Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (part 1 of 2)

Cyril of Alexandria (c. AD 376–444)

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Introduction

COMMENTARY OF S. CYRIL,
PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA, UPON

THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

1:2. Who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word. In saying that the Apostles were eyewitnesses of the substantial and living Word, the Evangelist agrees with John, who says, that "the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled in us, and His glory was seen, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father." For the Word became capable of being seen by reason of the flesh, which is visible and tangible and solid: whereas in Himself He is invisible. And John again in his Epistle says, "That which was from the beginning, That which we have heard, That which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled around the Word of Life, and the Life became manifest." Hearest thou not that he speaks of the Life as capable of being handled? This he does that thou mayest understand that the Son became man, and was visible in respect of the flesh, but invisible as regards His divinity.

1:51. He hath shewed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart. The arm enigmatically signifies the Word that was born of her: and by the proud, Mary means the wicked demons who with their prince fell through pride: and the Greek sages, who refused to receive the folly, as it seemed, of what was preached: and the Jews who would not believe, and were scattered for their unworthy imaginations about the Word of God. And by the mighty she means the Scribes and Pharisees, who sought the chief seats. It is nearer the sense, however, to refer it to the wicked demons: for these, when openly claiming mastery over the world, the Lord by His coining scattered, and transferred those whom they had made captive unto His own dominion. For those things all came to pass according to her prophecy, that 1:52. He hath put down riders from their thrones, and exalted the humble.

Great used to he the haughtiness of these demons whom He scattered, and of the devil, and of the Greek sages, as I said, and of the Pharisees and Scribes. But He put them down, and exalted those who had humbled themselves under their

mighty hand, ”having given them authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy:” and made the plots against us of these haughty-minded beings of none effect. The Jews, moreover, once gloried in their empire, but were stripped of it for their unbelief; whereas the Gentiles. who were obscure and of no note, were for their faith’s sake exalted. 1:53 He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

By the hungry, she means the human race: for, excepting the Jews only, they were pining with famine. The Jews, however, were enriched by the giving of the law, and by the teaching of the holy prophets. For ”to them belonged the giving of the law, the adoption of sons, the worship, the promises.” But they became wanton with high feeding, and too elate at their dignity; and having refused to draw near humbly to the Incarnate One, they were sent empty away, carrying nothing with them, neither faith nor knowledge, nor the hope of blessings. For verily they became both outcasts from the earthly Jerusalem, and aliens from the glorious life that is to be revealed, because they received not the Prince of Life, but even crucified the Lord of Glory, and abandoned the fountain of living water, and set at nought the bread that came down from heaven. And for this reason there came upon them a famine severer than any other, and a thirst more bitter than every thirst: for it was not a famine of the material bread, nor a thirst of water, ”but a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord.” But the heathen, who were hungering and athirst, and with their soul wasted away with misery, were filled with spiritual blessings, because they received the Lord. For the privileges of the Jews passed over unto them.

1:54. He hath taken hold of Israel His child to remember mercy. He hath taken hold of Israel,----not of the Israel according to the flesh, and who prides himself on the bare name, but of him who is so after the Spirit, and according to the true meaning of the appellation;----even such as look unto God, and believe in Him, and obtain through the Son the adoption of sons, according to the Word that was spoken, and the promise made to the prophets and patriarchs of old. It has, however, a true application also to the carnal Israel; for many thousands and ten thousands of them believed. ”But He has remembered His mercy as He promised to Abraham:” and has accomplished what He spake unto him, that ”in thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed.” For this promise was now in the act of fulfilment by the impending birth of our common Saviour Christ, Who is that seed of Abraham, in Whom the Gentiles are blessed. ”For He took on Him the seed of Abraham,” according to the Apostle’s words: and so fulfilled the promise made unto the fathers.

1:69. He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us. The word horn is used not only for power, but also for royalty. But Christ, Who is the Saviour that hath risen for us from the family and race of David, is both: for He is the King of kings, and the invincible power of the Father. 1:72. To perform mercy. Christ is mercy and jus-

tice: for we have obtained mercy through Him, and been justified, having washed away the stains of wickedness through faith that is in Him. 1:73. The oath which He sware to our father Abraham, But let no one accustom himself to swear from hearing that God sware unto Abraham. For just as anger, when spoken of God, is not anger, nor implies passion, but signifies power exercised in punishment, or some similar motion; so neither is an oath an act of swearing. For God does not swear, but indicates the certainty of the event,----that that which He says will necessarily come to pass. For God's oath is His own word, fully persuading those that hear, and giving each one the conviction that what He has promised and said will certainly come to pass.

1:76. And thou, child, shalt be called Prophet of the Highest. Observe, I pray, this also, that Christ is the Highest, Whose forerunner John was both in his birth, and in his preaching. What remains, then, for those to say, who lessen His divinity? And why will they not understand, that when Zacharias said, "And thou shalt be called Prophet of the Highest," he meant thereby "of God," of Whom also were the rest of the prophets. 1:79. To give light to them that sit in darkness, and the shadow of death. For those under the law, and dwelling in Judea, the Baptist was, as it were, a lamp, preceding Christ: and God so spake before of him; "I have prepared a lamp for My Christ." And the law also typified him in the lamp, which in the first tabernacle it commanded should be ever kept alight. But the Jews, after being for a short time pleased with him, flocking to his baptism, and admiring his mode of life, quickly made him sleep in death, doing their best to quench the ever-burning lamp. For this reason the Saviour also spake concerning him; "He was a burning and shining lamp, and ye were willing a little to rejoice for a season in his light."

1:79. To guide our feet into the way of peace. For the world, indeed, was wandering in error, serving the creation in the place of the Creator, and was darkened over by the blackness of ignorance, and a night, as it were, that had fallen upon the minds of all, permitted them not to see Him, Who both by nature and truly is God. But the Lord of all rose for the Israelites, like a light and a sun.

"From S. Cyril's Commentary upon the Gospel of St. Luke, Sermon the First."

From the Syriac, MS. 12,154. Luke ii. 1. And it came to pass in those days, &c. Christ therefore was born in Bethlehem at the time when Augustus Caesar gave orders that the first enrolment should be made. But what necessity was there, some one may perhaps say, for the very wise Evangelist to make special mention of this? Yes, I answer: it was both useful and necessary for him to mark the period when our Saviour was born: for it was said by the voice of the Patriarch: "The head shall not depart from Judah, nor a governor from his thighs until He come, for Whom it is laid up: and He is the expectation of the Gentiles." That we therefore might learn that the Israelites had then no king of the tribe of David, and that their own

native governors had failed, with good reason he makes mention of the decrees of Caesar, as now having beneath his sceptre Judaea as well as the rest of the nations: for it was as their ruler that he commanded the census to be made.

2:4. Because he was of the house and lineage of David. The book of the sacred Gospels referring the genealogy to Joseph, who was descended from David's house, has proved through him that the Virgin also was of the same tribe as David, inasmuch as the Divine law commanded that marriages should be confined to those of the same tribe: and the interpreter of the heavenly doctrines, the great apostle Paul, clearly declares the truth, bearing witness that the Lord arose out of Juda. The natures, however, which combined unto this real union were different, but from the two together is one God the Son, without the; diversity of the natures being destroyed by the union. For a union of two natures was made, and therefore we confess One Christ, One Son, One Lord. And it is with reference to this notion of a union without confusion that we proclaim the holy Virgin to be the mother of God, because God the Word was made flesh and became man, and by the act of conception united to Himself the temple that He received from her. For we perceive that two natures, by an inseparable union, met together in Him without confusion, and indivisibly. For the flesh is flesh, and not deity, even though it became the flesh of God: and in like manner also the Word is God, and not flesh, though for the dispensation's sake He made the flesh His own. But although the natures which concurred in forming the union are both different and unequal to one another, yet He Who is formed from them both is only One: nor may we separate the One Lord Jesus Christ into man severally and God severally, but we affirm that Christ Jesus is One and the Same, acknowledging the distinction of the natures, and preserving them free from confusion with one another.

2:5 With Mary, his betrothed wife, being great with child. The sacred Evangelist says that Mary was betrothed to Joseph, to shew that the conception had taken place upon her betrothal solely, and that the birth of the Emanuel was miraculous, and not in accordance with the laws of nature. For the holy Virgin did not bear from the immission of man's seed. And what was the reason of this? Christ, Who is the first-fruits of all, the second Adam according to the Scriptures, was born of the Spirit, that he might transmit the grace (of the spiritual birth) to us also: for we too were intended, no longer to bear the name of sons of men, but of God rather, having obtained the new birth of the Spirit in Christ first, that he might be "foremost among all," as the most wise Paul declares. And the occasion of the census most opportunely caused the holy Virgin to go to Bethlehem, that we might see another prophecy fulfilled. For it is written, as we have already mentioned, "And thou Bethlehem, house of Ephratah, art very small to be among the thousands of Judah: from thee shall come forth for Me to be Ruler in Israel!"

But in answer to those who argue that, if He were brought forth in the flesh, the Virgin was corrupted: and if she were not corrupted, that He was brought forth only in appearance, we say; the prophet declares, ”the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in and gone out, and the gate remaineth closed.” If, moreover, the Word was made flesh without sexual intercourse, being conceived altogether without seed, then was He born without injury to her virginity. 2:7. And she brought forth her firstborn Son.

In what sense then her firstborn? By firstborn she here means, not the first among several brethren, but one who was both her first and only son: for some such sense as (his exists among the significations of ”firstborn.” For sometimes also the Scripture calls that the first which is the only one; as ”I am God, the First, and with Me there is no other.” To shew then that the Virgin did not bring forth a mere man, there is added the word firstborn; for as she continued to be a virgin, she had no other son but Him Who is of the Father: concerning Whom God the Father also proclaims by the voice of David, ”And I will set Him Firstborn high among the kings of the earth.” Of Him also the all-wise Paul makes mention, saying, ”But when He brought the First-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.” How then did He enter into the world? For He is separate from it, not so much in respect of place as of nature; for it is in nature that He differs from the inhabitants of the world: but He entered into it by being made man, and becoming a portion of it by the incarnation. For though He is the Only-begotten as regards His divinity, yet as having become our brother, He has also the name of Firstborn; that, being made the first-fruits as it were of the adoption of men, He might; make us also the sons of God.

