders without the load of the world's cares, who have not heard in vain, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me;" to which sort is said, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Some then shall be judging with the Lord: but others to be judged, but to be placed on the right hand. For that there will be certain judging with the Lord, we have most evident testimony, which I have but now quoted: "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ...

9. But what the Lord did after His resurrection, signified what is to be to us after our resurrection, in that number of the kingdom of heaven, where shall be no bad man. ...Lastly, those seven thousand of whom reply was made to Elias, "I have left me seven thousand men that have not bowed knees before Baal," far exceed that number of fishes. Therefore the hundred and fifty-three fishes doth not alone express just such a number of saints, but Scripture doth express the whole number of saints and righteous men by so great a number for a particular reason; to wit, in order that in those hundred and fifty-three all may be understood that pertain to the resurrection to eternal life. For the Law hath ten commandments: but the Spirit of Grace, through which alone the Law is fulfilled, is called sevenfold. The number then must be examined, what mean ten and seven: ten in commandments, seven in the grace of the Holy Spirit: by which grace the commandments are fulfilled. Ten then and seven contain all that pertain to the resurrection, to the right hand, to the kingdom of heaven, to life eternal, that is, they that fulfil the Law by the Grace of the Spirit, not as it were by their own work or their own merit.

But ten and seven, if thou countest from one unto seventeen, by adding all the numbers by steps, so that to one thou mayest add two, add three, add four, that they may become ten, by adding five that they may become fifteen, by adding six that they may become twenty-one, by adding seven that they may become twenty-eight, by adding eight that they may become thirty-six, by adding nine that they may become forty-five, by adding ten that they may become fifty-five, by adding eleven that they may become sixty-six, by adding twelve that they may become seventy-eight, by adding thirteen that they may become ninety-one, by adding fourteen that they may become one hundred and five, by adding fifteen that they may become one hundred and twenty, by adding sixteen that they may become one hundred and thirty-six, by adding seventeen, make up one hundred and fifty-three, thou wilt find a vast number of all saints to belong to this number of a few fishes. In like manner then as in five virgins, countless virgins; as in five brethren of him that was tormented in hell, thousands of the people of the Jews; as in the number of one hundred and fifty-three fishes, thousands of thousands of saints: so in twelve thrones, not twelve men, but great is the number of the perfect.

10. But I see what is next required of us; in like manner as in the case of the five virgins, a reason was given why many should belong to five, and why to those five many Jews, and why to a hundred and fifty-three many perfect-to show why and how to the twelve thrones not twelve men, but many belong. What mean the twelve thrones, which signify all men everywhere that have been enabled to be so perfect as they must be perfect, to whom it is said, "Ye shall sit over the twelve tribes of Israel"? And why do all men everywhere belong to the number twelve? Because the very "everywhere" which we say, we say of the whole world: but the compass of lands is contained in four particular quarters, East, West, South, and North: from all these quarters they being called in the Trinity and made perfect in the faith and precept of the Trinity,-seeing that three times four are twelve, ye perceive wherefore the saints belong to the whole world; they that shall sit upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, since the twelve tribes of Israel, also, are the twelve tribes of the whole of Israel. For like as they that are to judge are from the whole world, so also they that are to be judged are from the whole world. The Apostle Paul of himself, when he was reproving believing laymen, because they referred not their causes to the Church, but dragged them with whom they had matters before the public, said, "Know ye not that we shall judge Angels?" See after what sort He hath made Himself judge: not only himself, but also all that judge aright in the Church.

11. Since then it is evident, that many are to judge with the Lord, but that others are to be judged, not however on equality, but according to their deserts; He will come with all His Angels, when before Him shall be gathered all nations, and among all the Angels are to be reckoned those that have been made so perfect, that sitting upon twelve thrones they judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For men are called Angels: the Apostle saith of himself, "As an angel of God ye received me. Of John Baptist it is said, "Behold, I send My Angel before Thy face, that shall prepare Thy way before Thee. Therefore, coming with all Angels, together with Him He shall have the Saints also. For plainly saith Isaias also, "He shall

come to judgment with the elders of the people. Those "elders of the people," then, those but now named Angels, those thousands of many men made perfect coming from the whole world, are called Heaven. But the others are called earth, yet fruitful. Which is the earth that is fruitful? That which is to be set on the right hand, unto which it shall be said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat: truly fruitful earth in which the Apostle doth joy, when they sent to him to supply his necessities: "Not because I ask a gift," he saith, "but I require fruit. And he giveth thanks, saying, "Because at length yehave budded forth again to be thoughtful for me.

He saith, "Ye have budded forth again," as to trees which had withered away with a kind of barrenness. Therefore the Lord coming to judgment (that we may nowhear the Psalm, brethren), He will do what? "He will call the heaven from above" (ver. 4). The heaven, all the Saints, those made perfect that shall judge, them He shall call from above, to be sitters with Him to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For how shall "He call the heaven from above," when the heaven is always above? But those that He here calleth heaven, the same elsewhere He calleth heavens. What heavens? That tell out the glory of God: for, "The heavens tell out the glory of God: whereof is said, "Into all the earth their sound hath gone forth, and into the ends of the world their words. For see the Lord severing in judgment: "He shall call the heaven from above and the earth, to sever His people. From whom but from evil men? Of whom here afterwards no mention is made, now as it were condemned to punishment. See these good men, and distinguish. "He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people. He calleth the earth also, not however to be associated, but to be dissociated. For at first He called them together, "when the God of gods spake and called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down," He had not yet severed:

those servants had been sent to bid to the marriage, who had gathered good and bad. But when the God of gods shall come manifest and shall not keep silence, He shall so call the "heaven from above" that it may judge with Him. For what the heaven is, the heavens themselves are; just as what the earth is, the lands themselves, just as what the Church is, the Churches themselves: "He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people. Now with the heaven He severeth the earth, that is, the heaven with Him doth sever the earth. How doth He sever the earth? In such sort that He setteth on the right hand some, others on the left. But to the earth severed, He saith what? "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me to eat," and so forth. But they say, "When saw we Thee an hungred? And He, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me. "He shall call therefore the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people."

12. "Gather to Him His righteous" (ver. 5). The voice divine and prophetic, seeing future things as if present doth exhort the Angels gathering. For He shall send His Angels, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Gather to Him His righteous. What righteous men save those that live of faith and do works of mercy? For those works are works of

righteousness. Thou hast the Gospel: "Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be seen of them." And as if it were inquired, What righteousness? "When therefore thou doest alms," He saith. Therefore alms He hath signified to be works of righteousness. Those very persons gather for His righteous: gather those that have had compassion on the "needy," that have considered the needy and poor: gather them, "The Lord preserve them, and make them to live;" "Gather to Him His righteous: who order His covenant above sacrifices:" that is, who think of His promises above those things which they work. For those things are sacrifices, God saying, "I will have mercy more than sacrifice." "Who keep His covenant more than sacrifice."

13. "And the Heaven shall declare His righteousness" (ver. 6). Truly this righteousness of God to us the "heavens have declared," the Evangelists have foretold. Through them we have heard that some will be on the right hand, to whom the Householder saith, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive. Receive what? "A kingdom. In return for what thing? "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat. What so valueless, what so earthly, as to break bread to the hungry? At so much is valued the kingdom of heaven. "Break thy bread to the hungry, and the needy without covering bring into thy house; if thou seest one naked, clothe him. If thou hast not the means of breaking bread, hast not house into which thou mayest bring, hast not garment wherewith thou mayest cover: give a cup of cold water, cast two mites into the treasury. As much the widow doth buy with two mites, as Peter buyeth, by leaving the nets, as Zacchaeus buyeth by giving half his goods. Of so much worth is all that thou hast. "The heavens shall declare His righteousness, for God is Judge. Truly judge not confounding but severing. For "the Lord knoweth them that are His. Even if grains lie hid in the chaff, they are known to the husbandman. Let no one fear that he is a grain even among the chaff; the eyes of our winnower are not deceived. Fear not lest that tempest, which shall be round about Him, should confound thee with chaff.

Certainly mighty will be the tempest; yet not one grain will it sweep from the side of the corn to the chaff: because not any rustic with three-pronged fork, but God, Three in One, is Judge. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge. Let heavens go, let the heavens tell, into every land let their sound go out, and unto the ends of the world their words: and let that body say, "From the ends of the world unto Thee have I cried, when my heart was in heaviness. For now mingled it groaneth, divided it shall rejoice. Let it cry then and say, "Destroy not my soul with ungodly men, and with men of blood my life. He destroyeth not together, because God is Judge. Let it cry to Him and say, "Judge me, O Lord, and sever my cause from the nation unholy: let it say, He shall do it: there shall be gathered to Him His righteous ones. He hath called the earth that He may sever His people.

14. "Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee" (ver. 7). He shall come and shall not keep silence; see how that even now, if ye hear, He is not silent. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee. For if thou hearest not, I will not speak to thee. "Hear, and I will speak to thee." For if thou hearest not, even though I shall speak, it will not be to thee. When then shall I speak to thee? If thou hearest. When hearest thou? If thou art my people. For, "Hear, my

people:" thou hearest not if thou art an alien people. "Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee: Israel, and I will testify to thee." ...For "Thy God," is properly said to that man whom God doth keep more as one of His family, as though in His household, as though in His peculiar: "Thy God am I." What wilt thou more? Requirest thou a reward from God, so that God may give thee something; so that what He hath given thee may be thine own? Behold God Himself, who shall give, is thine own. What richer than He? Gifts thou wast desiring, thou hast the Giver Himself. "God, thy God, I am."

15. What He requireth of man, let us see; what tribute our God, our Emperor and our King doth enjoin us; since He hath willed to be our King, and hath willed us to be His province? Let us hear His injunctions. Let not a poor man tremble beneath the injunction of God: what God enjoineth to be given to Himself, He doth Himself first give that enjoineth: be ye only devoted. God doth not exact what He hath not given, and to all men hath given what He doth exact. For what doth He exact? Let us hear now: "I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices" (ver. 8). I will not say to thee, Wherefore hast thou not slain for me a fat bull? why hast thou not selected the best he-goat from thy flock? Wherefore doth that ram amble among thy sheep, and is not laid upon mine altar? I will not say, Examine thy fields and thy pen and thy walls, seeking what thou mayest give Me. "I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices. What then: Dost Thou not accept my sacrifices? "But thy holocausts are always in My sight" (ver. 9). Certain holocausts concerning which it is said in another Psalm, "If Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would surely have given, with holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted: and again he turneth himself, "Sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit, a heart broken and humbled God doth not despise. Which be then holocausts that He despiseth not?

Which holocausts that are always in His sight? "Kindly, O Lord," he saith, "deal in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded, then shall Thou accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations, and holocausts. He saith that certain holocausts God will accept.But what is a holocaust? A whole consumed with fire: causis is burning, holon is whole:but a "holocaust" is a whole consumed with fire. There is a certain fire of most burning love: be the mind inflamed with love, let the same love hurry off the limbs to its use, let it not allow them to serve cupidity, in order that we may wholly glow with fire of divine love that will offer to God a holocaust. Such "holocausts of thine are in My sight always."

16. As yet that Israel perchance doth not understand what are the holocausts thereof which He hath in His sight always, and is still thinking of oxen, of sheep, of he-goats: let it not so think: "I will not accept calves of thy house." Holocausts I named; at once in mind and thought to earthly flocks thou wast running, therefrom thou wast selecting for Me some fat thing: "I will not accept calves of thy house." He is foretelling the New Testament, wherein all those sacrifices have ceased. For they were then foretelling a certain Sacrifice which was to be, with the Blood whereof we should be cleansed. "I will not accept calves of thy house, nor he-goats of thy flocks." 17. "For mine are all the beasts of the wood" (ver. 10). Why

should I ask of thee what I have made? Is it more thine, to whom I have given it to possess, than Mine, who have made it? "For mine are all the beasts of the wood." But perchance that Israel saith, The beasts are God's, those wild beasts which I enclose not in my pen, which I bind not to my stall; but this ox and sheep and he-goat-these are mine own. "Cattle on the mountain, and oxen." Mine are those which thou possessest not, Mine are these which thou possessest. For if thou art My servant, the whole of thy property is Mine. For it cannot be, that is the property of the master which the servant hath gotten to himself, and yet that not be the property of the Master which the Master Himself hath created for the servant. Therefore Mine are the beasts of the wood which thou hast not taken; Mine are also the cattle on the mountains which are thine, and the oxen which are at thy stall: all are Mine own, for I have created them.

18. "I know all the winged creatures of heaven" (ver. 11). How doth He know? He hath weighed them, hath counted. Which of us knoweth all the winged creatures of heaven? But even though to some man God give knowledge of all the winged creatures of heaven, He doth not Himself know in the same manner as He giveth man to know. One thing is God's knowledge, another man's: in like manner as there is one possession of God's, another of man's: that is, God's possessing is one thing, man's another. For what thou possessest thou hast not wholly in thy power, or else thy ox, so long as it liveth, is in thy power; so as that it either die not, or be not to be fed. With whom there is the highest power, there is highest and most secret cognition. Let us ascribe tiffs to God, while praising God. Let us not dare to say, How knoweth God? Do not, I pray you, brethren, of me expect this, that I should unfold to you, how God doth know: this only I say, He doth not so know as a man, He doth not so know as an Angel: and how He knoweth I dare not say, because also I cannot ken. One thing, nevertheless, I ken, that even before all the winged creatures of heaven were, God knew that which He was to create. What is that knowledge? O man, thou beginnest to see, after that thou hadst been formed, after that thou hadst received sense of seeing.

These fowls sprung of the water at the word of God, saying, "Let the waters bring forth fowls. Whereby did God know the things which He commanded the water to bear forth? Now surely He knew what He had created, and before He created He knew. So great then is the knowledge of God, so that with Himself they were in a certain ineffable manner before they were created: and of thee doth He expect to receive what He had, before He created? "I know all the winged creatures of heaven," which thou to Me canst not give. The things which thou wast about to slay for Me, I know all: not because I made I know, but in order that I might make. "And the beauty of the field is with Me. The fairness of the field, the abundance of all things engendering upon earth, "is with Me," He saith. How with Him? Were they so, even before they were made? Yea, for with Him were all things to come, and with Him are all things by-gone: things to come in such sort, that there be not withdrawn from Him all things by-gone. With Him are all things by a certain cognition of the ineffable wisdom of God residing in the Word, and the Word Himself is all things. Is not the beauty of the field in a manner with Him, inasmuch as He is everywhere, and Himself hath said, "Heaven and earth I fill"?