Consider therefore that He is called the Firstborn in respect of the economy: for with respect to His divinity He is the Only-begotten. Again, He is the Only-begotten in respect of His being the Word of the Father, having no brethren by nature, nor being co-ordinate with any other being: for the Son of God, consubstantial with the Father, is One and Alone: but He becomes the Firstborn by descending to the level of created things. When therefore He is called the Only-begotten, He is so with no cause assigned by reason of which He is the Only-begotten, being ”the Only-begotten God into the bosom of the Father:” but when the divine Scriptures call Him Firstborn, they immediately also add of whom He is the firstborn, and assign the cause of His bearing this title: for they say, ”Firstborn among many brethren:” and ”Firstborn from the dead:” the one, because He was made like unto us in all things except sin; and the other, because He first raised up His own flesh unto incorruption. Moreover, He has ever been the Only-begotten by nature, as being the Sole begotten of the Father, God of God, and Sole of Sole, having shone forth God of God, and Light of Light: but He is the Firstborn for our sakes, that by His being called the Firstborn of things created, whatever resembles Him may be saved through Him: for if He must of necessity be the Firstborn, assuredly those

must also continue to exist of whom He is the Firstborn. But if, as Eunomius argues, He is called God's Firstborn, as born the first of many; and He is also the Virgin's Firstborn; then as regards her also, He must be the first as preceding another child: but if He is called Mary's Firstborn, as her only child, and not as preceding others, then is He also God's Firstborn, not as the first of many, but as the Only One born.

Moreover if the first are confessedly the cause of the second, but God and the Son of God are first, then is the Son the cause of those who have the name of sons, inasmuch as it is through Him that they have obtained the appellation. He therefore who is the cause of the second sons may justly be called the Firstborn, not as being the first of them, but as the first cause of their receiving the title of sonship. And just as the Father being called the first----"for I, He saith, am the first, and I am after these things"----assuredly will not compel us to regard Him as similar in nature to those that are after Him; so also though the Son be called the first of creation, or the Firstborn before all creation, it by no means follows that He is one of the things made: but just as the Father said "I am the first," to shew that He is the origin of all things, in the same sense the Son also is called the first of creation. "For all things were made by Him," and He is the beginning of all created things, as being the Creator and Maker of the world .

2:7. And she laid him in the manger. He found man reduced to the level of the beasts: therefore is He placed like fodder in a manger, that we, having left off our bestial life, might mount up to that degree of intelligence which befits man's nature; and whereas we were brutish in soul, by now approaching the manger, even His own table, we find no longer fodder, but the bread from heaven, which is the body of life.

SERMON II. Sermon of S. Cyril, archbishop of Alexandria, from the Commentary upon the Gospel of Luke; Upon the birth of our Saviour in the flesh.

From the Syriac, MS. 12,165. 2:8-18. And there were shepherds in that country, watching and keeping guard by night over their flock: and the angel of the, Lord came unto them, and the glory of God shone upon them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for lo! I bring unto you good tidings of great joy, which, shall be to all the people: that there is born unto you to-day, in the city of David a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord. And this is your sign; ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and among men good will. And it came to pass that when the angels had gone from them unto heaven, the shepherds said unto one another, Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which hath come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe laid in the manger. And when they had seen, they made known the word that was spoken unto them concerning the child. And all that heard wondered at what was told them by the shepherds.

LET me begin my discourse to you with that which is written in the book of Psalms, ”Come let us praise the Lord, and sing unto God our Saviour:” for He is the Head of our feast-day, and therefore let us tell His noble doings, and relate the manner of that beautifully contrived dispensation, by means of which He has saved the world, and having placed on each one of us the yoke of His kingdom, is justly the object of our admiration. The blessed David therefore says in the Psalms, ”All ye people clap your hands;” and again adds thereto, ”Sing with understanding, God hath set

a king over all the heathen." For this holy mystery was wrought with a wisdom most befitting Christ, if it be true, as true most certainly it is, that the Lord, though He is God, appeared unto us, and though He is in the form of God the Father, and possesses an incomparable and universal preeminence, took the likeness of a slave. But even so He was God and Lord; for He did not cease to be that which He had been.

The company of the holy prophets had before proclaimed both His birth in the flesh, and His assumption of our likeness as about in due time to come to pass: and inasmuch as this hope had now reached its fulfilment, the rational powers of heaven bring the glad tidings of His manifestation and appearance in this world, to shepherds first of all at Bethlehem, who were thus the earliest to receive the knowledge of the mystery. And the type answers to the truth: for Christ reveals Himself to the spiritual shepherds, that they may preach Him to the rest, just as the shepherds also then were taught His mystery by the holy angels, and ran to bear the glad tidings to their fellows. Angels therefore are the first to preach Him, and declare His glory as God born in the flesh in a wonderful manner of a woman.

But perchance some one may object to this; "that He Who was now born was still a child, and wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger: how then did the powers above praise Him as God?" Against such our argument stands firm. Understand, O man, the depth of the mystery! God was in visible form like unto us: the Lord of all in the likeness of a slave, albeit the glory of lordship is inseparable from Him. Understand that the Only-begotten was made flesh; that He endured to be born of a woman for our sakes, to put away the curse pronounced upon the first woman: for to her it was said, "In pains shalt thou bring forth children:" for it was as bringing forth unto death, that they endured the sting of death . But because a woman has brought forth in the flesh the Immanuel, Who is Life, the power of the curse is loosed, and along with death have ceased also the pains that earthly mothers had to endure in bringing forth.

Wouldst thou learn also another reason of the matter? Remember what the very wise Paul has written of Him. "For as to the powerlessness of the law, wherein it was weak through the flesh, God having sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and because of sin, has condemned the sin in His flesh, that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit ." What then is the meaning of his saying that the Son was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh?" It is this. The law of sin lies hidden in our fleshly members, together with the shameful stirring of the natural lusts: but when the Word of God became flesh, that is man, and assumed our likeness, His flesh was holy and perfectly pure; so that He was indeed in the likeness of our flesh, but not according to its standard. For He was entirely free from the stains and emotions natural to our bodies , and from that inclination which leads us to what is not lawful.

When therefore thou seest the child wrapped in swaddling-clothes, stay not thy thought solely upon His birth in the flesh, but mount up to the contemplation of His godlike glory: elevate thy mind aloft: ascend to heaven: so wilt thou behold Him in the highest exaltation, possessed of transcendent glory; thou wilt see Him "set upon a throne high and lifted up;" thou wilt hear the Seraphim extolling Him in hymns, and saying that heaven and earth are full of His glory. Yea! even upon earth this has come to pass: for the glory of God shone upon the shepherds, and there was a multitude of the heavenly armies telling Christ's glory. And this it was which was proclaimed of old by the voice of Moses, "Rejoice, ye heavens, with Him, and let all the sons of God worship Him." For very many holy prophets had been born from time to time, but never had any one of them been glorified by the voice of angels: for they were men, and according to the same measure as ourselves, the true servants of God, and bearers of His words. But not so was Christ: for He is God and Lord, and the Sender of the holy prophets, and, as the Psalmist says, "Who in the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord, and who shall be likened unto the Lord among the sons of God?" For the appellation of sonship is bestowed by Him as of grace upon us who lie under the yoke, and are by nature slaves: but Christ is the true Son , that is, He is the Son of God the Father by nature, even when He had become flesh: for He continued, as I have said, to be that which He had ever been, though He took upon Him that which He had not been.

And that what I say is true, the prophet Isaiah again assures us, saying, "Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel; butter and honey shall He eat: before He knoweth or chooseth the evil, He shall prefer the good: for before the Child distinguisheth good or evil, He is not obedient to evil in that He chooseth the good." And yet how is it not plain to all, that a new-born babe, as yet unable, from its youth and tenderness, to understand anything, is unequal to the task of distinguishing between good and evil? For he knows absolutely nothing. But in our Saviour Christ it was a great and extraordinary miracle: for He ate while yet a babe both butter and honey. And because He was God, ineffably made flesh, He knew only the good, and was exempt from that depravity which belongs to man. And this too is an attribute of the supreme Substance; for that which is good by nature, firmly and unchangeably, belongs specially to It, and It only; "for there is none good, but one God," as the Saviour has Himself said.

Wouldst thou see another virtue of the Child? Wouldst thou see that He is by nature God, Who in the flesh was of woman? Learn what the prophet Isaiah says of Him: "And I drew near unto the prophetess, and she conceived, and bare a male; and the Lord said unto me, Call His name, Quick take captive, and spoil hastily. For before the Child shall know to call father or mother, He shall take the strength of Damascus." For contemporaneously with the birth of Christ the power of the devil was spoiled. For in Damascus he had been the object of religious service, and had had there very many worshippers; but when the holy Virgin brought forth, the

power of his tyranny was broken; for the heathen were won unto the knowledge of the truth; and their firstfruits and leaders were the Magi, who came from the East to Jerusalem; whose teacher was the heaven, and their schoolmaster a star.

Look not therefore upon Him Who was laid in the manger as a babe merely, but in our poverty see Him Who as God is rich, and in the measure of our humanity Him Who excels the inhabitants of heaven, and Who therefore is glorified even by the holy angels. And how noble was the hymn, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and among men good will!" For the angels and archangels, thrones and lordships, and high above them the Seraphim, preserving their settled order, are at peace with God: for never in any way do they transgress His good pleasure, but are firmly established in righteousness and holiness. But we, wretched beings, by having set up our own lusts in opposition to the will of our Lord, had put ourselves into the position of enemies unto Him. But by Christ this has been done away: for He is our peace; for He has united us by Himself unto God the Father, having taken away from the middle the cause of the enmity, even sin, and so justifies us by faith, and makes us holy and without blame, and calls near unto Him those who were afar off: and besides this, He has created the two people into one new man, so making peace, and reconciling both in one body to the Father. For it pleased God the Father to form into one new whole all things in Him, and to bind together things below and things above, and to make those in heaven and those on earth into one flock. Christ therefore has been made for us both Peace and Goodwill; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be glory and honour and might with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON III.

[From Aubert.] cc. 2:21-24. VERY numerous indeed is the assembly, and earnest the hearer:----for we see the Church full:----but the teacher is but poor. He nevertheless Who giveth to man a mouth and tongue, will further supply us with good ideas. For He somewhere says Himself, ”Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.” Since therefore ye have all come together eagerly on the occasion of this joyous festival of our Lord, let us with cheerful torches brightly celebrate the feast, and apply ourselves to the consideration of what was divinely fulfilled, as it were, this day, gathering for ourselves from every quarter whatsoever may confirm us in faith and piety.

But recently we saw the Immanuel lying as a babe in the manger, and wrapped in human fashion in swaddling bands, but extolled as God in hymns by the host of the holy angels. For they proclaimed to the shepherds His birth, God the Father having granted to the inhabitants of heaven as a special privilege to be the first to preach Him. And to-day too we have seen Him obedient to the laws of Moses, or rather we have seen Him Who as God is the Legislator, subject to His own decrees. And the reason of this the most wise Paul teaches us, saying, ”When we were babes we were enslaved under the elements of the world; but when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Christ therefore ransomed from the curse of the law those who being subject to it, had been unable to keep its enactments. And in what way did He ransom them? By fulfilling it. And to put it in another way: in order that He might expiate the guilt of Adam’s transgression, He showed Himself obedient and submissive in every respect to God the Father in our stead: for it is written, ”That as through the disobedience of the One man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the One, the many shall be made just.