What with Him is not, of whom it is said, "If I shall have ascended into heaven, Thou art there; and if I shall have descended into hell, Thou art present"? With Him is the whole: but it is not so with Him as that He doth suffer any contamination from those things which He hath created, or any want of them. For with thee, perchance, is a pillar near which thou art standing, and when thou art weary, thou leanest against it. Thou needest that which is with thee, God needeth not the field which is which Him. With Him is field, with Him beauty of earth, with Him beauty of heaven, with Him all winged creatures, because He is Himself everywhere. And wherefore are all things near Him? Because even before that all things were, or were created, to Him were known all things.

19. Who can explain, who expound that which is said to Him in another Psalm, "For my goods Thou needest not"? He hath said that He needeth not from us any necessary thing. "If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee" (ver. 12). He that keepeth Israel shall neither hunger nor thirst, nor be weary, nor fall asleep. But, lo! according to thy carnality I speak: because thou wilt suffer hunger when thou hast not eaten, perhaps thou thinkest even God doth hunger that He may eat. Even though He shall be hungry, He telleth not thee: all things are before Him, whence He will He taketh what is needful for Him. These words are said to convince little understanding; not that God hath declared His hunger. Though for our sake this God of gods deigned even to hunger. He came to hunger, and to fill; He came to thirst, and give drink; He came to be clothed with mortality, and to clothe with immortality; He came poor, to make rich. For He lost not His riches by taking to Him our poverty, for, "In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." "If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee. For Mine is the whole world, and the fulness thereof." Do not then labour to find what to give Me, without whom I have what I will.

20. Why then dost still think of thy flocks? "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats?" (ver. 13). Ye have heard what of us He requireth not, who willeth to enjoin us somewhat. If of such things ye were thinking, now withdraw your thoughts from such things: think not to offer God any such thing. If thou hast a fat bull, kill for the poor: let them eat the flesh of bulls, though they shall not drink the blood of he-goats. Which, when thou shalt have done, He will account it to thee, that hath said, "If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee:" and He shall say to thee, "I was hungry, and thou gavest Me to eat." "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats?"

21. Say then, Lord our God, what dost Thou enjoin thy people, Thy Israel? "Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise" (ver. 14). Let us also say to Him, "In me, O God, are thy vows, which I will render of prose to Thee. I had feared lest Thou mightest enjoin something which would be out of my power, which I was counting to be in my pen, and but now perchance it had been taken away by a thief. What dost Thou enjoin me? "Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise" Let me revert to myself, wherein I may find what I may immolate: let me revert to myself; in myself may I find immolation of praise: be Thy altar my conscience. We are without anxiety, we go not into Arabia in quest of frankincense: not any bags of covetous dealer do we sift: God requireth of us the sacrifice of praise. Zacchaeus had the sacrifice

of praise in his patrimony; the widow had it in her bag; some poor host or other hath had it in his jar: another neither in patrimony, nor in bag, nor in jar, hath had anything, had it wholly in his heart: salvation was to the house of Zacchaeus; and more this poor widow cast in than those rich men: this man, that doth offer a cup of cold water, shall not lose his reward: but there is even "peace on earth to men of good will. "Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. O sacrifice gratuitous, by grace given!

I have not indeed bought this to offer, but Thou hast given: for not even this should I have had. And this is the immolation of the sacrifice of praise, to render thanks to Him from whom thou hast whatever of good thou hast, and by whose mercy is forgiven thee whatsoever of evil of thine thou hast. "Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise: and render to the Highest thy prayers. With this odour the Lord iswell pleased.

22. "And call thou upon Me in the day of thy tribulation: and I will draw thee forth, and thou shall glorify Me" (ver. 15). For thou oughtest not to rely on thy powers, all thy aids are deceitful. "Upon Me call thou in the day of tribulation: I will draw thee forth, and thou shalt glorify Me. For to this end I have allowed the day of tribulation to come to thee: because perchance if thou wast not troubled, thou wouldest not call on Me: but when thou art troubled, thou callest on Me; when thou callest upon Me, I will draw thee forth; when I shah draw thee forth, thou shalt glorify Me, that thou mayest no more depart from Me. A certain man had grown dull and cold in fervour of prayer, and said, "Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called. He found tribulation as it were some profitable thing; he had rotted in the slough of his sins; now he had continued without feeling, he found tribulation to be a sort of caustic and cutting. "I found," he saith, "tribulation and grief, and on the Name of the Lord I called. And truly, brethren, tribulations are known to all men. Behold those afflictions that abound in mankind; one afflicted with loss bewaileth; another smitten with bereavement mourneth; another exiled from country grieveth and desireth to return, deeming sojourning intolerable; another's vineyard ishailed upon, he observeth his labours and all his toil spent in vain.

When can a human being not be made sad? An enemy he findeth in a friend. What greater misery in mankind? These things all men do deplore and grieve at, and these are tribulations: in all these they call upon the Lord, and they do rightly. Let them call upon God, He isable either to teach how it must be borne, or to heal it when borne. He knoweth how not to suffer us to be tried above that we are able to bear. Let us call upon God even in those tribulations: but these tribulations do find us; as in another Psalm is written, "Helper in tribulations which have found us too much: there isa certain tribulation which we ought to find. Let such tribulations find us: there is a certain tribulation which we ought to seek and to find. What is that? The above-named felicity in this world, abundance of temporal things: that isnot indeed tribulation, these are the solaces of our tribulation. Of what tribulation? Of our sojourning. For the very fact that we are not yet with God, the very fact that we are living amid trials and difficulties, that we cannot be without fear, istribulation: for there isnot that peace which ispromised us. He that shall not have found this tribulation in his

sojourning, doth not think of going home to his father-land. This istribulation, brethren. Surely now we do good works, when we deal bread to the hungry, home to the stranger, and the like: tribulation even this is.

For we find pitiful objects upon whom we show pity; and the pitiful case of pitiful objects maketh us compassionate. How much better now would it be with thee in that place, where thou findest no hungry man whom thou mayest feed, where thou findest no stranger whom thou mayest take in, no naked man whom thou mayest cover, no sick man whom thou mayest visit, no litigant whom thou mayest set at one! For all things in that place are most high, are true, are holy, are everlasting. Our bread in that place isrighteousness, our drink there is wisdom, our garment there isimmortality, our house iseverlasting in the heavens, our stedfastness isimmortality: doth sickness come over? Doth weariness weigh down to sleep? No death, no litigation: there peace, quiet, joy, righteousness. No enemy hath entrance, no friend falleth away. What isthe quiet there? If we think and observe where we are, and where He that cannot He hath promised that we are to be, from His very promise we find in what tribulation we are. This tribulation none findeth, but he that shall have sought it. Thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; for it iseasy for him that issick to find himself miserable: when thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; that thou art not yet with God. "Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called. "Immolate," therefore, "to God the sacrifice of praise. Praise Him promising, praise Him calling, praise Him exhorting, praise Him helping:

and understand in what tribulation thou art placed. Call upon (Him), thou shalt be drawn forth, thou shalt glorify, shalt abide.

23. But see what followeth, my brethren. For now some one or other, because God had said to him, "Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise," and had enjoined in a manner this tribute, did meditate to himself and said, I will rise daily, I will proceed to Church, I will say one hymn at matins, another at vespers, a third or fourth in my house, daily I do sacrifice the sacrifice of praise, and immolate to my God. Well thou doest indeed, if thou doest this: but take heed, lest now thou be careless, because now thou doest this: and perchance thy tongue bless God, and thy life curse God. O my people, saith to thee the God of gods, the Lord that spake, "calling the earth from the rising of the sun unto the setting," though yet thou art placed amid the tares, "Immolate the sacrifice of praise to thy God, and render to Him thy prayers: but take heed lest thou live ill, and chant well. Wherefore this? For, "Unto the sinner, saith God, why dost thou tell out My judgments, and takest My Covenant in thy mouth? (ver. 16). Ye see, brethren, with what trembling we say these words. We take the Covenant of God in our mouth, and we say these words. We take the Covenant of God in our mouth, and we preach to you the instruction and judgment of God. And what saith God to the sinner? "Why dost thou? Doth He then forbid preachers that be sinners?

And where is that, "What they say do, but what they do, do not"? Where isthat, "Whether in truth or on occasion Christ be preached"? But these words were said, lest they should fear that hear, from whomsoever it be that they hear: not that they should be without care

that speak good words, and do evil deeds. Now therefore, brethren, ye are without care: if ye hear good words ye hear God, through whomsoever it be that ye may hear. But God would not dismiss without reproof them that speak: lest with their speaking alone, without care for themselves they should slumber in evil life, and say to themselves, ”For God will not consign us to perdition, through whose mouth He has willed that so many good words should be spoken to His people. Nay, but hear what thou speakest, whoever thou art that speakest: and thou that writ be heard thyself, first hear thyself; and speak what a certain man doth speak in another Psalm, ”I will hear what in me speaketh the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. What am I then, that hear not what in me He speaketh, and will that other hear what through me He speaketh? I will hear first, will hear, and chiefly I will hear what speaketh in me the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. Let me hear, and ”chasten my body, and to servitude subject it, lest perchance to others preaching, myself be found a cast-away.

”Why dostthou tell out my judgments? Wherefore to thee what profiteth not thee? He admonisheth him to hear: not to lay down preaching, but to take up obedience. ”But thou, why dost thou take My Covenant in they mouth?”

24. ”But thou hatest instruction” (ver. 17). Thou hatest discipline. When I spare, thou singest and praisest: when I chasten, thou murmurest: as though, when I spare, I am thy God: and, when I chasten, I am not thy God. ”I rebuke and chasten those whom I love.” ”But thou hatest instruction: and hast thrownMy sayings behind thee.” The words that are said through thee, thou throwest behind thee. ”And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee:” to a place where they may not be seen by thee, but may load thee. ”And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee.” 25. ”If thou sawest a thief, thou didst consent unto him, and with adulterers thou didst make thy portion” (ver. 18). Lest perchance thou shouldest say, I have not committed theft, I have not committed adultery. What if he pleased thee that hath committed? Hast thou not with the very pleasing consented? Hast thou not by approval made thy portion with him that hath committed? For this is , brethren, to consent with a thief, and to make with an adulterer thy portion: for even if thou committest not, and approvest what iscommitted, thou art an accessory in the deed: for ”the sinner ispraised in the longings of his soul, and hethat doeth iniquity shall be blessed.” Thou doest not evil things, thou praisest evil-doers. For isthis a small evil? ”Thou didst make thy portion with adulterers.”

26. ”Thy mouth hath abounded in malice, and thy tongue hath embraced deceit” (ver. 19). Of the malevolence and deceit, brethren, of certain men he speaketh, who by adulation, though they know what they hear to be evil, yet lest they offend those from whom they hear, not only by not reproving but by holding their peace do consent. Too little is it, that they do not say, Thou hast done evil: but they even say, Thou hast done even well: and they know it to be evil: but their mouth aboundeth in malice, and their tongue embraceth deceit. Deceit is a sort of guile in words, of uttering one thing, thinking another. He saith not, thy tongue hath committed deceit or perpetrated deceit, but is order to point out to thee a kind

of pleasure taken in the very evil doing, He hath said, ”Hath embraced.” It istoo little that thou doest it, thou art delighted too; thou praisest openly, thou laughest to thyself. Thou dost push to destruction a man heedlessly putting forth his faults, and knowing not whether they be faults: thou that knowest it to be a fault, sayest not, ”Whither art thou rushing?” If thou wert to see him heedlessly walk in the dark, where thou knewest a well to be, and wert to hold thy peace, of what sort wouldest thou be? wouldest thou not be set down for an enemy of his life? And yet if he were to fall into a well, not in soul but in body he would die. He doth fall headlong into his vices, he doth expose before thee his evil doings: thou knowest them to be evil, and praisest and laughest to thyself. Oh that at length he were to be turned to God at whom thou hughest, and whom thou wouldest not reprove, and that he were to say, ”Let them be confounded that say to me, Well, well.”

27. ”Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract” (ver. 20). And this ”sitting” doth belong to that whereof he hath spoken above in, ”hath embraced. For he that doeth anything while standing or passing along, doth it not with pleasure: but if he for this purpose sitteth, how much leisure cloth he seek out to do it! That very evil detraction thou wast making with diligence, thou wast making sitting; thou wouldest thereon be wholly engaged; thou wast embracing thy evil, thou wast kissing thy craftiness. ”And against thy mother’s son thou didst lay a stumbling-block. Who is ”mother’s son”? Is it not brother? He would repeat then the same that he had said above, ”thy brother. Hath he intimated that any distinction must be perceived by us? Evidently, brethren, I think a distinction must be made. Brother against brother doth detract, for example’s sake, as though for instance one strong, and now a doctor and scholar of some weight, doth detract from his brother, one perchance that is teaching well and walking well: but another isweak, against him he layeth a stumbling-block by detracting from the former. For when the good are detracted from by those that seem to be of some weight and to be learned, the weak fall upon the stumbling-block, who as yet know not how to judge. Therefore this weak one iscalled ”mother’s son,” not yet father’s, still needing milk, and hanging on the breast.

He is borne as yet in the bosom of his mother the Church, he isnot strong enough to draw near to the solid food of his Fathers table, but from the mother’s breast he draweth sustenance, unskilled in judging, inasmuch as yet he isanimal and carnal. ”For the spiritual man judgeth all things,” but ”the animal man perceiveth not those things which are of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him. To such men saith the Apostle, ”I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as to babes in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat; for ye were not able, but not even now are ye able. A mother I have been to you: as issaid in another place, ”I became a babe among you, even as a nurse cherishing her own children. Not a nurse nursing children of others, but a nurse cherishing her own children. For there are mothers who when they have borne give to nurses: they that have borne cherish not their children, because they have given them to be nursed; but those that cherish, cherish not their own, but those of others: but he himself had borne, he was himself cherishing, to no nurse did commit what he had borne; for he had said, ”Of whom I travel

again until Christ be formed in you. He did cherish them, and gave milk. But there were some as it were learned and spiritual men who detracted from Paul.

"His letters indeed, say they, are weighty and powerful; but the presence of his body weak, and speech contemptible: he saith himself in his Epistle, that certain his detractors had said these words. They were sitting, and were detracting against their brother, and against that their mother's son, to be fed with milk, they were laying a stumbling-block. "And against thy mothers son thou didst lay a stumbling-block."

28. "These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue" (ver. 21). Therefore the Lord our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. Now, "These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue" What is, "I held my tongue"? From vengeance I have desisted, my severity I have deferred, patience to thee I have prolonged, thy repentance I have long looked for ..."Thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee;" Thou hast imagined that I shall be like unto thee, while thou wilt not be like unto Me. For, "Beye,"he saith, "perfect, even as your Father, which is in the heavens, who maketh His sun to rise on the good and evil." Him thou wouldest not copy, who giveth good things even to evil men, insomuch that sitting thou dost detract even from good men. "I will reprove thee," when "God manifest shall come, our God, and shall not keep silence," "I will reprove thee." And what to thee shall I do in reproving thee? what to thee shall I do? Now thyself thou seest not, I will make thee see thyself. Because if thou shouldest see thyself, and shouldest displease thyself, thou wouldest please Me: but because not seeing thyself thou hast pleased thyself, thou wilt displease both Me and thyself; Me when thou shalt be judged; thyself when thou shalt burn. But what to thee shall I do? He saith. "I will set thee before thy face." For why wouldest thou escape thyself? At thy back thou art to thyself, thou seest not thyself: I make thee see thyself: what behind thy back thou hast put, before thy face will I put; thou shalt see thy uncleanness, not that thou mayest amend, but that thou mayest blush. ...

29. But, "understand these things, ye that forget God" (ver. 22). See how He crieth, and keepeth not silence, spareth not. Thou hadst forgotten the Lord, didst not think of thy evil life. Perceive how thou hast forgotten the Lord. "Lest at length He seize like a lion, and there be none to driven" What is "like a lion"? Like a brave one, like a mighty one, like him whom none can withstand. To this he made reference when he said, "Lion." For it is used for praise, it isused also for showing evil. The devil hath been called lion: "Your adversary," He saith, "like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom He may devour?" May it not be that whereas he hath been called lion because of savage fierceness, Christ hath been called Lion for wondrous mightiness? And where is that, "The Lion hath prevailed of the tribe of Judah?" ...

30. "Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me" (ver. 23). How shall "sacrifice of praise glorify Me"? Assuredly sacrifice of praise doth no wise profit evil men, because they take Thy Covenant in their mouth, and do damnable things that displease Thine eyes. Straightway, he saith, even to them this I say, "Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me." For if thou livest ill and speakest good words, not yet dost thou praise: but again, if, when thou beginnest to live well, to thy

merits thou dost ascribe thy living well, not yet dost thou praise. ...Therefore the Publican went down justified, rather than that Pharisee. Therefore hear ye that live well, hear ye that live ill: "Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me." No one offereth Me this sacrifice, and isevil. I say not, Let there not offer Me this any one that is evil; but no one doth offer Me this, that is evil. For he that praiseth, is good: because if he praiseth, he doth also live well, because if he praiseth, not only with tongue he praiseth, but life also with tongue doth agree.

31. "And there is the way whereby I will show him the salvation of God." In sacrifice of praise "is the way." What is "the salvation of God"? Christ Jesus. And how in sacrifice of praise to us is shown Christ? Because Christ with grace came to us. These words saith the Apostle: "But I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me: but that in flesh I live, in faith I live of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Acknowledge then sinners, that there would not need physician, if they were whole. For Christ died for the ungodly. When then they acknowledge their ungodlinesses, and first copy that Publican, saying, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner:" show wounds, beseech Physician: and because they praise not themselves, but blame themselves,-"So that he that glorieth, not in himself but in the Lord may glory," -they acknowledge the cause of the coming of Christ, because for this end He came, that He might save sinners: for "Jesus Christ came," he saith, "into this world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Further, those Jews, boasting of their work, thus the same Apostle doth rebuke, in saying, that they to grace belonged not, who to their merits and their works thought that reward was owing. He therefore that knoweth himself to belong to grace, doth know what isChrist and what is Christ's because he needeth grace. If grace it iscalled, gratis it is given; if gratis it isgiven, not any merits of time have preceded that it should be given. ...

Psalm 51

1. Neither must this multitude's throng be defrauded, nor their infirmity burthened. Silence we ask, and quiet, in order that our voice, after yesterday's labour, be able with some little vigour to last out. It must be believed, that your love hath met together in greater numbers to-day for nothing else, but that ye may pray for those whom an alien and perverse inclination doth keep away. For we are speaking neither of heathens nor of Jews, but of Christians: nor of those that are yet Catechumens, but of many that are even baptized, from the Layer of whom ye do no wise differ, and yet to their heart ye are unlike. For to-day how many brethren of ours we think of, and deplore their going unto vanities and lying insanities, to the neglect of that to which they have been called. Who, if in the very circus from any cause they chance to be startled, do immediately cross themselves, and stand bearing It on the forehead, in the very place, from whence they had withdrawn, if they had borne It in heart. God's mercy must be implored, that He may give understanding for condemning these things, inclination to flee them, and mercy to forgive. Opportunately, then, of Penitence a Psalm to-day has been chanted. Speak we even with the absent: there will be to them for our voice your memory. Neglect not the wounded and feeble, but that ye may more easily make whole, whole ye ought to abide.

Correct by reproving, comfort by addressing, set an example by living well, He will be with them that hath been with you. For now that ye have overpassed these dangers, the fountain of God's mercy is not closed Where ye have come they will come; where ye have passed they will pass. A grievous thing it isindeed, and exceeding perilous, nay ruinous, and for certain a deadly thing, that witting they sin. For in one way to these vanities doth he run that despiseth the voice of Christ; in another way, he that knoweth from what he isfleeing. But that not even of such men we ought to despair, this Psalm doth show.

2. For there iswritten over it the title thereof, "A Psalm of David himself, when there came to him Nathan the prophet, when he went in unto Bersabee." Bersabee was a woman, wife of another. With grief indeed we speak, and with trembling; but yet God would not have to be hushed what He hath willed to be written. I will say then not what I will, but what I am obliged; I will say not as one exhorting to imitation, but as one instructing you to real Captivated with this woman's beauty, the wife of another, the king and prophet David, from whose seed according to the flesh the Lord was to come, committed adultery with her. This

thing in this Psalm isnot read, but in the title thereof it appeareth; but in the book of Kings it ismore fully read. Both Scriptures are canonical, to both without any doubt by Christians credit must be given. The sin was committed, and was written down. Moreover her husband in war he caused to be killed: and after this deed there was sent to him Nathan the prophet; sent by the Lord, to reprove him for so great an outrage.

3. What men should beware of, we have said; but what if they shall have fallen they should imitate, let us hear. For many men will to fall with David, and will not to rise with David. Not then for falling is the example set forth, but if thou shalt have fallen for rising again. Take heed lest thou fall. Not the delight of the younger be the lapse of the elder, but be the fall of the elder the dread of the younger. For this it was set forth, for this was written, for this in the Church often read and chanted: let them hear that have not fallen, lest they fall; let them hear that have fallen, that they may rise. So great a man's sin is not hushed, is proclaimed in the Church. There men hear that are ill hearers, and seek for themselves countenance for sinning: they look out for means whereby they may defend what they have made ready to commit, not how they may beware of what they have not committed, and they say to themselves, If David, why not I too? Thence that soul ismore unrighteous, which, forasmuch as it hath done it because David did, therefore hath done worse than David. I will say this very thing, if I shall be able, more plainly. David had set forth to himself none for a precedent as thou hast: he had fallen by lapse of concupiscence, not by the countenance of holiness:

thou dost set before thine eyes as it were a holy man, in order that thou mayest sin: thou dost not copy his holiness, but dost copy his fall Thou dost love that in David, which in himself David hated: thou makest thee ready to sin, thou inclinest to sin: in order that thou mayest sin thou consultest the book of God: the Scriptures of God for this thou hearest, that thou mayest do what displeaseth God. This did not David; he was reproved by a Prophet, he stumbled not over a Prophet. But others hearing to their health, by the fall of a strong man measure their weakness: and desiring to avoid what God condemneth, from careless looking do restrain their eyes. Them they fix not upon the beauty of another's flesh, nor make themselves carries with perverse simpleness; they say not, "With good intent I have observed, of kindness I have observed, of charity I have long looked. For they set before themselves the fall of David, and they see that this great man for this purpose hath fallen, in order that little men may not be willing to look on that whereby they may fall. For they restrain their eyes from wantonness, not readily do they join themselves in company, they do not mingle with strange women, they raise not complying eyes to strange balconies, to strange terraces. For from afar David saw her with whom he was captivated. Woman afar, lust near. What he saw was elsewhere, in himself that whereby he fell.

This weakness of the flesh must be therefore minded, the words of the Apostle recollected, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. He hath not said, let there not be; but, "let there not reign. There is sin in thee, when thou takest pleasure; there reigneth, if thou shalt have consented. Carnal pleasure, especially if proceeding unto unlawful and strange objects,

is to be bridled, not let loose: by government to be tamed, not to be set up for government. Look and be without care, if thou hast nothing whereby thou mayest be moved. But thou makest answer, "I contain with strong resolution. Art thou any wise stronger than David?

4. He admonisheth, moreover, by such an example, that no one ought to lift himself up in prosperous circumstances. For many fear adverse circumstances, fear not prosperous circumstances. Prosperity is more perilous to soul than adversity to body. First, prosperity doth corrupt, in order that adversity may find something to break. My brethren, stricter watch must be kept against felicity. Wherefore, see ye after what manner the saying of God amid our own felicity doth take from us security: "Serve ye," He saith, "the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling." In exultation, in order that we may render thanks; in trembling, lest we fall This sin did not David, when he was suffering Saul for persecutor. When holy David was suffering Saul his enemy, when he was being vexed by his persecutions, when he was fleeing through divers places, in order that he might not fall into his hands, he lusted not for her that was another's, he slew not husband after committing adultery with wife. He was in the infirmity of his tribulation so much the more intimate with God as he seemed more miserable. Something useful istribulation; useful the surgeon's lancet rather than the devil's temptation. He became secure when his enemies were overthrown, pressure was removed, swelling grew out. This example therefore doth avail to this end, that we should fear felicity. "Tribulation," he sixth, "and grief I found, and on the name of the Lord I called."

5. But it was done; I would say these words to those that have not done the like, in order that they should watch to keep their uncorruptness, and that while they take heed how a great one has fallen, they that be small should fear. But if any that hath already fallen heareth these words, and that hath in his conscience any evil thing; to the words of this Psalm let him advert; let him heed the greatness of the wound, but not despair of the majesty of the Physician. Sin with despair is certain death. Let no one therefore say, If already any evil thing I have done, already I am to be condemned: God pardoneth not such evil things, why add I not sins to sins? I will enjoy this word in pleasure, in wantonness, in wicked cupidity: now hope of amendment having been lost, let me have even what I see, if I cannot have what I believe. This Psalm then, while it maketh heedful those that have not believed, so doth not will them that have fallen to be despaired of. Whoever thou art that hast sinned, and hesitatest to exercise penitence for thy sin, despairing of thy salvation, hear David groaning. To thee Nathan the prophet hath not been sent, David himself hath been sent to thee Hear him crying, and with him cry: hear him groaning, and with him groan; hear him weeping, and mingle tears; hear him amended, and with him rejoice. If from thee sin could not be excluded, be not hope of pardon excluded. There was sent to that man Nathan the prophet, observe the king's humility. He rejected not the words of him giving admonition, he said not, Darest thou speak to me, a king? An exited king heard a prophet, let His humble people hear Christ.

6. Hear therefore these words, and say thou with him: ”Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy” (ver. 1). He that imploreth great mercy, confesseth great misery. Let them seek a little mercy of Thee, that have sinned in ignorance: ”Have pity,” he sixth, ”upon me, after Thy great mercy.” Relieve a deep wound after Thy great healing. Deep is what I have, but in the Almighty I take refuge. Of my own so deadly wound I should despair, unless I could find so great a Physician. ”Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy: and after the multitude of Thy pities, blot out my iniquity.” What he saith, ”Blot out my iniquity,” isthis, ”Have pity upon me, O God.” And what he saith, ”After the multitude of Thy pities,” is this, ”After Thy great mercy.” Because great is the mercy, many are the mercies; and of Thy great mercy, many are Thy pitying. Thou dost regard mockers to amend them, dost regard ignorant men to teach them, dost regard men confessing to pardon. Did he this in ignorance? A certain man had done some, aye many evil things he had done; ”Mercy,” he saith, ”I obtained, because ignorant I did it in unbelief.” This David could not say, ”Ignorant I did it.” For he was not ignorant how very evil a thing was the touching of another’s wife, and how very evil a thing was the killing of the husband, who knew not of it, and was not even angered. They obtain therefore the mercy of the Lord that have in ignorance done it; and they that have knowing done it, obtain not any mercy it may chance,but ”great mercy.”

7. ”More and more wash me from mine unrighteousness” (ver. 2). What is , ”More and more wash”? One much stained. More and more wash the sins of one knowing. Thou that hast washed off the sins of one ignorant. Not even thus isit to be despaired of Thy mercy. ”And from my delinquency purge Thou me.” According to the manner in which He isphysician, offer a recompense. He is God, offer sacrifice. What wilt thou give that thou mayest be purged? For see upon whom thou callest; upon a Just One thou callest. He hateth sins, if He isjust; He taketh vengeance upon sins, if He is just; thou wilt not be able to take away from the Lord God His justice: entreat mercy, but observe the justice: there ismercy to pardon the sinner, there is justice to punish the sin. What then? Thou askest mercy; shall sin unpunished abide? Let David answer, let those that have fallen answer, answer with David, and say, No, Lord, no sin of mine shall be unpunished; I know the justice of Him whose mercy I ask: it shall not be unpunished, but for this reason I will not that Thou punish me, because I punish my sin: for this reason I beg that Thou pardon, because I acknowledge.