He yielded therefore His neck to the law in company with us, because the plan of salvation so required: for it became Him to fulfil all righteousness. For having assumed the form of a slave, as being now enrolled by reason of His human nature among those subject to the yoke, He once even paid the half shekel to the collectors of the tribute, although by nature free, and as the Son not liable to pay the tax.

When therefore them seest Him keeping the law, be not offended, nor place the free-born among the slaves, but reflect rather upon the profoundness of the plan of salvation.

Upon the arrival, therefore, of the eighth day, on which it was customary for the circumcision in the flesh to be performed according to the enactment of the law, He receives His Name, even Jesus, which by interpretation signifies, the Salvation of the people. For so had God the Father willed that His Son should be named, when born in the flesh of a woman. For then especially was He made the salvation of the people, and not of one only, but of many, or rather of every nation, and of the whole world. He received His name, therefore, on the same occasion on which He was circumcised.

But come, and let us again search and see, what is the riddle, and to what mysteries the occurrence directs us. The blessed Paul has said, ”Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing.” To this it is probable that some may object, Did the God of all then command by the all-wise Moses a thing of no account to be observed, with a punishment decreed against those that transgressed it? Yes, I say: for as far as regards the nature of the thing, of that, I mean, which is done in the flesh, it is absolutely nothing, but it is pregnant with the graceful type of a mystery, or rather contains the hidden manifestation of the truth. For on the eighth day Christ arose from the dead, and gave us the spiritual circumcision. For He commanded the holy Apostles: ”Having gone, make ye disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” And we affirm that the spiritual circumcision takes place chiefly in the season of holy baptism, when also Christ makes us partakers of the Holy Ghost. And of this again, that Jesus of old, who was captain after Moses, was a type. For he first of all led the children of Israel across the Jordan: and then having halted them, immediately circumcised them with knives of stone. So when we have crossed the Jordan, Christ circumcises us with the power of the Holy Ghost, not purifying the flesh, but rather cutting off the defilement that is in our souls.

On the eighth day, therefore, Christ is circumcised, and receives, as I said, His Name: for then, even then, were we saved by Him and through Him, ”in Whom, it saith, ye were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands in the putting off of the fleshly body, with Christ’s circumcision, having been buried together with Him in baptism, wherein also ye were raised with Him.” His death, therefore, was for our sakes. as were also His resurrection and His circumcision. For He died, that we who have died together with Him in His dying unto sin, may no longer live unto sin: for which reason it is said, ”If we have died together with Him, we shall also live together with Him.” And He is said to have died unto sin, not because He had sinned, ”for He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth,” but because

of our sin. Like as therefore we died together with Him when He died, so shall we also rise together with Him.

Again, when the Son was present among us, though by nature God and the Lord of all, He does not on that account despise our measure, but along with us is subject to the same law, although as God He was Himself the legislator. Like the Jews, He is circumcised when eight days old, to prove His descent from their stock, that they may not deny Him. For Christ was expected of the seed of David, and offered them the proof of His relationship. But if even when He was circumcised they said, "As for This man, we know not whence He is;" there would have been a show of reason in their denial, had He not been circumcised in the flesh, and kept the law. But after His circumcision, the rite was done away by the introduction of that which had been signified by it, even baptism: for which reason we are no longer circumcised. For circumcision seems to me to have effected three several ends: in the first place, it separated the posterity of Abraham by a sort of sign and seal, and distinguished them from all other nations. In the second, it prefigured in itself the grace and efficacy of Divine baptism; for as in old time he that was circumcised, was reckoned among the people of God by that seal, so also he that is baptized, having formed in himself Christ the seal, is enrolled into God's adopted family. And, thirdly, it is the symbol of the faithful when established in grace, who cut away and mortify the tumultuous risings of carnal pleasures and passions by the sharp surgery of faith, and by ascetic labours; not cutting the body, but purifying the heart, and being circumcised in the spirit, and not in the letter: whose praise, as the divine Paul testifies, needs not the sentence of any human tribunal, but depends upon the decree from above.

After His circumcision, she next waits for the time of her purification: and when the days were fulfilled, and the fortieth was the full time, God the Word, Who sitteth by the Father's side, is carried up to Jerusalem, and brought into the Father's presence in human nature like unto us, and by the shadow of the law is numbered among the firstborn. For even before the Incarnation the firstborn were holy, and consecrated to God, being sacrificed to Him according to the law. O! how great and wonderful is the plan of salvation! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" He Who is in the bosom of the Father, the Son Who shares His throne, and is coeternal with Him: by Whom all things are divinely brought into existence, submitted nevertheless to the measure of human nature, and even offered a sacrifice to His own Father, although adored by all, and glorified with Him. And what did He offer? As the firstborn and a male a pair of turtles, or two young doves, according to what the law prescribed. But what does the turtle signify? And what too the other, the dove? Come, then, and let us examine this. The one, then, is the most noisy of the birds of the field: but the other is a mild and gentle creature. And such did the Saviour of all become towards us, shewing the most perfect gentleness, and like a turtle moreover soothing the world, and filling

His own vineyard, even us who believe in Him, with the sweet sound of His voice. For it is written in the Song of Songs, ”The voice of the turtle has been heard in our land.” For Christ has spoken to us the divine message of the Gospel, which is for the salvation of the whole world.

Turtles, therefore, and doves were offered, when He presented Himself unto the Lord, and there might one see simultaneously meeting together the truth and the types. And Christ offered Himself for a savour of a sweet smell, that He might offer us by and in Himself unto God the Father, and so do away with His enmity towards us by reason of Adam’s transgression, and bring to nought sin that had tyrannized over us all. For we are they who long ago were crying, ”Look upon me, and pity me.”

SERMON IV.

cc.2:25-35. The prophet Isaiah says, ”Beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings of good:” and what could there be so sweet to learn as that God has saved the world by the mediation of the Son, in that He was made like unto us? For it is written, ”that there is one God, and one Mediator of God and men, the Man Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself a ransom for us.” For of His own accord He descended to our poverty, that He might make us rich by our gaining what is His. Behold Him therefore as one in our estate presented unto the Father, and obedient to the shadows of the law, offering sacrifice moreover according to what was customary, true though it be that these things were done by the instrumentality of His mother according to the flesh. Was He then unrecognised by all at Jerusalem, and known to none dwelling there? How could this be the case? For God the Father had before proclaimed by the holy prophets, that in due season the Son would be manifested to save them that were lost, and to give light to them that were in darkness. By one too of the holy prophets He said, ”My righteousness approacheth quickly, and My mercy to be revealed, and My salvation shall burn as a torch. But the mercy and righteousness is Christ: for through Him have we obtained mercy and righteousness, having washed away our filthy vileness by faith that is in Him. And that which a torch going before them is to those in night and darkness, this has Christ become for those who are in mental gloom and darkness, implanting in them the divine light. For this reason also the blessed prophets prayed to be made partakers of His great grace, saying, ”Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation.”

Christ therefore was carried into the temple, being yet a little child at the breast: and the blessed Symeon being endowed with the grace of prophecy, takes Him in his arms, and filled with the highest joy, blessed God, and said; ”Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy Word, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all the nations, the Gentiles’ light for revelation, and a glory of Thy people Israel. For the mystery of Christ had been prepared even before the very foundation of the world, but was manifested in the last ages of time, and became a light for those who in darkness and error had fallen under the devil’s hand. These were they ”who serve the cre-

ation instead of the Creator," worshipping moreover the dragon, the author of evil, and the impure throng of devils, to whom they attach the honour due unto God: yet were they called by God the Father to the acknowledgment of the Son Who is the true light. Of them in sooth He said by the voice of Isaiah, "I will make signs unto them, and receive them, because I will ransom them, and they shall be multiplied, as they were many: and I will sow them among the nations, and they who are afar off shall remember Me. For very many were they that were astray, but were called through Christ: and again they are many as they were before;

for they have been received and ransomed, having obtained as the token of peace from God the Father, the adoption into His family and the grace that is by faith in Jesus Christ. And the divine disciples were sown widely among the nations: and what is the consequence? Those who in disposition were far from God, have been made near. To whom also the divine Paul sends an epistle, saying, "Now ye who some time were afar off have been made near in the blood of Christ. And having been brought near, they make Christ their glorying: for again, God the Father has said of them, "And I will strengthen them in the Lord their God, and in His Name shall they glory, saith the Lord. This also the blessed Psalmist teaches, speaking as it were unto Christ the Saviour of all, and saying, "Lord, they shall walk in the light of Thy countenance, and in Thy Name shall they exult all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted: for Thou art the glorying of their strength. And we shall find also the prophet Jeremiah calling out unto God, "Lord, my strength and my help, and my refuge in the day of my evils, to Thee shall the heathen come from the end of the earth, and say, Our fathers took unto themselves false idols, in which there is no help."

Christ therefore became the Gentiles' light for revelation: but also for the glory of Israel. For even granting that some of them proved insolent, and disobedient, and with minds void of understanding, yet is there a remnant saved, and admitted unto glory through Christ. And the firstfruits of these were the divine disciples, the brightness of whose renown lightens the whole world. And in another sense Christ is the glory of Israel, for He came of them according to the flesh, though He be "God over all, and blessed for evermore, Amen." And Symeon blesseth also the holy Virgin as the handmaid of the divine counsel, and the instrument of the birth that submitted not itself to the laws of human nature. For being a virgin she brought forth, and that not by man, but by the power of the Holy Ghost having come upon her.

And what does the prophet Symeon say of Christ? "Behold This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against." For the Immanuel is set by God the Father for the foundations of Sion, "being a stone elect, chief of the corner, and honourable." Those then that trusted in Him were not ashamed: but those who were unbelieving and ignorant, and unable to

perceive the mystery regarding Him, fell, and were broken in pieces. For God the Father again has somewhere said, ”Behold I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and He that believeth on It shall not be ashamed; but on whomsoever It shall fall, It will winnow him.” But the prophet bade the Israelites be secure, saying, ”Sanctify the Lord Himself, and He shall be thy fear: and if thou trust upon Him, He shall be thy sanctification, nor shall ye strike against Him as on a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.” Because however Israel did not sanctify the Emmanuel Who is Lord and God, nor was willing to trust in Him, having stumbled as upon a stone because of unbelief, it was broken in pieces and fell. But many rose again, those, namely, who embraced faith in Him. For they changed from a legal to a spiritual service: from having in them a slavish spirit, they were enriched with That Spirit Which maketh free, even the Holy Ghost: they were made partakers of the divine nature: they were counted worthy of the adoption of sons: and live in hope of gaining the city that is above, even the citizenship, to wit, the kingdom of heaven.

And by the sign that is spoken against, he means the precious Cross, for as the most wise Paul writes, ”to the Jews it is a stumbling-block, and foolishness to the heathen.” And again, ”To them that are perishing it is foolishness: but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God unto salvation.” The sign therefore is spoken against, if to those that perish it seem to be folly; while to those who acknowledge its power it is salvation and life. And Symeon further said to the holy Virgin, ”Yea, a sword shall go through thy own soul also,” meaning by the sword the pain which she suffered for Christ, in seeing Him Whom she brought forth crucified; and not knowing at all that He would be more mighty than death, and rise again from the grave. Nor mayest thou wonder that the Virgin knew this not, when we shall find even the holy Apostles themselves with little faith thereupon: for verily the blessed Thomas, had he not thrust his hands into His side after the resurrection, and felt also the prints of the nails, would have disbelieved the other disciples telling him, that Christ was risen, and had shewed Himself unto them,

The very wise Evangelist therefore for our benefit teaches us all things whatsoever the Son, when He was made flesh, and consented to bear our poverty, endured for our sakes and in our behalf, that so we may glorify Him as our Redeemer, as our Lord, as our Saviour, and our God: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father and the Holy Ghost be the glory and the power for over and ever, Amen.

SERMON V.

[From Mai and Cramer] 2:40-52. And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him. And again; But Jesus increased in stature and wisdom and grace with God and men. TO say that the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him, must be taken as referring to His human nature. And examine, I pray you, closely the profoundness of the dispensation: the Word endures to be born in human fashion, although in His divine nature He has no beginning nor is subject to time: He Who as God is all perfect, submits to bodily growth: the Incorporeal has limbs that advance to the ripeness of manhood: He is filled with wisdom Who is Himself all wisdom. And what say we to this? Behold by these things Him Who was in the form of the Father made like unto us: the Rich in poverty: the High in humiliation: Him said to "receive," Whose is the fulness as God. So thoroughly did God the Word empty Himself! For what things are written of Him as a man shew the manner of the emptying. For it were a thing impossible for the Word begotten of God the Father to admit ought like this into His own nature: but when He became flesh, even a man like unto us, then He is born according to the flesh of a woman, and is said also to have been subject to the things that belong to man's state: and though the Word as being God could have made His flesh spring forth at once from the womb unto the measure of the perfect man, yet this would have been of the nature of a portent: and therefore He gave the habits and laws of human nature power even over His own flesh.

Be not therefore offended, considering perchance within thyself, How can God increase? or how can He Who gives grace to angels and to men receive fresh wisdom? Rather reflect upon the great skill wherewith we are initiated into His mystery. For the wise Evangelist did not introduce the Word in His abstract and incorporeal nature, and so say of Him that He increased in stature and wisdom and grace, but after having shewn that He was born in the flesh of a woman, and took our likeness, he then assigns to Him these human attributes, and calls Him a child, and says that He waxed in stature, as His body grow little by little, in obedience to corporeal laws. And so He is said also to have increased in wisdom, not as receiving fresh supplies of wisdom,----for God is perceived by the understanding to be entirely

perfect in all things, and altogether incapable of being destitute of any attribute suitable to the Godhead:----but because God the Word gradually manifested His wisdom proportionably to the age which the body had attained.

The body then advances in stature, and the soul in wisdom: for the divine nature is capable of increase in neither one nor the other; seeing that the Word of God is all perfect. And with good reason he connected the increase of wisdom with the growth of the bodily stature, because the divine nature revealed its own wisdom in proportion to the measure of the bodily growth. 2:42. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. After the Evangelist had said, that Jesus advanced in wisdom and grace with God and men, he next shews that what he says is true: for he carries Him to Jerusalem in company with the holy Virgin, upon the summons of the feast: and then he says that He remained behind, and was afterwards found in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors both asking and answering questions regarding those things, as we may feel sure, which were spoken of old by the law: and that He was wondered at by all for His questions and answers. Thou seest Him advancing in wisdom and grace, by reason of His becoming known unto many as being what He was.

2:48. Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. His mother certainly knew that He was not the child of Joseph, but she so speaks to avoid the suspicions of the Jews. And upon her saying, that "Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing," the Saviour answers; 2:49. Did ye not know that I must be at My Father's? Here then first He makes more open mention of Him Who is truly His Father, and lays bare His own divinity: for when the holy Virgin said, Child, why hast Thou so done unto us? then at once shewing Himself to transcend the measure of human things, and teaching her that she had been made the handmaid of the dispensation in giving birth to the flesh, but that He by nature and in truth was God, and the Son of the Father That is in heaven, He says, Did ye not know that I must be at My Father's? Here let the Valentinians, when they hear that the temple was God's, and that Christ was now at His own, Who long before also was so described in the law, and represented as in shadows and types, feel shame in affirming, that neither the Maker of the world, nor the God of the law, nor the God of the temple, was the Father of Christ.

SERMON VI.

3:1-6. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet. The blessed Isaiah was not ignorant of the scope of John's preachings, but of old, even long before the time, bearing witness of it, he called Christ Lord and God: but John he styled His minister and servant, and said that he was a lamp advancing before the true light, the morning star heralding the sun, foreshowing the coming of the day that was about to shed its rays upon us: and that he was a voice, not a word, forerunning Jesus, as the voice does the word. 3:4 Prepare ye the ways of the Lord, make His paths straight,

John, being chosen for the Apostleship, was also the last of the holy prophets: for which reason, as the Lord was not yet come, he says, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. And what is the meaning of "Prepare ye the way of the Lord?" It is put for, Make ready for the reception of whatever Christ may wish to enact: withdraw your hearts from the shadow of the law: cease from the types: think no more perversely. "Make the paths of our God straight." For every path that leadeth unto good is straight and smooth and easy: but the other is crooked that leadeth down to wickedness them that walk therein. For of such it is written, "Whose paths are crooked, and the tracks of their wheels awry." Straightforwardness therefore of the mind is as it were a straight path, having no crookedness. Such was the divine Psalmist's character, who thus sings, "A crooked heart hath not cleaved unto me." And Jesus, the son of Nun, in exhorting the people, said, "Make straight your hearts unto the God of Israel:" while John cries, "Make straight your ways." And this means, that the soul must be straight, displaying its natural intuition as it was created: and it was created beautiful and very straight. But when it turns aside, and its natural state is perverted, this is called vice, and the perversion of the soul. The matter therefore is not very difficult: for if we continue as we are made, we shall be virtuous.

But when some one, as it were, exclaims against us, saying, How shall we prepare the way of the Lord? or how make His paths straight? for there are many impediments in the way of those that will live well,----Satan, who hates all that is beautiful, the unholy throng of wicked spirits, the law of sin itself that is in our fleshly mem-

bers, and which arms itself against the inclinations of the mind to what is good, and many other passions besides, that have mastery over the mind of man:----what then shall we do, with so great difficulty pressing upon us? The word of prophecy meets these objections, saying, Every valley shall be filled up, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low: and the crooked way shall become straight, and the rough ways shall become smooth: and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." 3:6. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

And all flesh did see the salvation of God, even of the Father: for He sent the Son to be our Saviour. And in these words by "flesh," man generally is to be understood, that is, the whole human race. For thus all flesh shall see the salvation of God: no longer Israel only, but all flesh. For the gentleness of the Saviour and Lord of all is not limited, nor did He save one nation merely, but rather embraced within His net the whole world, and has illuminated all who were in darkness. And this is what was celebrated by the Psalmist's lyre, "All the nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord." While at the same time the remnant of the Israelites is saved, as the great Moses also long ago declared, saying, "Rejoice ye nations with His people."

SERMON VII.

3:7-9. The Baptist therefore said to the multitudes that came to he baptized of him, Generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the coming wrath? WE affirm therefore that the blessed Baptist, as being full of the Holy Ghost, was not ignorant of the daring acts that Jewish wickedness would venture against Christ. For he foreknew that they would both disbelieve in Him, and wagging their envenomed tongue, would pour forth railings and accusations against Him: accusing Him at one time of being born of fornication; at another, as one who wrought His miracles by the help of Beelzebub, prince of the devils: and again, as one that had a devil, and was no whit better than a Samaritan. Having this therefore in view, he calls even those of them who repent wicked, and reproves them because, though they had the law speaking unto them the mystery of Christ, and the predictions of the prophets relating thereunto, they nevertheless had become dull of hearing, and unready for faith in Christ the Saviour of all. ”For who hath warned you to flee from the coining wrath?” Was it not the inspired Scripture, which tells the happiness of those who believe in Christ, but forewarns those who believe not, and are ignorant, that they will be condemned to severe and inevitable punishment?

3:8. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. Moreover, the fruit of repentance is, in the highest degree, faith in Christ: and next to it, the evangelic mode of life, and in general terms the works of righteousness in contradistinction to sin, which the penitent must bring forth as fruits worthy of repentance. And he has added; ”Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father: for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” You see how most skilfully he humbles their foolish pride, and shews that their being born of Abraham according to the flesh is useless for their profit. For of what benefit is nobility of birth, if men practise not the like earnest deeds, nor imitate the virtue of their ancestors? For the Saviour says unto them, ”if ye were Abraham’s children, ye would have done the works of Abraham.” The relationship which God requires is one in character and manners: so that it is a vain thing to boast of holy and good parents, while we fall far short of their virtue.

But, says the Jew, if this be so, in what way is the send of Abraham still to be multiplied, and the promise made to him of God hold true, of which the terms are, that ”He will multiply his seed as the stars of heaven?” By the calling of the Gentiles, O Jew: for it was said to Abraham himself, that ”in Isaac shall a seed for thee be called:” and that ”I have set thee as a father of many nations.” But the phrase ”in Isaac” means, According to promise. He is set therefore as a father of many nations by faith, that is to say, in Christ. And of these it was that God spake also by the voice of Ezekiel: ”And I will take away out of their flesh the heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may know Me, that I am the Lord.”

And the blessed Baptist apparently calls them stones, because they as yet knew not Him Who is by nature God, but were in error, and in their great folly worshipped the creation instead of the Creator: but they were called, and became the sons of Abraham, and acknowledged, by believing in Christ, Him Who is by nature God. But that he may benefit in a still higher degree those that hear him, the blessed Baptist brings forward something more: ”But already even the axe is laid at the root of the trees.” But by the axe in this passage he signifies the sharp wrath which God the Father brought upon the Jews for their wickedness towards Christ, and audacious violence: for the wrath was brought upon them like an axe. And this the prophet Zecharias has explained to us, saying, ”The wailing of Jerusalem shall be as the wailing of a grove of pomegranate trees cut down in the plain.” And Jeremiah also addressing her, said, ”The Lord called thy name a beautiful olive tree, very leafy to behold: at the sound of its felling, a fire was kindled upon it: great was the lamentation over it: its branches have been made unserviceable: and the Lord of hosts That planted thee hath uttered evils against thee.” And to this thou mayest add also the parable in the Gospels about the fig-tree. As being therefore a plant unfruitful, and no longer of generous kind, it was cut down by God. He does not, however, say that the axe was laid into the root, but at the root, that is, near the root. For the branches were cut off, but the plant was not dug up by its root: for the remnant of Israel was saved, and did not perish utterly.

SERMONS VIII AND IX.