8. ”For mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my delinquency is before me ever” (ver. 3). I have not put behind my back what I have done, I look not at others, forgetful of myself, I pretend not to pull out a straw from my brother’s eye, when there isa beam in my eye; my sin is before me, not behind me. For it was behind me when to me was sent the Prophet, and set before me the parable of the poor man’s sheep. For saith Nathan the Prophet to David, ”There was a certain rich man having very many sheep; but a poor man his neighbour had one little ewe sheep, which in his bosom and of his own food he was feeding: there came a stranger to the rich man, nothing from his flock he took, for the lithe ewe sheep of the poor man his neighbour he lusted;her he slew for the stranger: what doth he deserve?” But the other being angry doth pronounce sentence: then the king, evidently knowing not

wherein he had been taken, declared the rich man deserving of death, and that the sheep be restored fourfold. Most sternly and most justly. But his sin was not yet before him, behind his back was what he had done: his own iniquity he did not yet acknowledge, and therefore another's he did not pardon. But the Prophet, being for this purpose sent, took from his back the sin, and before his eyes placed it, so that he might see that sentence so stern to have been pronounced against himself. For cutting and healing his heart's wound, he made a lancet of his tongue. ...

9. "Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done" (ver. 4). What isthis? For before men was not another's wife debauched and husband slain? Did not all men know what David had done? What is, "Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done. Because Thou alone art without sin. He is a just punisher that hath nothing in Him to be punished; He is a just reprover that hath nothing in Him to be reproved. "That thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. To whom he speaketh, brethren, to whom he speaketh, isdifficult to understand. To God surely he speaketh, and it is evident that God the Father isnot judged. What is, "And conquer when Thou art judged"? He seeth the future Judge to be judged, one just by sinners to be judged, and therein conquering, because in Him was nothing to be judged. For alone among men could truly say the God-Man, "If ye have found in Me sin, say. But perchance there was what escaped men, and they found not what was really there, but was not manifest. In another place He saith, "Behold there cometh the Prince of the world," being an acute observer of all sins; "Behold," He saith, "there cometh the Prince of this world," with death afflicting sinners, presiding over death: for, "By the malice of the devil death came into the world.

"Behold," He saith, "there cometh the Prince of the world:"-He said these words dose upon His Passion:-" and in Me he shall find nothing," nothing of sin, nothing worthy of death, nothing worthy of condemnation. And as if it were said to Him, Why then dost Thou die? He continueth and saith, "But that all men may know that I do the will of My Father; arise, let us go hence. I suffer, He saith, undeserving, for men deserving, in order that them I may make deserving of My Life, for whom I undeservedly suffer their death. To Him then, having no sin, saith on the present occasion the Prophet David, "Against Thee only have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. For Thou overcomest all men, all judges; and he that deemeth himself just, before Thee isunjust: Thou alone justly judgest, having been unjustly judged, That hast power to lay down Thy life, and hast power again to take it. Thou conquerest, then, when Thou art judged. All men Thou overcomest, because Thou art more than men, and by Thee were men made.

10. "For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived" (ver. 5). As though he were saying, They are conquered that have done what thou, David, hast done: for this is not a little evil and little sin, to wit, adultery and man-slaying. What of them that from the day that they were born of their mother's womb, have done no such thing? even to them dost thou ascribe some sins,

in order that He may conquer all men when He beginneth to be judged. David hath taken upon him the person of mankind, and hath heeded the bonds of all men, hath considered the offspring of death, hath adverted to the origin of iniquity, and he saith, "For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived. Was David born of adultery; being born of Jesse, a righteous man, and his own wife? What is it that he saith himself to have been in iniquity conceived, except that iniquity is drawn from Adam? Even the very bond of death, with iniquity itself is engrained? No man is born without bringing punishment, bringing desert of punishment. A Prophet saith also in another placer "No one is clean in Thy sight, not even an infant, whose life isof one day upon earth. For we know both by the Baptism of Christ that sins are loosed, and that the Baptism of Christ availeth the remission of sins. If infants are every way innocent, why do mothers run with them when sick to the Church? What by that Baptism, what by that remission isput away?

An innocent one I see that rather weeps than is angry. What doth Baptism wash off? what doth that Grace loose? There isloosed the offspring of sin. For if that infant could speak to thee, it would say, and if it had the understanding which David had, it would answer thee, Why heedest thou me, an infant? Thou dost not indeed see my actions: but I in iniquity have been conceived, "And in sins hath my mother nourished me in the womb."

Apart from this bond of mortal concupiscence was Christ horn without a male, of a virgin conceiving by the Holy Ghost. He cannot be said to have been conceived in iniquity, it cannot be said, In sins His mother nourished Him in the womb, to whom was said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Virtue of the Highest shall overshadow thee." It is not therefore because it is sin to have to do with wives that men are conceived in iniquity, and in sins nourished in the womb by their mother; but because that which is made is surely made of flesh deserving punishment. For the punishment of the flesh is death, and surely there is in it liability to death itself. Whence the Apostle spoke not of the body as if to die, but as if dead: "The body indeed is dead," he saith, "because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." How then without bond of sin is born that which is conceived and sown of a body dead because of sin? This chaste operation in a married person hath not sin, but the origin of sin draweth with it condign punishment. For there is no husband that, because he is an husband, is not subject to death, or that is subject to death for any other reason but because of sin. For even the Lord was subject to death, but not on account of sin: He took upon Him our punishment, and so looseth our guilt. With reason then, "In Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive." For, "Through one man," saith the Apostle, "sin hath entered into this world, and through sin death, and so hath passed unto all men, in that all have sinned." Definite is the sentence: "In Adam," he saith, "all have sinned." Alone then could such an infant be innocent, as hath not been born of the work of Adam.

11. "For, behold, truth Thou hast loved uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom, Thou hast manifested to me" (ver. 6). That is, Thou hast not left unpunished even the sins of those whom Thou dost pardon. "Truth Thou hast loved: so mercy Thou hast granted first, as that Thou shouldest also preserve truth. Thou pardonest one confessing, pardonest, but

only if he punisheth himself: so there are preserved mercy and truth: mercy because man is set free; truth, because sin is punished. "Uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast manifested to me. What "hidden things"? What "uncertain things"? Because God pardoneth even such. Nothing is so hidden, nothing so uncertain. For this uncertainty the Ninevites repented, for they said, though after the threatenings of the Prophet, though after that cry, "Three clays and Nineve shall be overthrown: they said to themselves, Mercy must be implored; they said in this sort reasoning among themselves, "Who knoweth whether God may turn for the better His sentence, and have pity? It was "uncertain," when it is said, "Who knoweth? on an uncertainty they did repent, certain mercy they earned: they prostrated them in tears, in fastings, in sackcloth and ashes they prostrated them, groaned, wept, God spared. Nineve stood: was Nineve overthrown? One way indeed it seemeth to men, and another way it seemed to God. But I think that it was fulfilled that the Prophet had foretold. Regard what Nineve was, and see how it was overthrown; overthrown in evil, builded in good;

just as Saul the persecutor was overthrown, Paul the preacher builded. Who would not say that this city, in which we now are, was happily overthrown, if all those madmen, leaving their triflings, were to run together to the Church with contrite heart, and were to call upon God's mercy for their past doings? Should we not say, Where is that Carthage? Because there is not what there was, it is overthrown: but if there is what there was not, it is builded. So is said to Jeremiah, "Behold, I will give to thee to root up, to dig under, to overthrow, to destroy," and again, "to build, and to plant. Thence is that voice of the Lord, "I will smite and I will heal. He smiteth the rottenness of the deed, He healeth the pain of the wound. Physicians do thus when they cut; they smite and heal; they arm themselves in order to strike, they carry steel, and come to cure. But because great were the sins of the Ninevites, they said, "Who knoweth? This uncertainty had God disclosed to His servant David. For when he had said, before the Prophet standing and convicting him, "I have sinned: straightway he heard from the Prophet, that is, from the Spirit of God which was in the Prophet, "Thy sin is put away from thee. "Uncertain and hidden things" of His wisdom He manifested to him.

12. "Thou shall sprinkle me," he saith, "with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed" (ver. 7). Hyssop we know to be a herb humble but healing: to the rock it is said to adhere with roots. Thence in a mystery the similitude of cleansing the heart has been taken. Do thou also take hold, with the root of thy love, on thy Rock: be humble in thy humble God, in order that thou mayest be exalted in thy glorified God. Thou shalt be sprinkled with hyssop, the humility of Christ shall cleanse thee. Despise not the herb, attend to the efficacy of the medicine. Something further I will say, which we are wont to hear from physicians, or to experience in sick persons. Hyssop, they say, is proper for purging the lungs. In the lung is wont to be noted pride: for there is inflation, there breathing. It was said of Saul the persecutor as of Saul the proud, that he was going to bind Christians, breathing slaughter: he was breathing out slaughter, breathing out blood, his lung not yet cleansed. Hear also in this place one humbled, because with hyssop purged: "Thou shalt wash me," that is, shalt

cleanse the: "and above snow I shall be whitened." "Although," he saith, "your sins shall have been like scarlet, like snow I will whiten." Out of such men Christ doth present to Himself a vesture without spot and wrinkle. Further, His vesture on the mount, which shone forth like whitened snow, signified the Church cleansed from every spot of sin.

13. But where is humility from hyssop? Hear what followeth: "To my hearing Thou shall give exultation and gladness, and bones humbled shall exult" (ver. 8). I will rejoice in hearing Thee, not in speaking against Thee. Thou hast sinned, why defendest thou thyself? Thou wilt speak: suffer thou; hear, yield to divine words, lest thou be put to confusion, and be still more wounded: sin hath been committed, be it not defended: to confession let it come, not to defence. Thou engagest thyself as defender of thy sin, thou art conquered: no innocent patron hast thou engaged, thy defence is not profitable to thee. For who art thou that defendest thyself? Thou art meet to accuse thyself. Say not, either, "I have done nothing;" or, "What great thing have I done?" or, "Other men as well have done." If in doing sin thou sayest thou hast done nothing, thou wilt be nothing, thou wilt receive nothing: God is ready to give indulgence, thou closest the door against thyself: He is ready to give, do not oppose the bar of defence, but open the bosom of confession. "To my hearing Thou shall give exultation and gladness." ...

14. "Turn Thou away Thy face from my sins, and all mine iniquities blot out" (ver. 9). For now bones humbled exult, now with hyssop cleansed, humble I have become. "Turn Thou away Thy face," not from me, but "from my sins." For in another place praying he saith, "Turn not away Thy face from me." He that would not that God's face be turned away from himself, would that God's face be turned away from his sins. For to sin, when God turneth not Himself away, he adverteth: if he adverteth, he animadverteth. "And all mine iniquities blot out." He is busied with that capital sin: he reckoneth on more, he would have all his iniquities to be blotted out: he relieth on the Physician's hand, on that "great mercy," upon which he hath called in the beginning of the Psalm: "All mine iniquities blot out." God turneth away His face, and so blotteth out; by "turning away" His face, sins He blotteth out. By "turning towards," He writeth them. Thou hast heard of Him blotting out by turning away, hear of Him by turning towards, doing what? "But the countenance of the Lord is upon men doing evil things, that He may destroy from the earth the remembrance of them:" He shall destroy the remembrance of them, not by "blotling out their sins." But here he doth ask what? "Turn away Thy face from my sins." Well he asketh. For he himself doth not turn away his face from his own sins, saying, "For my sin I acknowledge." With reason thou askest and well askest, that God turn away from thy sin, if thou from thence dost not turn away thy face: but if thou settest thy sin at thy back, God doth there set His face. Do thou turn sin before thy face, if thou wilt that God thence turn away His face; and then safely thou askest, and He heareth.

15. "A clean heart create in me, O God" (ver. 10). "Create"-he meant to say, "as it were begin something new. But, because repentant he was praying (that had committed some sin, which before he had committed, he was more innocent), after what manner he hath

said "create" he showeth. "And a right spirit renew in my inner parts. By my doing, he saith, the uprightness of my spirit hath been made old and bowed. For he saith in another Psalm, "They have bowed my soul. And when a man cloth make himself stoop unto earthly lusts, he is "bowed" in a manner, but when he is made erect for things above, upright is his heart made, in order that God may be good to him. For, "How good is the God of Israel to the upright of heart! Moreover, brethren, listen. Sometimes God in this world chastiseth for his sin him that He pardoneth in the world to come. For even to David himself, to whom it had been already said by the Prophet, "Thy sin is put away," there happened certain things which God had threatened for that very sin. For his son Abessalom against him waged bloody war, and many ways humbled his father. He was walking in grief, in the tribulation of his humiliation, so resigned to God, that, ascribing to Him all that was just, he confessed that he was suffering nothing underservedly, having now an heart upright, to which God was not displeasing.

A slanderous person and one throwing in his teeth harsh curses he patiently heard, one of the soldiers on the opposite side, that were with his unnatural son. And when he was heaping curses upon the king, one of the companions of David, enraged, would have gone and smitten him; but he is kept back by David. And he is kept back how? For that he said, God sent him to curse me. Acknowledging his guilt he embraced his penance, seeking glory not his own, praising the Lord in that good which he had, praising the Lord in that which he was suffering, "blessing the Lord alway, ever His praise was in his mouth. Such are all the upright in heart: not those crooked persons who think themselves upright and God crooked: who when they do any evil thing, rejoice; when they suffer any evil thing, blaspheme; nay, if set in tribulation and scourging, they say from their distorted heart, "O God, what have I done to Thee? Truly it is because they have done nothing. to God, for they have done all to themselves. "And an upright spirit, renew in my inner parts."

16. "Cast me not forth from Thy face" (ver. 11). Turn away Thy face from my sins: and "cast me not forth from Thy face." Whose face he feareth, upon the face of the Same he calleth. "And Thy Holy Spirit take not away from me." For in one confessing there is the Holy Spirit. Even now, to the gift of the Holy Spirit it belongeth, that what thou hast done displeaseth thee. The unclean spirit sins do please; the Holy One they displease. Though then thou still implore pardon, yet thou art joined to God on the other part, because the evil thing that thou hast committed displeaseth thee: for the same thing displeaseth both thee and Him. Now, to assail thy fever, ye are two, thou and the Physician. For the reason that there cannot be confession of sin and punishment of sin in a man of himself: when one is angry with himself, and is displeasing to himself, then it is not without the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor doth he say, Thy Holy Spirit give to me, but, "Take not away from me."

17. "Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation" (ver. 12). "Give back" what I had; what by sinning I had lost: to wit, of Thy Christ. For who without Him can be made whole? Because even before that He was Son of Mary, "In the beginning He was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" and so, by the holy fathers a future dispensation

of flesh taken upon Him, was looked for; as is believed by us to have been done. Times are changed, not faith. ”And with Principal Spirit confirm me.” Some have here understood the Trinity in God, Itself God; the dispensation of Flesh being excepted therefrom: since it is written, ”God is a Spirit.” For that which is not body, and yet is, seemeth to exist in such sort as that it is spirit. Therefore some understand here the Trinity spoken of: ”In upright Spirit,” the Son; in ”Holy Spirit,” Holy Ghost; in ”Principal Spirit,” Father. It is not any heretical opinion, therefore, whether this be so, or whether ”upright Spirit” He would have to be taken of man himself (when He saith, ”An upright spirit renew in my inner parts”), which I have bowed and distorted by sinning, so that in that case the Holy Spirit be Himself the Principal Spirit: which also he would not have to be taken away from him, and thereby would have himself to be confirmed therein.

18. But see what he annexeth: ”With Principal Spirit,” he saith, ”confirm Thou me.” Wherein ”confirm”? Because Thou hast pardoned me, because I am secure, that what Thou hast forgiven is not to be ascribed, on this being made secure and with this grace confirmed, therefore I am not ungrateful. But I shall do what? ”I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways” (ver. 13). Being myself of the unrighteous (that is, one that was myself an unrighteous man, now no longer unrighteous; the Holy Spirit not having been taken away from me, and I being confirmed with Principal Spirit). ”I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways.” What ways wilt thou teach unrighteous men? ”And ungodly men to Thee shall be converted.” If David’s sin is counted for ungodliness, let not ungodly men despair of themselves, forasmuch as God hath spared an ungodly man; but let them take heed that to Him they be converted, that His ways they learn. But if David’s deed is not counted for ungodliness, but this is properly call ungodliness, namely, to apostatize from God, not to worship one God, or never to have worshipped, or to have forsaken, Him whom one did worship, then what he saith hath the force of superabundance, ”And ungodly men shall to Thee be converted.” So full art thou of the fatness of mercy, that for those converted to Thee, not only sinners of any sort, but even ungodly, there is no cause for despair. Wherefore? That believing on Him that justifieth an ungodly man, their faith may be counted for righteousness.

19. ”Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health” (ver. 14). The Latin translator hath expressed, though by a word not Latin, yet an accuracy from the Greek. For we all know that in Latin, sanguines (bloods) are not spoken of, nor yet sanguina (bloods in the neuter), nevertheless because the Greek translator hath thus used the plural number, not without reason, but because he found this in the original language the Hebrew, a godly translator hath preferred to use a word not Latin, rather than one not exact. Wherefore then hath he said in the plural number, ”From bloods”? In many bloods, as in the origin of the sinful flesh, many sins he would have to be understood. The Apostle having regard to the very sins which come of the corruption of flesh and blood, saith, ”Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God. For doubtless, after the true faith of the same Apostle, that flesh shall rise again and shall itself gain incorruption, as He saith Himself, ”This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality. Because then this corruption is

of sin, by the name thereof sins are called. In like manner as both that morsel of flesh and member which playeth in the mouth when we articulate words is called a tongue, and that is called a tongue which by the tongue is made, so we call one tongue the Greek, another the Latin; for the flesh is not diverse, but the sound.

In the same manner, then, as the speech which is made by the tongue is called a tongue; so also the iniquity which is made by blood is called blood. Heeding, then, his many iniquities, as in the expression above, "And all my iniquities blot out," and ascribing them to the corruption of flesh and blood, "Free me," he saith, "from bloods: that is, free me from iniquities, cleanse me from all corruption. ...Not yet is the substance, but certain hope. "And my tongue shall exult of Thy righteousness."

20. "O Lord, my lips Thou shall open, and my mouth shall tell of Thy praise" (ver. 15). "Thy praise," because I have been created: "Thy praise," because sinning I have not been forsaken: "Thy praise," because I have been admonished to confess: "Thy praise," because in order that I might be secured I have been cleansed.

21. "Because if Thou hadst willed sacrifice, I would have given it surely" (ver. 16). David was living at that time when sacrifices of victim animals were offered to God, and he saw these times that were to be. Do we not perceive ourselves in these words? Those sacrifices were figurative, foretelling the One Saving Sacrifice. Not even we have been left without a Sacrifice to offer to God. For hear what he saith, having a concern for his sin, and wishing the evil thing which he hath done to be forgiven him: "If Thou hadst willed;" he saith, "sacrifice, I would have given it surely. With holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted." Nothing shall we therefore offer? So shall we come to God? And whence shall we propitiate Him? Offer; certainly in thyself thou hast what thou mayest offer. Do not from without fetch frankincense, but say, "In me are, O God, Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee." Do not from without seek cattle to slay, thou hast in thyself what thou mayest kill. "Sacrifice to God is a spirit troubled, a heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not" (ver. 17). Utterly he despiseth bull, he-goat, ram: now is not the time that these should be offered. They were offered when they indicated something, when they promised something; when the things promised come, the promisesare taken away. "A heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not." Ye know that God is high: if thou shalt have made thyself high, He will be from thee; if thou shall have humbled thyself, He will draw near to thee.

22. See who this is: David as one man was seeming to implore; see ye here our image and the type of the Church. "Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion" (ver. 18). With this Sion deal kindly. What is Sion? A city holy. What is a city holy? That which cannot be hidden, being upon a mountain established. Sion in prospect, because it hath prospect of something which it hopeth for. For Sion is interpreted "prospect," and Jerusalem, "vision of peace." Ye perceive then yourselves to be in Sion and in Jerusalem, if being sure ye look for hope that is to be, and if ye have peace with God. "And be the walls of Jerusalem builded." "Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded." For not to herself let Sion ascribe her merits: do Thou with her deal kindly, "Be the walls

of Jerusalem builded:" be the battlements of our immortality laid, in faith and hope and charity.

23. "Then Thou shalt accept the sacrifice of righteousness" (ver. 19). But now sacrifice for iniquity, to wit, a spirit troubled, and a heart humbled; then the sacrifice of righteousness, praises alone. For, "Blessed they that dwell in Thy house, for ever and ever they shall praise Thee:" for this is the sacrifice of righteousness. "Oblations and holocausts." What are "holocausts"? A whole victim by fire consumed. When a whole beast was laid upon the altar with fire to be consumed, it was called a holocaust. May divine fire take us up whole, and that fervour catch us whole. What fervour? "Neither is there that hideth himself from the heat thereof." What fervour? That whereof speaketh the Apostle: "In spirit fervent." Be not merely our soul taken up by that divine fire of wisdom, but also our body; that it may earn their immortality; so be it lifted up for a holocaust, that death be swallowed into victory. "Oblations and holocausts." "Then shall they lay upon thine altar calves." Whence "calves"? What shall He therein choose? Will it be the innocence of the new age, or necks freed from the yoke of the law? ...

Psalm 52

1. The title of the Psalm hath: ”At the end, understanding of David, when there came Doeg the Edomite arid told Saul, David hath come into the house of Abimelech:” whereas we read that he had come into the house of Achimelech. And it may chance that we do not unreasonably suppose, that because of the similarity of a name and the difference of one syllable, or rather of one letter, the titles have been varied. In the manuscripts, however, of the Psalms, when we looked into them, rather Abimelech we have found than Achimelech. And since in another place thou hast a most evident Psalm, intimating not a dissimilarity of name, but an utterly different name; when, for instance, David changed his face before King Achish, not before king Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed: and yet the title of the Psalm is thus written, ”When he changed his countenance in the presence of Abimelech” -the very change of name maketh us the rather intent upon a mystery, lest thou shouldest pursue the quasi-facts of history, and despise the sacred veilings. ...

2. Observe ye two kinds of men; the one of men labouring, the other of those among whom they labour: the one of men thinking of earth, the other of heaven: the one of men weighing down their heart unto the deep, the other of men with Angels their heart conjoining: the one trusting in earthly things, wherein this world aboundeth, the other confiding in heavenly things, which God, who lieth not, hath promised. But mingled are these kinds of men. We see now the citizen of Jerusalem, citizen of the kingdom of heaven, have some office upon earth: to wit, one weareth purple, is a Magistrate, is Aeligdile, is Proconsul, is Emperor, doth direct the earthly republic: but he hath his heart above, if he is a Christian, if he is a believer, if he is godly, if he is despising those things wherein he is, and trusteth in that wherein he is not yet. Of which kind was that holy woman Esther, who, though she was wife of a king, incurred the danger of interceding for her countrymen: and when she was praying before God, where she could not lie, in her prayer said, that her royal ornaments were to her but as the cloth of a menstruous woman. Despair we not then of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven, when we see them engaged in any of Babylon’s matters, doing something earthly in republic earthly: nor again let us forthwith congratulate all men that we see doing matters heavenly;

because even the sons of pestilence sit sometimes in the seat of Moses, of whom is said, ”What things they say, do ye: but what things they do, do not: for they say, and do not.

Those, amid earthly things, lift up heart unto heaven, these, amid heavenly words, trail heart upon earth. But there will come time of winnowing, when both are to be severed with greatest diligence, in order that no grain may pass over unto the heap of chaff that is to be burned, that not one single straw may pass over to the mass that is to be stored in the barn. So long as then now it is mingled, hear we thence our voice, that is, voice of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven (for to this we ought to aspire, to bear with evil men here, rather than be borne with by good men): and let us conjoin ourselves to this voice, both with ear and with tongue, and with heart and work. Which if we shall have done, we are here speaking in those things which we hear. Let us therefore speak first of the evil body of kingdom earthly.

3. "Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? (ver. 1). Observe, my brethren, the glorying of malignity, the glorying of evil men. Where is glorying? "Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? That is, he that in malice is mighty, why doth he glory? There is need that a man be mighty, but in goodness, not in malice. Is it any great thing to glory in malice? To build a house doth belong to few men, any ignorant man you please can pull down. To sow wheat, to dress the crop, to wait until it ripen, and in that fruit on which one has laboured to rejoice, doth belong to few men: with one spark any man you please can burn all the crop. To breed an infant, when born to feed him, to educate, to bring him on to youth's estate, is a great task: to kill him in one moment of time any one you please is able. Therefore those things which are done for destruction, are most easily done. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord: he that glorieth, let him glory in goodness. Thou gloriest, because thou art mighty in evil. What art thou about to do, O mighty man, what art thou about to do, boasting thyself much? Thou art about to kill a man: this thing also a scorpion, this also one fever, this also a poisonous fungus can do. To this is thy mightiness reduced, that it be made equal to a poisonous fungus?

This therefore do the good citizens of Jerusalem, who not in malice but in goodness glory: firstly, that not in themselves, but in the Lord they glory. Secondly, that those things which make for edification they earnestly do, and do such things as are strong to abide: but things which make for destruction they may do, for the discipline of men advancing, not for the oppression of the innocent. To this mightiness then that earthly body being compared, why may it not hear out of these words, "Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty?"

4. "In iniquity the whole day upon injustice hath thy tongue thought" (ver. 2): that is, in the whole of time, without weariness, without intermission, without cessation. And when thou doest not, thou thinkest; so that when anything of evil is away from thy hands, from thy heart it is not away; either thou doest an evil thing, or while thou canst not do, thou sayest an evil thing, that is, thou evil-speakest: or when not even this thou canst do, thou wiliest and thinkest an evil thing. "The whole day," then, that is, without intermission. We expect punishment to this man. Is he to himself a small punishment? Thou threatenest him: thou, when thou threatenest him, wilt send him whither? Unto evil? Send him away unto himself. In order that thou mayest vent much rage, thou art going to give him into the

power of beasts: unto himself he is worse than beasts. For a beast can mangle his body: of himself he cannot leave his heart whole. Within, against himself he doth rage of himself, and dost thou from without seek for stripes? Nay, pray God for him, that he may be set free from himself. Nevertheless in this Psalm, my brethren, there is not a prayer for evil men, or against evil men, but a prophecy of what is to result to evil men. Think not therefore that the Psalm of ill-will saith anything: for it is said in the spirit of prophecy.

5. There followeth then what? All thy might and all thy thought of iniquity all the day, and meditation of malignity in thy tongue without intermission, hath performed what, done what? "As with a sharp razor thou hast done deceit" (ver. 3). See what do evil men to Saints, they scrape their hair. What is it that I have said? If there be such citizens of Jerusalem, that hear the voice of their Lord, of their King, saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: that hear the voice which but now from the Gospel hath been read, "What doth it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and of himself make wreck: they despise all present good things, and above all life itself. And what is Doeg's razor to do to a man on this earth meditating on the kingdom of heaven, and about to be in the kingdom of heaven, having with him God, and about to abide with God? What is that razor to do? Hair it is to scrape, it is to make a man bald. And this belongeth to Christ, who in the Place of a Skull was crucified. It maketh also the son of Core, which is interpreted baldness. For this hair signifieth a superfluity of things temporal. Which hairs indeed are not made by God superfluously on the body of men, but for a sort of ornament:

yet because without feeling they are cut off, they that cleave to the Lord with their heart, so have these earthly things as they have hair. But sometimes even something of good with "hair" is wrought, when thou breakest bread to the hungry, the poor without roof thou bringest into thy house; if thou shalt have seen one naked, thou coverest him: lastly, the Martyrs themselves also imitating the Lord, blood for the Church shedding, hearing that voice, "As Christ laid down His life for us, so also ought we also to lay down for the brethren," in a certain way with their hair did good to us, that is, with those things which that razor can lop off or scrape. But that therefore even with the very hair some good can be done, even that woman a sinner intimated, who, when she had wept over the feet of the Lord, with her hair wiped what with tears she wetted? Signifying what? That when thou shalt have pitied any one, thou oughtest to relieve him also if thou canst. For when thou hast pity, thou sheddest as it were tears: when thou relievest, thou wipest with hair. And if this to any one, how much more to the feet of the Lord. The feet of the Lord are what? The holy Evangelists, whereof is said, "How beautiful are the feet of them that tell of peace, that tell of good things! Therefore like a razor let Doeg whet his tongue, let him whet deceit as much as he may:

he will take away superfluous temporal things; will he necessary things everlasting?