3:10-14. And the multitudes asked him. THE blessed Luke has introduced three classes of men making inquiry of John,----the multitudes, the publicans, and, thirdly, the soldiers: and as a skilful physician applies to each malady a suitable and fitting remedy, so also the Baptist gave to each mode of life useful and becoming counsel, bidding the multitudes in their course towards repentance practise mutual kindness: for the publicans, he stops the way to unrestrained exactions: and very wisely tells the soldiers to oppress no one, but be content with their wages.

SERMON X. Sermon the Tenth, from S. Cyril’s Commentary upon Luke, upon John the Baptist.

[From the Syriac MS. 12,165.] 3: 15-17. But when the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether he were not the Christ, John answered, and said to them all, I indeed baptize you in water, but there cometh He Who is mightier than I: Whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire, Whose fan is in His hand, and He shall purge His floor, and gather His wheat into stores, but the chaff He will burn in unquenchable fire. IT is written, that ”a just father will bring up (his children) excellently.” For those who are clad in the glory of the righteousness that is by Christ, and are acquainted with His sacred commands, will train up excellently and piously those who are their sons in the faith, giving them not the material bread of earth, but that which is from above, even from heaven. Of which bread the admirable Psalmist also makes mention, where he says, ”Bread establisheth man’s heart, and wine rejoiceth man’s heart.” Let us therefore now also establish our hearts: let our faith in Christ be assured, as we correctly understand the meaning of those evangelic writings now read unto us. ”For when the people, it says, were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts of John, whether he were not the Christ, he answered them in the words which we have just heard read.”

They had beheld with admiration the incomparable beauty of John’s mode of life: the splendour of his conduct: the unparalleled and surpassing excellence of his piety. For so great and admirable was he, that even the Jewish populace began to conjecture whether he were not himself the Christ, Whom the law had described to them in shadows, and the holy prophets had before proclaimed. Inasmuch therefore as some ventured on this conjecture, he at once cuts away their surmise, declining as a servant the honours due to the Master, and transferring the glory to

Him Who transcends all, even to Christ. For he knew that He is faithful unto those that serve Him. And what he acknowledges is in very deed the truth: for between God and man the distance is immeasurable. "Ye yourselves, therefore, he says, bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him." But where shall we find the holy Baptist thus speaking? In the Gospel of John, who has thus spoken concerning him; "And this is the testimony of John when the scribes and Pharisees at Jerusalem sent to ask him whether he were the Christ. And he confessed, and denied not, and said, that I am not the Christ, but am he that is sent before Him." Great therefore and admirable in very deed is the forerunner, who was the dawning before the Saviour's meridian splendour, the precursor of the spiritual daylight, beautiful as the morning star, and called of God the Father a torch.

Having therefore thus declared himself not to be the Christ, he now brings forward proofs, which we must necessarily consider, and by which we may learn how immeasurable the distance evidently is between God and man, between the slave and the Master, between the minister and Him Who is ministered unto, between him who goes before as a servant, and Him Who shines forth with divine dignity. What, therefore, is the proof? "I indeed baptize in water: after me shall come He Who is mightier than I, Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." As I said, therefore, the difference is incomparable, the superiority immeasurable, if, as is the case, the blessed Baptist, being so great in virtue, declares that he is not worthy even, as it were, to touch His shoes. And his declaration is true: for if the rational powers above, principalities, and thrones, and lordships, and the holy Seraphim themselves, who stand around His godlike throne, holding the rank of ministers, unceasingly crown Him with praises as the Lord of all, what dweller upon earth is worthy even to be nigh unto God? For though He be loving unto man, and gentle, and mild, yet must we, as being of slight account, and children of earth, confess the weakness of our nature.

And after this, he again brings forward a second proof, saying, "I indeed baptize you in water: but He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire. And this too is of great importance for the proof and demonstration that Jesus is God and Lord. For it is the sole and peculiar property of the Substance That transcends all, to be able to bestow on men the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and make those that draw near unto It partakers of the divine nature. But this exists in Christ, not as a thing received, nor by communication from another, but as His own, and as belonging to His substance: for "He baptizes in the Holy Ghost. The Word therefore That became man is, as it appears, God, and the fruit of the Father's substance. But to this, it may be, those will object who divide the one Christ into two sons,----those I mean who, as Scripture says, are "animal, and dividers, and having not the Spirit,"----that He Who baptizes in the Holy Ghost is the Word of God, and not He Who is of the seed of David. What answer shall we make, then, to this? Yes! we

too affirm, without fear of contradiction, that the Word being God as of His own fulness bestows the Holy Ghost on such as are worthy: but this He still wrought, even when He was made man, as being the One Son with the flesh united to Him in an ineffable and incomprehensible manner.

For so the blessed Baptist, after first saying, "I am not worthy to stoop down "and loose the thong of His shoes," immediately added, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire; plainly while having feet for shoes. For no one whose mind was awake would say, that the Word, while still incorporeal, and not as yet made like unto us, had feet and shoes, but only when He had become a man. Inasmuch, however, as He did not then cease to be God, He wrought even so works worthy of the Godhead, by giving the Spirit unto them that believe in Him. For He, in one and the same person, was at the same time both God and also man.

But yes, he objects, the Word wrought the works of Deity by means of Him Who is of the seed of David. If so then thou arguest, we will repeat to thee in answer the words of John; for he somewhere said unto the Jews, "There cometh after me a man Who was before me, because He is before me: and I knew Him not, but He That sent me to baptize in water, He said unto me, Upon Whom thou seest the Spirit descending from heaven, and abiding upon Him, This is He That baptizeth in the Holy Ghost: and I saw, and bare witness, that This is the Son of God." Behold, therefore, while plainly calling Him a man, he says that He is prior to him, and was before him, in that He is first, evidently in His divine nature; according to what was plainly said by Himself to the Jewish populace, "Verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am."

Next, he says as well, that the Spirit also came down from heaven upon Him. Do they pretend that the Holy Ghost came down upon the Word of God while still abstract and incorporeal? and represent Him Who bestows the Spirit as made partaker of His own Spirit? Or rather is this their meaning, that having received the Spirit in His human nature, He in His divine nature baptizes in the Holy Ghost? For He is Himself singly, and alone, and verily the Son of God the Father, as the blessed Baptist, being taught of God, himself bare witness, saying, "And I saw, and bare witness that This is the Son of God!"

Wouldst thou have also a third proof, in addition to what have already been given? "His fan," he says, "is in His hand, and He shall purge His floor, and gather His wheat into His stores, but the chaff He shall burn with fire unquenchable." For he compares those upon earth to ears of corn, or rather to the threshingfloor and the wheat upon it: for each one of us has grown like an ear of corn. And our Lord once, when speaking to the holy Apostles, made a similar comparison of our state: "The harvest indeed is great: but the labourers are few: pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest." We therefore, who are upon the earth, are called ears of corn and wheat, and the harvest. And this harvest belongs

to God over all: for He is Lord of all. But behold! says the blessed Baptist, the threshing floor belongs to Christ as its owner; for as such He purges it, removing and separating the chaff from the wheat. For the wheat is the just, whose faith is established and assured: but the chaff signifies those whose mind is weak, and their heart easy to be ensnared, and unsafe and timorous, and blown about by every wind. The wheat, then, he says, is stored up in the granary: is deemed worthy, that is, of safety at God's hand, and mercy, and protection and love: but the chaff, as useless matter, is consumed in the fire.

In every way, therefore, we may perceive that the Word of God, even when He was man, nevertheless continued to be one Son. For He performs those works that belong to Deity, possessing the majesty and glory of the Godhead inseparable from Him. If so we believe, He will crown us with His grace: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be glory and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XI. The eleventh Sermon of the Commentary upon the Gospel of Luke by the holy Cyril, archbishop of Alexandria, upon the manifestation of our lord.

[From the Syriac MS. 12,165.] 3:21-23 . And it came to pass, that when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized: and as He was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove. And there was a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased. And Jesus Himself was beginning to be about thirty years old. AGAIN come, that fixing our mind intently upon the Evangelic Scriptures, we may behold the beauty of the truth. Come let us direct the penetrating and accurate eyes of the mind unto the mystery of Christ; let us view with wonder the admirable skill of the divine economy: for so shall we see His glory. And thus to act is for our life: as He Himself assures us, when speaking unto God the Father in heaven, ”Those things are life eternal: to know Thee Who alone art true; and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.” How therefore was He sent? and what was the manner of His coming unto us? For being by nature God That filleth all, how, as the blessed John the Evangelist said, ”was He in the world,” Himself being Lord? And how was He sent by the Father, when as God He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things? for all things were established by Him.

The wise John the Evangelist then teaches us, saying, ”And the Word was made flesh.” But perchance some one will say, ’What then? Having ceased to be the Word, did He change into being flesh? Did He fall from His Majesty, having undergone a transformation unto something which previously He was not?’ Not so, we say. Far

from it. For by nature He is unchangeable and immutable. In saying, therefore, that the Word became flesh, the Evangelist means a man like unto us. For we also are often called flesh ourselves. For it is written, ”And all flesh shall see the salvation of God,” meaning thereby that every man shall see it. While therefore He immutably retains that ”which He was, yet as having under this condition assumed our likeness, He is said to have been made flesh. Behold Him, therefore, as a man, enduring with us the things that belong to man’s estate, and fulfilling all righteousness, for the plan of salvation’s sake. And this thou learnest from what the Evangelist says: ”And it came to pass that when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized, and prayed.” Was He too then in need of holy baptism? But what benefit could accrue to Him from it? The Only-begotten Word of God is Holy of the Holy: so the Seraphim name Him in their praises: so every where the law names Him: and the company of the holy prophets accords with the writings of Moses. What is it that we gain by holy baptism? Plainly the remission of our sins. But in Jesus there was nought of this; ”for He did no sin: neither was guile found ”in His mouth,” as the Scripture saith. ”He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sins, and made higher than the heavens,” according to the words of the divine Paul.

But yes! perchance some one will say, who has been ill instructed in the faith, ’Was it then God the Word that was baptized? Was He in need of being made partaker of the Holy Ghost? Not at all. Therefore it is that we affirm, that the man who was of the seed of David, and united unto Him by conjunction , was baptized and received the Spirit.’ The Indivisible therefore is divided by you into two sous: and because He was baptized when, thirty years old, He was made holy, as you say, by being baptized. Was He therefore not holy until He arrived at His thirtieth year? Who will assent to you, when thus you corrupt the right and blameless faith? For ”there is one Lord Jesus Christ,” as it is written. But this we affirm: that He was not separate from Him, and by Himself when baptized and made partaker of the Holy Ghost: for we know, both that He is God, and without stain, and Holy of the Holy: for we confess that ”of His fulness have all we received. For the Holy Spirit indeed proceedeth from God the Father, but belongeth also to the Son. It is even often called the Spirit of Christ, though proceeding from God the Father. And to this Paul will testify, saying, at one time, ”They that are in the flesh cannot please God: but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

But if any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And again, ”But because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Father, our Father. The Holy Spirit therefore proceedeth indeed as I said from God the Father, but His Only-begotten Word, as being both by nature and verily Son, and resplendent with the Father’s dignities, ministereth It to the creation,

and bestoweth It on those that are worthy. Yea verily He said, ”All things that the Father hath are mine.”