6. "Thou hast loved malice above benignity" (ver. 4). Before thee was benignity; herself thou shouldest have loved. For thou wast not going to expend anything, nor wast thou going to fetch something to love by a distant voyage. Benignity is before thee, iniquity before thee:

compare and choose. But perchance thou hast an eye wherewith thou seest malignity, and hast no eye wherewith thou seest benignity. Woe to the iniquitous heart. What is worse, it doth turn away itself, that it may not see what it is able to see. For what of such hath been said in another place? "He would not understand that he might do good. For it is not said, he could not: but "he would not," he saith, "understand that he might do good," he closed his eyes from present light. And what followeth? "Of iniquity he hath meditated in his bed; that is, in the inner secrecy of his heart. Some reproach of this kind is heaped upon this Doeg the Edomite, a malignant body, a motion of earth, not abiding, not heavenly. "Thou hast loved malignity above benignity. For wilt thou know how an evil man doth see both, and the former he doth rather choose, from the other doth turn himself away? Wherefore doth he cry out when he suffereth anything unjustly? Wherefore doth he then exaggerate as much as he can the iniquity, and praise benignity, censuring him that hath wrought in him malignity above benignity? Be he then a rule to himself for seeing:

out of himself he shall be judged. Moreover, if he do what is written, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and, "Whatsoever good things ye will that men should do unto you, these also do ye do unto them: at home he hath means of knowing, because what on himself he will not have to be done, he ought not to do to another. "Thou hast loved malice above benignity. Iniquitously, inordinately, perversely thou wouldest raise water above oil: the water will be sunk, the oil will remain above. Thou wouldest under darkness place a light: the darkness will be put to flight, the light will remain. Above heaven thou wouldest place earth, by its weight the earth will fall into its place. Thou therefore wilt be sunk by loving malice above benignity. For never will malice overcome benignity. "Thou hast loved malice above benignity: iniquity more than to speak of equity. Before thee is equity, before thee is iniquity: one tongue thou hast, whither thou wilt thou turnest it: wherefore then rather to iniquity and not to equity? Food of bitterness dost thou not give to thy belly, and food of iniquity dost thou give to thy malignant tongue? As thou choosest whereon to live, so choose what thou mayest speak. Thou preferrest iniquity to equity, and preferrest malice to benignity; thou indeed preferrest, but above what can ever He but benignity and equity?

But thou, by placing thyself in a manner upon those things which it is necessary should go beneath, wilt not make them to be above good things, but thou with them wilt be sunk unto evil things.

7. Because of this there followeth in the Psalm, "Thou hast loved all words of sinking under" (ver. 5). Rescue therefore thyself, if thou canst, from sinking 'under. From shipwreck thou art fleeing, and dost embrace lead! If thou wilt not sink, catch at a plank, be borne on wood, let the Cross carry thee through. But now because thou art a Doeg the Edomite, a "motion," and "of earth," thou doest what? "Thou hast loved all words of sinking-under, a tongue deceitful." This hath preceded, words of sinking-under have followed a tongue deceitful. What is a tongue deceitful? A minister of guile is a tongue deceitful, of men bearing one thing in heart, another thing from mouth bringing forth. But in these is overthrowing, in these sinking under.

8. ”Wherefore God shall destroy thee at the end” (ver. 6): though now thou seemest to flourish like grass in the field before the heat of the sun. For, ”All flesh is grass, and the brightness of man as the bloom of grass: the grass hath withered, and the bloom hath fallen down: but the word of the Lord abideth for everlasting.” Behold that to which thou mayest bind thyself, to what ”abideth for everlasting.” For if to grass, and to the bloom of grass, thou shalt have bound thyself, since the grass shall wither, and the bloom shall fall down, ”God shall destroy thee at the end:” and if not now, certainly at the end He shall destroy, when that winnowing shall have come, and the heap of chaff from the solid grain shall have been separated. Is not the solid grain for the barns, and the chaff for the fire? Shall not the whole of that Doeg stand at the left hand, when the Lord is to say, ”Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels”? Therefore ”God shall destroy at the end: shall pluck thee out, and shall remove thee from thy dwelling.” Now then this Doeg the Edomite is in a dwelling: ”But a servant abideth not in the house for ever.” Even he worketh something of good, even if not with his doings, at least with the words of God, so that in the Church, when he ”seeketh his own,” he would say, at least, those things which are of Christ.

”But He shall remove thee from thy dwelling.” ”Verily, verily, I say unto you, they have received their reward.” ”And thy root from the land of the living.” Therefore in the land of the living we ought to have root. Be our root there. Out of sight is the root: fruits may be seen, root cannot be seen. Our root is our love, our fruits are our works: it is needful that thy works proceed from love, then is thy root in the land of the living. Then shall be rooted up that Doeg,nor any wise shall he be able there to abide, because neither more deeply there hath he fixed a root: but it shall be with him in like manner as it is with those seeds on the rock, which even if a root they throw out, yet, because moisture they have not, with the risen sun forthwith do wither. But, on the other hand, they that fix a root more deeply, hear from the Apostle what? ”I bow my knees for you to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye may be in love rooted and grounded.” And because there now is root, ”That ye may be able,” he saith, ”to comprehend what is the height, and breadth, and length, and depth: to know also the super-eminent knowledge of the love of Christ, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.” Of such fruits so great a root is worthy, being so single, so budding, for buddings so deeply grounded. But truly this man’s root shall be rooted up from the land of the living.

9. ”And the just shall see, and shall fear; and over him they shall laugh” (ver. 7). Shall fear when? Shall laugh when? Let us therefore understand, and make a distinction between those two times of fearing and laughing, which have their several uses. For so long as we are in this world, not yet must we laugh, lest hereafter we mourn. We have read what is reserved at the end for this Doeg, we have read and because we understand and believe, we see but fear. This, therefore, hath been said, ”Thejust shall see, and shall fear. So long as wesee what will result at the end to evil men, wherefore do we fear? Because the Apostle hath said, ”In fear and trembling work out your own salvation: because it hath been said in a Psalm, ”Serve the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. Wherefore ”with fear”? ”Wherefore let him that thinketh himself to stand, see that he fall not. Wherefore

"with trembling"? Because he saith in another place: "Brethren, if a man shall have been overtaken in any delinquency, ye that are spiritual instruct such sort in the spirit of gentleness; heeding thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Therefore, the just that are now, that live of faith, so see this Doeg, what to him is to result, that nevertheless they fear also for themselves: for what they are to-day, they know; what to-morrow they are to be, they know not. Now, therefore, "The just shall see, and they shall fear.

But when shall they laugh? When iniquity shall have passed over; when it shall have flown over; as now to a great degree hath flown over the time uncertain; when shall have been put to flight the darkness of this world, wherein now we walk not but by the lamp of the Scriptures, and therefore fear as though in night. For we walk by prophecy; whereof saith the Apostle Peter, "We have a more sure prophetic word, to which giving heed ye do well, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day shine, and the day-star arise in your hearts. So long then as by a lamp we walk, it is needful that with fear we should live. But when shall have come our day, that is, the manifestation of Christ, whereof the same Apostle saith, "When Christ shall have appeared, your life, then ye also shall appear with Himself in glory," then the just shall laugh at that Doeg. ...

10. But what shall they then say that shall laugh? "And over him they shall laugh; and shall say, Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper" (ver. 8). See ye the body earthly! "As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be," is a proverb of covetous men, of grasping men, of men oppressing the innocent, of men seizing upon other men's goods, of men denying things entrusted to their care. Of what sort is this proverb? "As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be; that is, as much as thou shall have had of money, as much as thou shalt have gotten, by so much the more mighty shall thou be. "Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper, but hath trusted in the multitude of his riches. Let not a poor man, one perchance that is evil, say, I am not of this body. For he hath heard the Prophet saying, "He hath trusted in the multitude of his riches: forthwith if he is poor, he heedeth his rags, he hath observed near him perchance a rich man among the people of God more richly apparelled, and he saith in his heart, Of this man he speaketh; doth he speak of me? Do not thence except thyself, do not separate thyself, unless thou shalt have seen and feared, in order that thou mayest hereafter laugh. For what doth it profit thee, if thou dost want means, and thou burnest with cupidity?

When our Lord Jesus Christ to that rich man that was grieved, and that was departing from Him, had said, "Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven, and come follow Me: and great hopelessness for rich men foretold, so that He said, more easily could a camel pass through the eye of a needle, than a rich man enter into the kingdom of Heaven, were not forthwith the disciples grieved, saying with themselves, "Who shall be able to be saved? Therefore when they were saying, "Who shall be able to be saved? did they think of the few rich men, did there escape them so great a multitude of poor men? Could they not say to themselves, If it is hard, aye animpossible thing, that rich men should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as it is impossible that a

camel should enter through the eye of a needle, let all poor men enter into the kingdom of heaven, be the rich alone shut out? For how few are the rich men? But of poor men are thousands innumerable. For not the coats are we to look upon in the kingdom of heaven; but for every one's garment shall be reckoned the effulgence of righteousness: there shall be therefore poor men equal to Angels of God, clothed with the stoles of immortality, they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father:

what reason is there for us about a few rich men to be concerned, or distressed? This thought not the Apostles; but when the Lord had spoken this, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven: they saying to themselves, "Who shall be able to be saved," meant what? Not means, but desires; for they saw even poor men themselves, even if not having money, yet to have covetousness. And that ye may know, that not money in a rich man, but covetousness is condemned, attend to what I say; Thou observest that rich man standing near thee, and perchance in him is money, and is not covetousness; in thee is not money, and is covetousness. A poor man full of sores, full of woe, licked by dogs, having no help, having no morsel, not having perchance a mere garment, was borne by the Angels unto Abraham's bosom. Ho! being a poor man, art thou glad now; for are even sores by thee to be desired? Is not thy patrimony soundness? There is not in this Lazarus the merit of poverty, but that of godliness. For thou seest who was borne up, thou seest not whither he was borne up. Who was borne up by Angels? A poor man, full of woe, full of sores. Whither was he borne up? Unto Abraham's bosom. Read the Scriptures, and thou shall find Abraham to have been a rich man.

In order that thou mayest know, that not riches are blamed; Abraham had much gold, silver, cattle, household, was a rich man, and unto his bosom Lazarus, a poor man, was borne up. Unto bosom of rich man, poor man: are not rather both unto God rich men, both in cupidity poor men? ...

11. Therefore that man having been condemned that "hath trusted in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity: for what more vain, than he that thinketh coin more to avail than God? Therefore that man having been condemned that said, blessed of the people to whom these things are: thou that sayest, "Blessed the people of whom is the Lord their own God," dost think of thyself what? dost hope for thyself what? "But I; now at length hear that body: "But I am like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God" (ver. 9). Not one man speaketh, but that olive fruit-bearing, whence have been pruned the proud branches, and the humble wild olive grafted in. "Like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God, I have trusted in the mercy of God. He did what? "In the multitude of his riches: therefore his root shall be plucked out from the land of the living. "But I," because "like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God," the root whereof is nourished, is not rooted out, "have trusted in the mercy of God. But perchance now? For even herein men err sometimes. God indeed they worship, and are not now like to that Doeg: but though on God they rely, it is for temporal things nevertheless; so that they say to themselves, I Worship my God, who will make me rich upon earth, who to me will give sons, who to me will give a wife.

Such things indeed giveth none but God, but God would not have Himself for the sake of such things to be loved. For to this end oftentimes those things He giveth even to evil men, in order that some other thing good men of Him may learn to seek. In what manner then sayest thou, "I have trusted in the mercy of God"? Perchance for obtaining temporal things? Nay but, "For everlasting and world without end. The expression, "For everlasting," he willed to repeat by adding, "world without end," in order that by there repeating he might affirm how rooted he was in the love of the kingdom of heaven, and in the hope of everlasting felicity.

12. "I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done" (ver. 10). "Hast done what?" Doeg Thou hast condemned, David Thou hast crowned. "I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done." Great confession, "Because thou hast done"! "Hast done" what? except these very things which above have been spoken of, that like an olive fruit-bearing in the house of God, I should trust in the mercy of God for everlasting and world without end? Thou hast done: an ungodly man cannot justify himself. But who is He that justifieth? "Believing," he saith, "on Him" that justifieth "the ungodly." "For what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received, as if of thyself thou hast?" Be it far from me that I should so glory, saith he, that is opposed against Doeg, that beareth with Doeg upon earth, until he remove from his dwelling, and be rooted up from the land of the living. I glory not as if I have not received, but in God I glory. "And I will confess to Thee because Thou hast done," that is, because Thou hast done not according to my merits, but according to Thy mercy. But I have done what? If thou recollectest, "Before, I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." But thou, what hast thou done? "But mercy I have obtained, because ignorant I did it." "I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done."

13. "And I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. Bitter is the world, but Thy name is pleasant. Even if certain sweet things are in the world, yet with bitterness they are digested. Thy name is preferred, not only for greatness but also for pleasantness. "For unjust men have told to me their delights, but it is not as Thy law, O Lord. For if there were nothing sweet to the Martyrs, they would not have suffered with equanimity so great bitterness of tribulations. Their bitterness by any one was experienced, their sweetness easily could no one taste. The name of God therefore is pleasant to men loving God above all pleasantnesses. "I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. And to what dost Thou prove that it is pleasant? Give me a palate to which it is pleasant. Praise honey as much as thou art able, exaggerate the sweetness thereof with what words thou shalt have the power: a man knowing not what honey is, unless he shall have tasted, what thou sayest knoweth not.Therefore the rather to the proof the Psalm inviting thee saith what? "Taste and see that sweet is the Lord. Taste thou wilt not, and thou sayest, Is it pleasant? What is pleasant? If thou hast tasted, in thy fruit be it found, not in words alone, as it were only in leaves, lest by the curse of the Lord, to wither like that fig-tree thou shouldest deserve. "Taste," he saith, "and see, that sweet is the Lord.

Taste and see: then ye shall see, if ye shall have tasted. But to a man not tasting, how provest thou? By praising the pleasantness of the name of God, whatsoever things thou shall have said are words: something else is taste. The words of His praise there hear even the ungodly, but none taste how sweet it is, but the Saints. Further, a man discerning the sweetness of the name of God, and wishing to unfold and wishing to show the same, and not finding persons to whom he may unfold it; for to the Saints there is no need that he show it, because they even of themselves taste and know, but the ungodly cannot discern what they will not taste: doth, I say, what, because of the sweetness' of the name of God? He hath borne him forthwith away from the crowds of the ungodly. "And I will look," he saith, "for Thy name, for it is pleasant, in the sight of Thy Saints. Pleasant is Thy name, but not in the sight of the ungodly. I know how sweet a thing it is, but it is to them that have tasted.

Psalm 53

1. Of this Psalm we undertake to treat with you, as far as the Lord supplieth us. A brother biddeth us that we may have the will, and prayeth that we may have the power. If anything in haste perchance I shall have passed over, He that even to us deigneth to give what we shall be enabled to say, will supply it in you. The title of it is: ”At the end, for Maeleth, understanding to David himself.” ”For Maeleth,” as we find in interpretations of Hebrew names, seemeth to say, For one travailing, or in pain. But who there is in this world that travaileth and is in pain, the faithful acknowledge, because thereof they are. Christ here travaileth, Christ here is in pain: the Head is above, the members below. For one not travailing nor in pain would not say, ”Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Him, with whom when persecuting He was travailing, being converted, He made to travail. For he also was himself afterwards enlightened, and grafted on those members which he used to persecute; being pregnant with the same love, he said, ”My little children, of whom again I travail, until Christ be formed in you.” For the members therefore of Christ, for His Body which is the Church, for that same One Man, that is, for that very unity, whereof the Head is above, this Psalm is sung. ...Who are they, then, amid whom we travail and groan, if in the Body of Christ we are, if under Him, the Head, we live, if amongst His members we are counted? Who they are, hear ye.

2. ”The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God” (ver. 1). Such sort is it of men amid whom is pained and groaneth the Body of Christ. If such is this sort of men, of not many do we travail; as far as seemeth to occur to our thoughts, very few there are; and a difficult thing it is to meet with a man that saith in his heart, ”There is no God; nevertheless, so few there are, that, fearing amid the many to say this, in their heart they say it, for that with mouth to say it they dare not. Not much then is that which we are bid to endure, hardly is it found: uncommon is that sort of men that say in their heart, ”There is no God. But, if it he examined in another sense, is not that found to be in more men, which we supposed to be in men few and uncommon, and almost in none? Let them come forth into the midst that live evil lives, let us look into the doings of profligate, daring, and wicked men, of whom there is a great multitude; who foster day by day their sins, who, their acts having been changed into habit, have even lost sense of shame:

this is so great a multitude of men, that the Body of Christ, set amid them, scarce dareth to censure that which it is not constrained to commit, and deemeth it a great matter for itself that the integrity of innocence be preserved in not doing that which now, by habit, either it doth not dare to blame, or if it shall have dared, there breaketh out the censure and recrimination of them that live evil lives, more readily than the free voice of them that live good lives. And those men are such as say in their heart, "There is no God. Such men I am confuting. Whence confuting? That their doings please God, they judge. He doth not therefore affirm, "some say," but "The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God. Which men do so far believe there is a God, that the same God they judge with what they do to be pleased. But if thou being wise dost perceive, how "the unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God," if thou give heed, if thou understand, if thou examine; he that thinketh that evil doings please God, Him he doth not think to be God. For if God is, He is just; if He is just, injustice displeaseth Him, iniquity displeaseth. But thou, when thou thinkest that iniquity pleaseth Him, dost deny God.

For if God is one Whom iniquity displeaseth, but God seemeth not to thee to be one whom iniquity displeaseth, and there is no God but one whom iniquity displeaseth, then when thou sayest in thy heart, God doth countenance my iniquities, thou sayest nothing else than, "There is no God."

3. Let us advert also to that sense, which concerning Christ our Lord Himself, our Head Himself, doth present itself. For when Himself in form of a servant appeared on earth, they that crucified Him said, "He is not God. Because Son of God He was, truly God He was. But they that are corrupted and have become abominable said what? "He is not God: let us slay Him, "He is not God. Thou hast the voice of these very men in the book of Wisdom. For after there had gone before the verse, "The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God ; as if reasons were required why the unwise man could say this, he hath subjoined, "Corrupted they are, and abominable have become in their iniquities" (ver. 2). Hear ye those corrupted men. "For they have said with themselves, not rightly thinking: corruption beginneth with evil belief, thence it proceedeth to depraved morals, thence to the most flagrant iniquities, these are the grades. But what with themselves said they, thinking not rightly? "A small thing and with tediousness is our life. From this evil belief followeth that which also the Apostle hath spoken of, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. But in the former passage more diffusely luxury itself is described: "Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered; in every place let us leave the tokens of our gladness. After the more diffuse description of that luxury, what followeth? "Let us slay the poor just man:

this is therefore saying, "He is not God. Soft words they seemed but now to say: "Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered. What more delicate, what more soft? Wouldest thou expect, out of this softness, Crosses, swords? Wonder not, soft are even the roots of brambles; if any one handle them, he is not pricked: but that wherewith thou shall be pricked from thence hath birth. "Corrupted," therefore, are those men, "and abominable

have become in their iniquities. They say, "If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Behold them openly saying, "He is not God." ...

4. "The Lord from Heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding and seeking after God" (ver. 3). What is this? "Corrupted they are," all these that say, "There is no God"? And what? Did it escape God, that they were become such? Or indeed to us would their inward thought be opened, except by Him it were told? If then He understood, if then He knew, what is this which hath been said, "that He might see"? For the words are of one inquiring, of one not knowing. "God from Heaven hath looked forth," etc. And as though He had found what He sought by looking upon, and by looking down from Heaven, He giveth sentence: "All men have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, not so much as one" (ver. 4). Two questions arise somewhat difficult: for if God looketh out from Heaven, in order that He may see if there is one understanding or seeking after God; there stealeth upon an unwise man the thought, that God knoweth not all things. This is one question: what is the other? If there is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one; who is he that travaileth amid bad men? The former question then is solved as followeth:

ofttimes the Scripture speaketh in such manner, that what by the gift of God a creature doth, God is said to do. ...For hence has been said the following also, "For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the depth of God; not because He that knoweth all things searcheth, but because to thee hath been given the Spirit, which maketh thee also to search: and that which by His own gift thou doest, He is said to do; because without Him thou wouldest not do it: therefore God is said to do, when thou doest. ...And because this by the gift of God thou doest, God from heaven is "looking forth upon the sons of men. The former question then, according to our measure, thus hath been solved.

5. What is that which looking forth we acknowledge? What is that which looking forth God acknowledgeth? What (because here He giveth it) doth He acknowledge? Hear what it is; that "All have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one." What then is that other question, but the same whereof a little before I have made mention? If, "There is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one," no one remaineth to groan amid evil men. Stay, saith the Lord, do not hastily give judgment. I have given to men to do well; but of Me, He saith, not of themselves: for of themselves evil they are: sons of men they are, when they do evil; when well, My sons. For this thing God doth, out of sons of men He maketh sons of God: because out of Son of God He hath made Son of Man. See what this participation is: there hath been promised to us a participation of Divinity: He lieth that hath promised, if He is not first made partaker of mortality. For the Son of God hath been made partaker of mortality, in order that mortal man may be made partaker of divinity. He that hath promised that His good is to be shared with thee, first with thee hath shared thy evil: He that to thee hath promised divinity, showeth in thee love. Therefore take away that men are sons of God, there remaineth that they are sons of men: "There is none that doeth good, is not so much as one."

6. ”Shall not all know that work iniquity, that devour My people for the food of bread”? (ver. 5). ...There is therefore here a people of God that is being devoured. Nay, ”There is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one.” We reply by the rule above. But this people that is devoured, this people that suffereth evil men, this that groaneth and travaileth amid evil men, now out of sons of men have been made sons of God: therefore are they devoured. For, ”The counsel of the needy man thou hast confounded, because the Lord is his hope.” For ofttimes, in order that the people of God may be devoured, this very thing in it is despised, that it is the people of God. I will pillage, he saith, and despoil; if he is a Christian, what will he do to me? ...But what followeth? ”I will convince thee, and will set thee before thy face.” Thou wilt not now know so as thou shouldest be displeasing to thyself, thou shall know so as thou mayest mourn. For God cannot but show to the unrighteous their iniquity. If He is not to show, who will they be that are to say, ”What hath profiled us pride, and what hath boasting of riches bestowed upon us?” For then shall they know, that now will not know. ”Shall not all know?” etc. Why hath He added, ”for the food of bread”? As it were as bread, they eat My people. For all other things which we eat, we can eat now these, now those; not always this vegetable, not always this flesh, not always these apples: but always bread. What is then, ”Devour My people for the food of bread”? Without intermission, without cessation they devour.

7. ”On God they have not called.” He is comforting the man that groaneth, and chiefly by an admonition, lest by imitating evil men, who ofttimes prosper, they delight in evil doing. There is kept for thee that which to thee hath been promised: their hope is present, thine is future, but theirs is transient, thine sure; theirs false, thine true. For they ”upon God have not called.” Do not daily such men ask of God? They do ”not” ask of God. Give heed, if I am able to say this by the aid of God Himself. God gratuitously will have Himself to be worshipped, gratuitously will have Himself to be loved, that is chastely to be loved; not Himself to be loved for the reason that He giveth anything besides Himself, but because He giveth Himself. He then that calleth upon God in order that He may be made rich, On God doth not call: for upon that He calleth which to himself he willeth to come. ...But now thou wouldest have coffer full, and conscience void: God filleth not coffer, but breast. What do outward riches profit thee, if inward need presseth thee? Therefore those men that for the sake of worldly comforts, that for the sake of earthly good things, that for the sake of present life and earthly felicity, call upon God, do not call upon God.

8. For this reason what followeth concerning them? ”There have they feared with fear, where there was no fear” (ver. 6). For is there fear, if a man lose riches? There is no fear there, and yet in that case men are afraid. But if a man lose wisdom, truly there is fear, and in that case he is not afraid. ...Thou hast feared to give back money, and hast willed to lose fidelity. The Martyrs took not away property of other persons, but even their own they despised that they might not lose fidelity: and it was too little to lose money, when they were proscribed; they took also their life when they suffered: they lost life, in order that unto everlasting life they might find it. Therefore there they feared, where they ought to have been afraid. But they that of Christ have said, ”He is not God,” have there feared

where was no fear. For they said, "If we shall have let Him go, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and kingdom. O folly and imprudence saying in its heart, "He is not God"! Thou hast feared to lose earth, thou hast lost Heaven: thou hast feared lest there should come the Romans, and take away from thee place and kingdom! Could they take away from thee God? What then remaineth? what but that thou confess, that thou hast willed to keep, and by keeping ill hast lost? For thou hast lost both place and nation by slaying Christ.

For ye did will rather to slay Christ, than to lose place; and ye have lost place, and nation, and Christ. In fearing, they have slain Christ: but wherefore this? "For God hath scattered the bones of them that please men. Willing to please men, they feared to lose their place. But Christ Himself, of whom they said, "He is not God," willed rather to displease such men, as they were: sons of men, not sons of God, He willed rather to displease. Thence were scattered their bones, His bones no one hath broken. "They were confounded, for God hath despised them. In very deed, brethren, as far as regardeth them, great confusion hath come to them. In the place where they crucified the Lord, whom for this cause they crucified, that they might not lose both place and nation, the Jews are not. "God," therefore, "hath despised them: and yet in despising He warned them to be converted. Let them now confess Christ, and say, He is God, of whom they said, "He is not God. Let them return to the inheritance of their fathers, to the inheritance of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, let them possess with these very persons life eternal: though they have lost life temporal. Wherefore this? Because out of sons of men have been made sons of God. For so long as they remain, and will not, there is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. "They were confounded, for God hath despised them.

And as though to these very persons He were turned, He saith, "Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? (ver. 7). O ye fools, ye revile, insult, buffet, besmear with spittings, with thorns ye crown, upon the Cross ye lift up; whom? "Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? Shall not That Same of whom ye have said, "He is not God"? "In God's turning away the captivity of His people. For there turneth away the captivity of His people, no one but He that hath willed to be a captive in your own hands. But what men shall understand this thing? "Jacob shall exult, and Israel shall rejoice. "Israel; the true Jacob, and the true Israel, that younger, to whom the eider was servant shall himself exult, for he shall himself understand.

Psalm 54

1. The title of this Psalm hath fruit in the prolixity thereof, if it be understood: and because the Psalm is short, let us make up our not having to tarry over the Psalm by tarrying over the title. For upon this dependeth every verse which is sung. If any one, therefore, observe that which on the front of the house is fixed, secure he will enter; and, when he shall have entered, he will not err. For this on the post itself is prominently marked, namely, in what manner within he may not be in error. The title thereof standeth thus: ”At the end, in hymns, understanding to David himself, when there came the Ziphites, and said to Saul, Behold, is not David hidden with us? That Saul was persecutor of the holy man David, very well we know: that Saul was bearing the figure of a temporal kingdom, not to life but to death belonging, this also to your Love we remember to have imparted. And also that David himself was bearing the figure of Christ, or of the Body of Christ, ye ought both to know and to call to mind, ye that have already learned. What thenof the Ziphites? There was a certain village, Ziph, whereof the inhabitants were Ziphites, in whose country David had hidden himself, when Saul would find and slay him. These Ziphites then, when they had learned this, betrayed him to the king his persecutor, saying, ”Behold, is not David hidden with us?

Of no good to them indeed was their betrayal, and to David himself of no harm. For their evil disposition was shown: but Saul not even after their betrayal could seize David; but rather in a certain cave in that very country, when into his hands Saul had been given to slay, David spared him, and that which he had in his power he did not But the other was seeking to do that which he had not in his power. Let them that have been Ziphites take heed: let us see those whom to us the Psalm presenteth to be understood by the occasion of those same men.