But let us retort upon those who pervert the right belief this question; ’How can He Who received the Spirit, if He be, according to your phrase, a man, and the Son separately and by Himself, baptize with the Holy Ghost, and Himself give the Holy Spirit to them who are baptized?’ For to be able to impart the Spirit to men suiteth not any one whatsoever of things created, but, together with God’s other attributes, is the distinct property of Almighty God alone. But He Who gave It was man: for the wise John said, ”After me cometh a Man, Who was before me . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” As therefore it is unbefitting God the Word, regarded as God the Word, to draw near unto holy baptism, and be made partaker of the Spirit, so in like manner it is altogether incredible, or rather impossible to believe that the ability to baptize men with the Holy Ghost, is the act of a mere man with nothing in Him superior to ourselves.

How then will the mystery be true? In that for our aid He assumed a kind of adaptation . The divine Word became man, even ”He Who was in the form of God the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal unto God,” as most wise Paul says, ”but took the form of a slave, being made in the likeness of men, and humbling Himself to poverty.” Enquire therefore Who He was that was first in the likeness of God the Father, and could be regarded as on an equality with Him, but took the form of a slave, and became then a man, and besides this made Himself poor. Was it He of the seed of David, as they argue, Whom they specially regard separately and by Himself as the other Son, distinct from the Word of God the Father? If so, let them shew that He ever was on an equality with the Father. Let them shew how He assumed the form of a slave. Or what shall we say was that form of a slave? And how did He empty Himself? For what is poorer than human nature? He therefore Who is the exact image of God the Father, the likeness, and visible expression of His person, Who shines resplendent in equality unto Him, Who by right of nature is free, and the yoke of Whoso kingdom is put upon all creation,----He it is Who took the form of a slave, that is, became a man, and made Himself poor by consenting to endure these human things, sin only excepted.

But how then, they object, was He baptized, and received also the Spirit? To which we reply, that He had no need of holy baptism, being wholly pure and spotless, and holy of the holy. Nor had He need of the Holy Ghost: for the Spirit That proceedeth from God the Father is of Him, and equal to Him in substance. We must now therefore at length hear what is the explanation of the economy. God in his love to man provided for us a way of salvation and of life. For believing in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and making this confession before many witnesses, we wash away all the filth of sin, and are enriched by the communication of the Holy Spirit, and made partakers of the divine nature, and gain the grace of adoption. It was

necessary therefore that the Word of the Father, when He humbled Himself unto emptiness, and deigned to assume our likeness, should become for our sakes the pattern and way of every good work. For it follows, that He Who in every thing is first, must in this also set the example. In order therefore that we may learn both the power itself of holy baptism, and how much we gain by approaching so great a grace, He commences the work Himself; and, having been baptized, prays that you, my beloved, may learn that never-ceasing prayer is a thing most fitting for those who have once been counted worthy of holy baptism.

And the Evangelist says that the heavens were opened, as having long been closed. For Christ said, ”Forthwith shall ye see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” For both the flock above and that below being now made one, and one chief Shepherd appointed for all, the heavens were opened, and man upon earth brought near to the holy angels. And the Spirit also again came down as at a second commencement of our race: and upon Christ first, Who received it not so much for His own sake as for ours: for by Him and in Him are we enriched with all things. Most suitably therefore to the economy of grace does He endure with us the things of man’s estate: for where otherwise shall we see Him emptied, Whose in His divine nature is the fulness? How became He poor as we are, if He were not conformed to our poverty? How did He empty Himself, if He refused to endure the measure of human littleness?

Having taken therefore Christ as our pattern, let us draw near to the grace of holy baptism, that so we may gain boldness to pray constantly, and lift up holy hands to God the Father, that He may open the heavens also unto us, and send down upon us too the Holy Ghost, to receive us as sons. For He spake unto Christ at the time of holy baptism, as though having by Him and in Him accepted man upon earth to the sonship, ”This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.” For He Who is the Son by nature and in truth, and the Only-begotten, when He became like unto us, is specially declared to be the Son of God, not as receiving this for Himself:----for He was and is, as I said, very Son:----but that He might ratify the glory unto us. For He has been made our firstfruits, and firstborn, and second Adam: for which reason it is said, that ”in Him all things have become new:” for having put off the oldness that was in Adam, we have gained the newness that is in Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be glory and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

[Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

Sermons 12-25 (Luke 4-1-6-17)

SERMON XII. The twelfth sermon of the commentary upon the Gospel of Luke, by S. Cyril, upon the fast of our Lord in the flesh.

[From the Syriac, Ms. 14,727.] 4:1-2. But Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan, and continued in the Spirit in the wilderness forty days, being tempted of the Devil. And he ate nothing during those days; and when they were accomplished He hungered. THE blessed prophets, when speaking of the Only-begotten Word of God,----of Him Who is equal unto God in glory, and the sharer of His throne, and radiant in perfect equality unto Him,----lead us to the persuasion that He was manifested as a Saviour and Deliverer for those upon earth, by saying, ”Arise, O Lord, help me.” He arose therefore and helped, having taken the form of a slave, and being made in the likeness of men: for so did He as one of us set Himself as an avenger in our stead, against that murderous and rebellious serpent, who had brought sin upon us, and thereby had caused corruption and death to reign over the dwellers upon earth, that we by His means, and in Him, might gain the victory, whereas of old we were vanquished, and fallen in Adam.

Come therefore and let us praise the Lord, and sing psalms unto God our Saviour: let us trample Satan under foot; let us raise the shout of victory over him now he is thrown and fallen: let us exult over the crafty reptile, caught in an inextricable snare: let us too say of him in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, ”How is the hammer of all the earth broken and beaten small! Thou art found and hast been taken, because thou stoodest against the Lord.” For of old, that is before the time of the advent of Christ the Saviour of all, the universal enemy had somewhat grand and terrible notions about himself: for he boastfully exulted over the infirmity of the inhabitants of the earth, saying, ”I will hold the world in my hand as a nest, and as eggs that are left I will take it up: and no one shall escape from me or speak against me.” And in very truth there was no one of those upon earth who could rise up against his power; but the Son rose up against him, and contended with him, having been made like unto us. And therefore, as I said, human nature, as victorious in Him, wins the crown. And this in old time the Son Himself proclaimed, where by one of the holy prophets He thus addresses Satan; ”Behold, I am against thee, O corrupting mountain, that corruptest the whole earth.”

Come therefore and let us see what the blessed Evangelist says, when Christ was now going to battle in our behalf with him who corrupted the whole earth. ”But Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan. Here behold, I pray, man’s nature anointed with the grace of the Holy Ghost in Christ as the firstfruits, and crowned with the highest honours. For of old indeed the God of all promised, saying, ”it shall come to pass in those days, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh. And the promise is fulfilled for us in Christ first. And whereas of those in old time who without restraint gave way to fleshly lust, God somewhere said, ”My Spirit shall not dwell in these men, because they are flesh: now because all things have become new in Christ, and we are enriched with the regeneration that is by water and Spirit;----for no longer are we children of flesh and blood, but rather call God our Father;----therefore it is, and very justly, that as being now in honour, and possessing the glorious privilege of adoption, we have been made partakers of the divine nature by the communication of the Holy Ghost. But He Who is the Firstborn among us, when He became so among many brethren, and yielded Himself to emptiness, was the first to receive the Spirit, although Himself the Giver of the Spirit, that this dignity, and the grace of fellowship with the Holy Ghost might reach us by His means.

Something like this Paul also teaches us, where speaking both of Him and us, he says, ”For both He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of One: for which reason He is not ashamed to call them His brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name to My brethren. For as being in no degree ashamed to call us brethren, whose likeness He took, therefore, having transferred to Himself our poverty, He is sanctified with us, although Himself the Sanctifier of all creation; that thou mightest not see Him refusing the measure of human nature, Who consented for the salvation and life of all to become man.

When therefore the wise Evangelist says of Him, ”But Jesus being full of the Spirit returned from the Jordan,” be not offended, nor err from the mark in thy inward thoughts, and wander from the doctrine of the truth, as to the way and manner in which the Word, Who is God, was sanctified: but rather understand the wisdom of the economy, by reason of which also He is the object of our admiration. For He was made flesh and became man, not to avoid whatever belongs to man’s estate, and despise our poverty, but that we might be enriched with what is His, by His having been made like unto us in every particular, sin only excepted. He is sanctified therefore as man, but sanctifies as God: for being by nature God, He was made man. ”He was led therefore, it says, in the Spirit in the wilderness forty days, being tempted of the devil.” What therefore is the meaning of the word led? It signifies not so much that He was conducted thither, as that He dwelt and continued there. For we are ourselves also accustomed to say of any one who lives religiously, So and so, whoever it may be, is a well-conducted person. And we give the title of paedagogue, not to signify, according to the literal interpretation, that they actually

lead and conduct boys, but that they take care of them, and well and laudably train them, educating and teaching them to conduct themselves with propriety.

He dwelt therefore in the wilderness in the Spirit, that is spiritually; for He fasted, granting no food whatsoever to the necessities of the body. But to this I imagine some one may immediately object; 'And what harm then did it do Jesus to be constantly dwelling in cities? And in what way could it benefit Him to choose to inhabit the wilderness? For there is no good thing of which He is in want. And why too did He also last? What necessity was there for Him to labour, Who knows not what it is to feel the rising of any depraved desire? For we adopt the practice of fasting as a very useful expedient, by which to mortify pleasures, and buffet the law of sin that is in our members, and extirpate those emotions which lead on to fleshly lust. But what need had Christ of fasting? For He it is by Whom the Father slays the sin in the flesh. And knowing this, the divine Paul wrote, "For as to the powerlessness of the law, by reason of its weakness because of the flesh, God having sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and because of sin, condemned the sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us, who walk not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. He therefore, who even in us miserable beings mortifies the motions of the flesh, and has abolished sin, what fasting could He need in ought that concerns Himself? He is holy:

undefiled by nature: wholly pure, and without blemish. He cannot experience even the shadow of a change. Why therefore did He make His abode in the wilderness, and fast, and endure, being tempted?' The type has regard to us, my beloved: He sets before us His acts as our example, and establishes a model of the better and more admirable mode of life practised among us, I mean, that of the holy monks. For whence was it possible for men on earth to know that the habit of dwelling in deserts was useful for them, and highly advantageous for salvation? For they retire from waves and storms as it were; from the utter turmoil, and vain distractions of this world, and so to speak like the blessed Joseph, they strip off and give back to the world all that belongs to it. And something like this the wise Paul too says of those who are wont so to live. "But those who are Jesus Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. And he shews to those who choose this mode of life that abstinence is necessary, of which the fruit is fasting and the power of endurance, and of abstaining from or taking but little food. For so will Satan, when he tempts. be overcome.

But observe this especially: that he was first baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit, and withdrew into the wilderness, and made abstinence, that is, fasting, as it were His armour; and being thus equipped, when Satan drew near, and He had overcome him, He has so set before us Himself as our pattern. Thou therefore too must first put on the armour of God, and the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation. Thou too must first be clothed with power from on high, must be made, that is, partaker

of the Holy Ghost by means of precious baptism, and then mayest thou undertake to lead the life well beloved and honourable with God: then with spiritual courage thou shalt take for thy habitation the deserts: then shalt thou keep holy fast, and mortify pleasures, and vanquish Satan when he tempts. In Christ therefore have we gained all things .

[From Mai.] Lo! He appears among the combatants, Who as God bestows the prize: among those who wear the chaplet of victory is He Who crowns the heads of the saints. Let us behold therefore the skilfulncss of His wrestlings; how He overthrows the devil's wickedness. When forty days had been spent in fasting, "He afterwards hungered." But He it is Who gives food to the hungry, and is Himself the bread that came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, as being That whereby all things consist. But because, on the other hand, it was necessary that He Who refused not our poverty should withdraw from nothing whatsoever that belongs to man's condition, He consented for His flesh to require its natural supplies; and hence the words, "He hungered." It was not however till He had fasted sufficiently, and by His Godlike power had kept His flesh unwasted, though abstaining from meat and drink, that scarcely at length He permitted it to feel its natural sensations: for it says, that He hungered. And for what reason? That skilfully by means of the two , He Who is at once God and Man, might be recognised as such in one and the same person, both as superior to us in His divine nature, and in His human nature as our equal.

4:3. And the devil said unto him.

Then the devil draweth near to tempt Him; expecting that the feeling of hunger would aid him in his innate wickedness: for oftentimes he prevails over us by taking our infirmities to aid his plots and enterprizes. He thought that He would readily jump at the wish of seeing bread ready for His use: and therefore he said, "If Thou be the Son of God, bid this stone become bread." He approaches Him therefore as an ordinary man, and as one of the saints: yet he had a suspicion, that possibly He might be the Christ. In what way then did he wish to learn this? He considered, that to change the nature of any thing into that which it was not, would be the act and deed of a divine power: for it is God Who makes these things and transforms them: if therefore, says he, this be done, certainly He it is Who is looked for as the subverter of my power: but if He refuse to work this change, I have to do with a man, and cast away my fear, and am delivered from my danger. And therefore it was that Christ, knowing the monster's artifice, neither made the change, nor said that He was either unable or unwilling to make it, but rather shakes him off as importunate and officious, saying that "man shall not live by bread alone;" by which He means, that if God grant a man the power, he can subsist without eating, and live as Moses and Elias, who by the Word of the Lord passed forty days without taking food. If therefore it is possible to live without bread, why should I make the

stone bread? But He purposely does not say, I cannot, that He may not deny His own power: nor does He say, I can; lest the other, knowing that He is God, to Whom alone such things are possible, should depart from Him.

And observe, I pray, how the nature of man in Christ casts off the faults of Adam's gluttony: by eating we were conquered in Adam, by abstinence we conquered in Christ. By the food that springeth up from the earth our earthly body is supported, and seeks for its sustenance that which is congenerate with it: but the rational soul is nourished unto spiritual healthiness by the Word of God. For the food that the earth supplies nourishes the body that is akin to it: but that from above and from heaven strengthens the spirit. The food of the soul is the Word that cometh from God, even the spiritual bread which strengtheneth man's heart, according to what is sung in the Book of Psalms. And such also we affirm to be the nature of the food of the holy angels. 4:5. He shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world.

But O thou malignant, and wicked, and accursed being, how didst thou dare to shew the Lord all the kingdoms of the whole creation, and say, "All these are mine? Now therefore if Thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give them Thee." How dost thou promise that which is not thine? Who made thee heir of God's kingdom? Who made thee lord of all under heaven? Thou hast seized these things by fraud. Restore them therefore to the incarnate Son, the Lord of all. Hear what the prophet Isaiah says respecting thee; "Hath it been prepared for thee also to reign? a deep gulf, fire, and brimstone, and wood laid in order; the anger of the Lord as a gulf burning with brimstone." How then dost thou, whose lot is the inextinguishable flame, promise to the King of all that which is His own? Didst thou think to have Him as thy worshipper at Whom all things tremble, while the Seraphim, and all the angelical powers hymn His glory? It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve ." Seasonably He made mention of this commandment, striking as it were his very heart. For before His advent, Satan had deceived all under heaven, and was himself everywhere worshipped: but the law of God, ejecting him from the dominion he had usurped by fraud, has commanded men to worship Him only Who by nature and in truth is God, and to offer service to Him alone.

4:9. If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down hence. The third temptation which the devil employs is that of vain-glory, saying, "Cast Thyself down hence," as a proof of Thy divinity. But neither did he make Him fall by means of vanity, but himself in this also shot wide of the mark. For He answers, "It is said, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." For God grants not His aid to those who tempt Him, but to those who believe in Him: nor ought we, because He deigns us mercy, therefore to make a vain display. Moreover, Christ never gave a sign to those who tempted Him: "for a wicked generation, He saith, seeketh after a sign, and a sign shall not be given it." And let Satan now when tempting hear the same. Wo therefore won

the victory in Christ: and he who conquered in Adam went away ashamed, that we might have him under our feet; for Christ as Conqueror handed on to us also the power to conquer, saying, ”Behold I have granted you to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy.”

4:10. For it is written, that He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee to guard Thee. But see how maliciously he endeavours by the use of the Scriptures to humble the glory of the Lord, as if in need of angelic aid; and as though it would stumble, did not the angels help it. For the application of the Psalm refers not to Christ, nor does the Sovereign need angels. As for the pinnacle, it was a very lofty building, erected at the side of the temple.

Some however wrongly refer the Psalm to the person of the Lord, and taking the versos together thus read; ”Because Thou, O Lord, art my hope, Thou has made the Most High Thy refuge.” They say therefore that the Lord had as His refuge the Most High, even the Father Who is in heaven. And their pretext for such a way of understanding it is, that Satan so took the verses, saying, ”If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, that He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee.” For Satan being false and a deceiver, applies what is said of us to the person of Christ the Saviour of us all. But we do not understand it in Satan’s fashion; though if the Arians have so understood it, there is no cause for astonishment: for they follow their own father, ”who is a liar, and the truth is not in him,” according to the Saviour’s words. For if the truth be as they say, and we have made Christ our help, and He has the Father for His refuge, then have we fled to one Who Himself has need of aid, and call Him our Saviour Who is saved by another. This cannot be: Heaven forbid. We say therefore to those who are wont so to think, Ye tell us another of your errors: ye are travelling out of the royal and straight path: ye are falling into thorns and pitfalls: ye have wandered from the truth. The Son is in all things equal to the Father: the mark and impress of His substance: the Most High, as also the Father is Most High.

Satan then made use of these verses, as though the Saviour were a common man. For being entirely darkness, and having his mind blinded, he understood not the force of what was said, that the psalm is spoken in the person of every just man who is aided by the Highest, even the God of heaven. And besides this, He knew not that the Word being God, was made man, and was Himself now being tempted in accordance with the plan of salvation. He therefore, as I said, supposed the words were spoken as of a common man, or oven as of one of the holy prophets. But it is monstrous for us, who accurately know the mystery, and believe that He is God and the Son of God, and that for our sakes He became man like unto us, to imagine that the verses were spoken of Him. To say then, ”Thou hast made the Most High thy refuge,” befits not the person of the Saviour. For He is Himself the Most High: the refuge of all: the hope of all: the all-powerful right hand of the Father: and

whosoever has made Him his defence, no evil shall approach him. For He shall command the angels, who are ministering spirits, to guard the just. For just as our fathers in the flesh, when they see the path rough and impassable, catch up their infants in their hands, lest perchance their tender feet should be hurt, being as yet unable to walk over the hard road, so also the rational powers do not permit those, who are as yet unable to labour, and whose understanding is still childish, to toil beyond their strength, but snatch them out of every temptation.

4:14. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit unto Galilee. Having left the habitations of cities, He dwelt in deserts: there He fasted, being tempted of Satan; there He gained victory in our behalf: there He crushed the heads of the dragons: there, as the blessed David says, "The swords of the enemy utterly failed, and cities were destroyed," that is, those who were like towers and cities. Having therefore mightily prevailed over Satan, and having crowned in His own person man's nature with the spoils won by the victory over him, He returned unto Galilee in the power of the Spirit, both exercising might and authority, and performing very many miracles, and occasioning great astonishment. And He wrought miracles, not as having deceived the grace of the Spirit from without and as a gift, like the company of the saints, but rather as being by nature and in truth the Son of God the Father, and taking whatever is His as His own proper inheritance. For He even said unto Him, "That all that is Mine is Thine, and Thine Mine, and I am glorified in them." He is glorified therefore by exercising as His own proper might and power that of the consubstantial Spirit.

4:16. And He came to Nazareth: and entered into the synagogue. Since therefore it was now necessary that He should manifest Himself to the Israelites, and that the mystery of His incarnation should now shine forth to those who knew Him not, and inasmuch as He was now anointed of God the Father for the salvation of the world, He very wisely orders this also, [viz. that His fame should now spread abroad.] And this favour He grants first to the people of Nazareth, because, humanly speaking, He had been brought up among them. Having entered, therefore, the synagogue, He takes the book to read: and having opened it, selected a passage in the prophets, which declares the mystery concerning Him. And by these words He most plainly Himself tells us by the voice of the prophet, that He both would be made man, and come to save the world. For we affirm, that the Son was anointed in no other way than by having become according to the flesh such as we are, and taken our nature. For being at once God and man, He both gives the Spirit to the creation in His divine nature, and receives it from God the Father in His human nature; while it is He Who sanctifies the whole creation, both as having shone forth from the Holy Father, and as bestowing the Spirit, Which He Himself pours forth, both upon the powers above as That Which is His own, and upon those moreover who recognised His appearing.

4:18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; therefore He hath anointed Me: He hath sent Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He plainly shews by these words that He took upon Him the humiliation and submission to the emptying (of His glory), and both the very name of Christ and the reality for our sakes: for the Spirit, He says, which by nature is in Me by the sameness of Our substance and deity, also descended upon Me from without. And so also in the Jordan It came upon Me in the form of a dove, not because It was not in Me, but for the reason for which He anointed Me. And what was the reason for which He chose to be anointed? It was our being destitute of the Spirit by that denunciation of old, ”My Spirit shall not abide in these men, because they are flesh.”