2. If we inquire then by what word is translated Ziphites, we find, ”Men flourishing.” Flourishing then were certain enemies to holy David, flourishing before him hiding. We may find them in mankind, if we are willing to understand the Psalm. Let us find here at first David hiding, and we shallfind his adversaries flourishing. Observe David hiding: ”For ye are dead,” saith the Apostle to the members of Christ, ”and your life is hid with Christ in God.” These men, therefore, that are hiding, when shall they be flourishing? ”When Christ,” he saith, ”your life, shall have appeared, then ye also with Him shall appear in glory.” When

these men shall be flourishing, then shall be those Ziphites withering. For observe to what flower their glory is compared: ”All flesh is grass, and the honour of flesh as the flower of grass.” What is the end? ”The grass hath withered, and the flower hath fallen off.” Where then shall be David? See what followeth: ”But the Word of the Lord abideth for ever.” ...

3. These men sometimes are observed of the weak sons of light, and their feet totter, when they have seen evil men in felicity to flourish, and they say to themselves, ”Of what profit to me is innocence? What doth it advantage me that I serve God, that I keep His commandments, that I oppress no one, from no one plunder anything, hurt no one, that what I can I bestow? behold, all these things I do, and they flourish, I toil.” But why? Wouldest thou also wish to be a Ziphite? They flourish in the world, wither in judgment, and after withering, into fire everlasting shall be cast: wouldest thou also choose this? Art thou ignorant of what He hath promised thee, who to thee hath come, what in Himself here He displayed? If the flower of the Ziphites were to be desired, would not Himself thy Lord also in this world have flourished? Or indeed was there wanting to Him the power to flourish? Nay but here He chose rather amid the Ziphites to hide, and to say to Pontius Pilate, as if to one being himself also a flower of the Ziphites, and in suspicion about His kingdom, ”My kingdom is not of this world.” Therefore here He was hidden: and all good men are hidden here, because their good is within, it is concealed, in the heart it is, where is faith, where charity, where hope, where their treasure is. Do these good things appear in the world? Both these good things are hidden, and the reward of these good things is hidden. ...

4. ”O God, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me” (ver. 1). Let the Church say this, hiding amid the Ziphites. Let the Christian body say this, keeping secret the good of its morals, expecting in secret the reward of its merits, let it say this: ”In Thy virtues judge me. Thou hast come, O Christ, humble Thou hast appeared, despised Thou hast been, scourged hast been, crucified hast been slain hast been; but, on the third day hast risen, on the fortieth day into Heaven hast ascended: Thou sittest at the right hand of the Father, and no one seeth: Thy Spirit thence Thou hast sent, which men that were worthy have received; fulfilled with Thy love, the praise of that very humility of Thine throughout the world and nations they have preached: Thy name I see to excel among mankind, but nevertheless as weak to us hast Thou been preached. For not even did that Teacher of the Gentiles say, that among us he knew anything, ”Save Christ Jesus, and Him crucified; in order that of Him we might choose the reproach, rather than the glory of the flourishing Ziphites. Nevertheless, of Him he saith what? ”Although He died of weakness, yet He liveth of the power of God. He came then that He might die of weakness, He is to come that He may judge in the power of God: but through the weakness of the Cross His name hath been illustrious.

Whosoever shall not have believed upon the name made illustrious through weakness, shall stand in awe at the Judge, when He shall have come in power. But, lest He that once was weak, when He shall have come strong, with that fan send us to the left hand; may He ”saveus in His name, and judge us in His virtue. For who so rash as to have desired this,

as to say to God, for instance "Judge me"? Is it not wont to be said to men for a curse, "God judge thee"? So evidently it is a curse, if He judge thee in His virtue; and shall not have saved thee in His name: but when in name precedent He shall have saved thee, to thy health in virtue consequent He shall judge. Be thou without care: that judgment shall not to thee be punishment, but dividing. For in a certain Psalm thus is said: "Judge me, O God, and divide my cause from the nation unholy." ...

5. "O God, hearken to my prayer, in Thy ears receive the words of my mouth" (ver. 2). ...To Thee may my prayer attain, driven forth and darted out from the desire of Thy eternal blessings: to Thy ears I send it forth, aid it that it may reach, lest it fall short in the middle of the way, and fainting as it were it fall down. But even if there result not to me now the good things which I ask, I am secured nevertheless that hereafter they will come. For even in the case of transgressions a certain man is said to have asked of God, and not to have been hearkened to for his good. For privations of this world had inspired him to prayer, and being set in temporal tribulations he had wished that temporal tribulations should pass away, and there should return the flower of grass; and he saith, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? The very voice of Christ it is, but for His members' sake. "The words," he saith, "of my transgressions I have cried to Thee throughout the day, and Thou hast not hearkened: and by night, and not for the sake of folly to me: that is, "and by night I have cried, and Thou hast not hearkened;

and nevertheless in this very thing that Thou hast not hearkened, it is not for the sake of folly to me that Thou hast not hearkened, but rather for the sake of wisdom that Thou hast not hearkened, that I might perceive what of Thee I ought to ask. For those things I was asking which to my cost perchance I should have received. Thou askest riches, O man; how many have been overset through their riches? Whence knowest thou whether to thee riches may profit? Have not many poor men more safely been in obscurity; having become rich men, so soon as they have begun to blaze forth, they have been a prey to the stronger? How much better they would have lain concealed, how much better they would have been unknown, that have begun to be inquired after not for the sake of what they were, but for the sake of what they had! In these temporal things therefore, brethren, we admonish and exhort you in the Lord, that ye ask not anything as if it were a thing settled, but that which God knoweth to be expedient for you. For what is expedient for you, ye know not at all. Sometimes that which ye think to be for you is against you, and that which ye think to be against you is for you. For sick ye are; do not dictate to the physician the medicines he may choose to set beside you.

If the teacher of the Gentiles, Paul the Apostle, saith, "For what we should pray for as we ought, we know not," how much more we? Who nevertheless, when he seemed to himself to pray wisely, namely, that from him should be taken away the thorn of the flesh, the angel of Satan, that did buffet him, in order that he might not in the greatness of the revelations be lifted up, heard from the Lord what? Was that done which he wished? Nay, in order to that being done which was expedient, he heard from the Lord, I say, what? "Thrice," he saith, "I

besought the Lord that He would take it from me; and He said to me, My Grace sufficeth for thee: for virtue in weakness is made perfect. Salve to the wound I have applied; when I applied it I know, when it should be taken away I know. Let not a sick man draw back from the hands of the physician, let him not give advice to the physician. So it is with all these things temporal. There are tribulations; if well thou worshippest God, thou wilt know that He knoweth what is expedient for each man: there are prosperities; take the more heed, lest these same corrupt thy soul, so that it withdraw from Him that hath given these things. ...

6. "For aliens have risen up against me" (ver. 3). What "aliens"? Was not David himself a Jew of the tribe of Judah? But the very place Ziph belonged to the tribe of Judah; it was of the Jews. How then "aliens"? Not in city, not in tribe, not in kindred, but in flower. ...But see the Ziphites, see them for a time flourishing. With reason "alien" sons. Thou amid the Ziphites hiding saidst what? "Blessed the people whereof the Lord is its God." Out of this affection this prayer is being sent forth into the ears of the Lord, when it is said, "for aliens have risen up against me."

7. "And mighty men have sought after my soul. For in a new manner, my brethren, they would destroy the race of holy men, and the race of them that abstain from hoping in this world, all they that have hope in this world. Certainly commingled they are, certainly together they live. Very much to one another are opposed these two sorts: the one of those that place no hope but in things secular, and in temporal felicity, and the other of those that do firmly place their trope in the Lord God. And though concordant are these Ziphites, do not much trust to their concord: temptations are wanting; when there shall have come any temptation, so as that a person may be reproved for the flower of the world, I say not to thee he will quarrel with the Bishop, but not even to the Church Herself will he draw near, lest there fall any part of the grass. Wherefore have I said these words, brethren? Because now gladly ye all hear in the name of Christ, and according as ye understand, so ye shout out at the word; ye would not indeed shout at it unless ye understood. This your understanding ought to be fruitful. But whether it is fruitful, temptation doth try; lest suddenly when ye are said to be ours, through temptation ye be found aliens, and it be said, "Aliens have risen up against me, and mighty men have sought my soul.

Be not that said which followeth, "They have not set forth God before their face. For when will he set God before his face, before whose eyes there is nought but the world? namely, how he may have coin upon coin, how flocks may be increased, how barns may be filled, how it may be said to his soul, "Thou hast many good things, be merry, feast, take thy fill. Doth he set before his face Him, that unto one so boasting and so blooming with the flower of the Ziphites saith, "Fool" (that is, "man not understanding," "man unwise"), "this night shall be taken from thee thy soul; all these things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"

8. "For behold, God helpeth me" (ver. 4). Even themselves know not themselves, amid whom I am hiding. But if they too were to set God before their face, they would find in what manner God helpeth me. For all holy men are helped by God, but within, where no

one seeth For in like manner as the conscience of ungodly men is a great punishment, so a great joy is the very conscience of godly men. ”For our glory this is,” saith the Apostle, ”the testimony of our conscience.” In this within, not in the flower of the Ziphites without, doth glory that man that now saith, ”For behold God helpeth me.” Surely though afar off are to be those things which He promiseth, this day have I a sweet and present help; to-day in my heart’s joy I find that without cause certain say, ”Who doth show to us good things? For there is signed upon us the light of Thy countenance, O Lord, Thou hast put pleasantness into my heart.” Not into my vineyard, not into my flock, not into my cask, not into my table, but ”into my heart.” ”For behold God helpeth me.” How doth He help thee? ”And the Lord is the lifter up of my soul.”

9. ”Turn away evil things unto mine enemies” (ver. 5). So however green they are, so however they flourish, for the fire they are being reserved. ”In Thy virtue destroy Thou them.” Because to wit they flourish now, because to wit they spring up like grass: do not thou be a man unwise and foolish, so that by giving thought to these things thou perish for ever and ever. For, ”Turn Thou away evil things unto mine enemies.” For if thou shalt have place in the body of David Himself, in His virtue He will destroy them. These men flourish in the felicity of the world, perish in the virtue of God. Not in the same manner as they flourish, do they also perish: for they flourish for a time, perish for everlasting: flourish in unreal good things, perish in real torments. ”In Thy strength destroy,” whom in Thy weakness Thou hast endured.

10. ”Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee” (ver. 6). Who can even understand this good thing of the heart, at another’s speaking thereof, unless in himself he hath tasted it? What is, ”Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee”?... For what sacrifice here shall I take, brethren? or what worthily shall I offer to the Lord for His mercy? Victims shall. I seek from flock of sheep, ram shall I select, for any bull in the herds shall I look out, frankincense indeed from the land of the Sabaeans shall I bring? What shall I do? What offer; except that whereof He speaketh, ”Sacrifice of praise shall honour Me”? Wherefore then ”voluntarily”? Because truly I love that which I praise. I praise God, and in the self-same praise I rejoice: in the praise of Himself I rejoice, at whom being praised, I blush not. For He is not praised in the same manner as by those who love the theatrical follies is praised either by a charioteer, or a hunter, or actor of any kind, and by their praisers, other praisers are invited, are exhorted, to shout together: and when all have shouted, ofttimes, if their favourite is overcome, they are all put to the blush. Not so is our God : be He praised with the will, loved with charity: let it be gratuitous (or voluntary) that He is loved and that He is praised. What is ”gratuitous”? Himself for the sake of Himself, not for the sake of something else.

For if thou praisest God in order that He may give thee something else, no longer freely dost thou love God. Thou wouldest blush, if thy wife for the sake of riches were to love thee, and perchance if poverty should befall thee, should begin to think of adultery. Seeing that therefore thou wouldest be loved by thy partner freely, wilt thou for anything else love God? What reward art thou to receive of God, O covetous man? Not earth for thee, but Himself

He keepeth, who made heaven and earth. ”Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee: do it not of necessity. For if for the sake of anything else thou praisest God, out of necessity thou praisest. ...These things also which He hath given, because of the Giver are good things. For He giveth entirely, He giveth these temporal things: and to certain men to their good, to certain men to their harm, after the height and depth of His judgments. ...”Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Wherefore ”voluntarily”? Because gratis. What is gratis? ”And I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, for it is a good thing: for nothing else, but because a ”good thing” it is. Doth he say, ”I will confess to Thy name, O Lord,” because Thou givest me fruitful manors, because Thou givest me gold and silver, because Thou givest me extended riches, abundant money, most exalted dignity? Nay. But what? ”For it is a good thing. Nothing I find better than Thy name.11.

”For out of all tribulation Thou hast delivered me” (ver. 7). For this cause I have perceived how good a thing is Thy name: for if this I were able before tribulations to acknowledge, perchance for me there had been no need of them. But tribulation hath been applied for admonition, admonition hath redounded to Thy praise. For I should not have understood where I was, except of my weakness I had been admonished. ”Out of all tribulations,” therefore, ”Thou hast delivered me. And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back: upon those Ziphites ”mine eye hath looked back. Yea, their flower I have passed over in loftiness of heart, unto Thee I have come, and thence I have looked back upon them, and have seen that ”All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: as in a certain place is also said, ”I have seen the ungodly man to be exalted and raised up like the cedars of Lebanon: I passed by, and, lo! he was not. Wherefore ”he was not”? Because thou hast passed by. What is, ”because thou hast passed by”? Because not to no purpose hast thou heard ”Lift up thy heart; because not on earth, where thou wouldest have rotted, thou hast remained; because thou hast lifted thy soul to God, and thou hast mounted beyond the cedars of Lebanon, and from that elevation hast observed: and ”Lo! he was not; and thou hast sought him, and there hath not been found place for him.

No longer is labour before thee; because thou hast entered into the sanctuary of God, and hast understood for the last things. So also here thus he concludeth. ”And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back. This do ye therefore, brethren, with your souls; lift up your hearts, sharpen the edge of your mind, learn truly to love God, learn to despise the present world, learn voluntarily to sacrifice the offerings of praise; to the end that, mounting beyond the flower of the grass, ye may look back upon your enemies.

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.