These words the incarnate Word of God speaks: for being very God of very God the Father, and having become for our sakes man without undergoing change, with us He is anointed with the oil of gladness, the Spirit having descended upon Him at the Jordan in the form of a dove. For in old time both kings and priests were anointed symbolically, gaining thereby a certain measure of sanctification: but He Who for our sakes became incarnate, was anointed with the spiritual oil of sanctification, and the actual descent of the Spirit, receiving It not for Himself, but for us. For inasmuch as the Spirit had taken its flight, and not made His abode in us because of our being flesh, the earth was full of grief, being deprived of the participation of God. And He proclaimed also deliverance to captives, which also He accomplished by having bound the strong one, Satan, who in tyrant fashion lorded it over our race, and having torn away from Him us his goods.

As the words ”He anointed Me” befit the manhood: for it is not the divine nature which is anointed, but that which is akin to us: so also the words ”He sent Me” are to be referred to that which is human. Those also whose heart was of old obscured by the darkness of the devil, He has illuminated by rising as some Sun of Righteousness, and making them the children no longer of night and darkness, but of light and day, according to Paul’s word, And those who were blind,-----for the Apostate had blinded their hearts,----have recovered their sight, and acknowledged the truth; and, as Isaiah says, ”Their darkness has become light:” that is, the ignorant have become wise: those that once were in error, have known the paths of righteousness. And the Father also says somewhere unto the Son Himself, ”I have given Thee for a covenant of kindred, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out the prisoners from their bonds, and from the guard-house those that sit in darkness.” For the Only-begotten came into this world and gave a new covenant to His kindred, the Israelites, of whom He was sprung according to the flesh, even the covenant long before announced by the voice of the prophets. But the divine and heavenly light shone also upon the Gentiles: and He went and preached to the spirits in Hades, and showed Himself to those who were shut up in the guard-house, and freed all from their bonds and violence. And how do not these things plainly prove that Christ is both God, and of God by nature?

And what means the sending away the broken in freedom? It is the letting those go free whom Satan had broken by the rod of spiritual violence. And what means the preaching the acceptable year of the Lord? It signifies the joyful tidings of His own advent, that the time of the Lord, even the Son, had arrived. For that was the acceptable year in which Christ was crucified in our behalf, because we then were made acceptable unto God the Father, as the fruit borne by Him. Wherefore He said, ”When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men unto Myself. And verily He returned to life the third day, having trampled upon the power of death: after which He said to His disciples, ”All power has been given Me, &c. That too is in every respect an acceptable year in which, being received into His family, we were admitted unto Him, having washed away sin by holy baptism, and been made partakers of His divine nature by the communion of the Holy Ghost. That too is an acceptable year, in which He manifested His glory by ineffable miracles: for with joy have we accepted the season of His salvation, which also the very wise Paul referred to, saying, ”Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation:

the day, when the poor who erewhile were sick by the absence of every blessing, having no hope and being without God in the world, such as were the gentiles, were made rich by faith in Him, gaining the divine and heavenly treasure of the Gospel message of salvation; by which they have been made partakers of the kingdom of heaven, copartners with the saints, and heirs of blessings such as neither the mind can conceive nor language tell. ”For eye, it saith, hath not seen, and car hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him. Though it may also be true, that the text here speaks of the abundant supply of graces bestowed by Christ upon the poor in spirit,

But by the bruised in heart, He means, those who have a weak and yielding mind, unable to resist the attacks of their passions, and so carried along by them, as to seem to be captives: to these He promises both healing and forgiveness. And to those who are blind, He gives the recovering of sight. For those who serve the creature instead of the Creator, ”and say to the wood, Thou art my father, and to the stone, Thou hast begotten me,” without recognising Him Who is by nature and in truth God, how can they be ought else than blind, seeing they have a heart devoid of the light that is divine and spiritual? And on these the Father bestows the light of the true knowledge of God: for they are called through faith, and acknowledge Him, or rather are acknowledged of Him, and whereas they were children of night and darkness, they have been made children of light. For the day has shone upon them, and the sun of righteousness has arisen, and the bright morning star has dawned.

There is no objection, however, to any one’s referring all these declarations to the Israelites. For they were poor, and crushed in heart, and, so to speak, prisoners,

and in darkness. ”For there was not upon earth that was doing good, not even one. But all had turned aside, together they had become unprofitable.” But Christ came, preaching to the Israelites before all others, the glories of His advent. And like to their maladies were those of the Gentiles; but they have been redeemed by Him, having been enriched with His wisdom, and endowed with understanding, and no longer is their mind weak and broken, but healthy and strong, and ready to receive and practise every good and saving work. For in their error they had need of wisdom and understanding, who in their great folly worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, and inscribed stocks and stones with the name of Gods. But those who long ago lived in gloom and darkness, because they knew not Christ, now acknowledge Him as their God.

These words having been read to the assembled people, He drew upon Himself the eyes of all, wondering perhaps how He knew letters Who had not learnt. For it was the wont of the Israelites to say, that the prophecies concerning Christ were fullilled, either in the persons of some of their more glorious kings, or, at all events, in the holy prophets. For not correctly understanding what was written of Him, they missed the true direction, and travelled on another path. But that they might not again thus misinterpret the present prophecy, He carefully guards against error by saying, ”This day is this prophecy fulfilled in your ears,” expressly setting Himself before them in these words, as the person spoken of in the prophecy. For it was He Who preached the kingdom of heaven to the heathen, who were poor, having nothing, neither God, nor law, nor prophets; or rather, He preached it unto all who were destitute of spiritual riches: the captives He set free, having overthrown the apostate tyrant Satan, and Himself shed the divine and spiritual light on those whose heart was darkened; for which reason He said, ”I am come a light into this world:” it was He Who unbound the chains of sin from those whose heart was crushed thereby: Who clearly shewed that there is a life to come, and denounced the just judgment. Finally, it was He Who preached the acceptable year of the Lord, even that in which the Saviour’s proclamation was made: for by the acceptable year I think is meant His first coming; and by the day of restitution the day of judgment.

4:11. And all bare Him witness and wondered. For not understanding Him Who had been anointed and sent, and Who was the Author of works so wonderful, they returned to their usual ways, and talk foolishly and vainly concerning Him. For although they had wondered at the words of grace that proceeded out of His mouth, yet their wish was to treat them as valueless: for they said, ”Is not this the son of Joseph?” But what does this diminish from the glory of the Worker of the miracles? What prevents Him from being both to be venerated and admired, even had He been, as was supposed, the son of Joseph? Seest thou not the miracles? Satan fallen, the herds of devils vanquished, multitudes set free from various kinds of maladies? Thou praisest the grace that was present in His teachings; and then

dost thou, in Jewish fashion, think lightly of Him, because He accounted Joseph for His father? O great senselessness! True is it to say of them, ”Lo! a people foolish, and without understanding: they have eyes and see not, ears, and hear not.”

4:23. Ye will altogether say unto Me this parable... This was a common saying among the Jews, and had its origin in a witticism: for when physicians were themselves ill, men would say, Physician, heal thyself. Christ therefore, setting before them as it were this proverb, said unto them, Ye wish for many signs to be wrought by Me among you especially, in whose country I was brought up; but I know the common feeling to which all men are liable: for always, somehow or other, even the choicest things are despised when there is no scarcity of them, and people have them in abundance. And so too is the case with men: for his acquaintance will oftentimes refuse one with whom they are familiar, and who is constantly among them, even the honour which is due. He rebuked them therefore for asking so foolishly, ”Is not this the son of Joseph?” and still keeping to the object of His teaching, says, ”Verily, verily, I say unto you, that no prophet is acceptable in his country.”

4:25. There were many widows in the days of Elias. For since, as I have mentioned, certain of the Jews affirmed that the prophecies relating to Christ had been accomplished either in the holy prophets, or in certain of their own more distinguished men, He for their good draws them away from such a supposition , by saying that Elias had been sent to a single widow, and that the prophet Elisaeus had healed but one leper, Naaman the Syrian: by these signifying the church of the heathen, who were about to accept Him, and be healed of their leprosy, by reason of Israel remaining impenitent. 4:28. And all in the synagogue were filled with anger.

They then were inflamed with anger, because he had branded their wicked thought; and also because He had said. To-day is this Scripture fulfilled, namely, that ”The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me;” for they considered that He made Himself equal to the prophets. Moreover, they cast Him out of their city, decreeing thereby their own condemnation, and confirming; what the Saviour had said: for they themselves were banished from the city that is above, for not having received Christ. And that He might not convict them of impiety in words merely, He permitted their audacity against Himself to proceed even unto deeds: for their violence was unreasonable, and their envy untamed. Leading Him therefore to the brow of the hill, they endeavoured to throw Him from the crags: but He went through the midst of them without taking any notice, so to say, of their attempt: not as refusing to suffer,----for for this reason He had even come,----but as awaiting a suitable time. For it was now the commencement of His preaching, and it would have been unseasonable to have suffered before He had proclaimed the word of truth. For it depended on Him to suffer, or not to suffer; for He is Lord of times as well as of things. And this is a proof, that when He suffered He suffered voluntarily, and that neither then could He have suffered, had He not yielded Himself thereto.

4:31. And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.

Those whom argument cannot bring to the sure knowledge of Him Who by nature and in truth is God and Lord, may perhaps be won by miracles unto a docile obedience. And therefore usefully, or rather necessarily, He oftentimes completes His lessons by proceeding to the performance of some mighty work. For the inhabitants of Judaea were unready to believe, and slighted the words of those who called them to salvation, and especially the people of Capernaum had this character: for which reason the Saviour reproved them, saying, ”And thou Capernaum, that art exalted unto heaven, ”shalt be brought down unto hell. But although He knows them to be both disobedient, and hard of heart, nevertheless He visits them as a most excellent physician would those who were suffering under a very dangerous disease, and endeavours to rid them of their malady. For He says Himself, that ”those who are in health, have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. He taught therefore in their synagogues with great freedom of speech: for this He had foretold by the voice of Isaiah, saying, ”I have not spoken in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth. The holy apostles moreover He oven commanded to publish their words concerning Him with full boldness of speech, saying, ”What I tell you in darkness, speak ye in the light: and what ye have heard (whispered) into the ear, proclaim upon the housetops. On the Sabbath also, when they were at leisure from labour, He conversed with them.

They therefore wondered at the power of His teaching, and at the greatness of His authority: ”For the word, it says, was with authority; for He used not flatteries, but urged them to salvation. For the Jews indeed thought that Christ was nothing more than one of the saints, and that He had appeared among them in prophetic rank only: but that they might entertain a higher opinion and idea concerning Him, He exceeds the prophetic measure; for He never said, Thus saith the Lord, as of course was their custom, but as being the Lord of the law He spake things that surpass the law.

God moreover said by Isaiah, ”And I will make with them an everlasting covenant, even the holy, the sure things of David: behold I have given Him as a testimony among the gentiles, a ruler and commander of the gentiles. For it was fitting that Moses, as a servant, should be the minister of the shadow that endureth not: but Christ, I affirm, was the eternal publisher of a lasting and abiding worship. And what is the eternal covenant? It means the sacred prophecies of Christ, Who is of David’s seed according to the flesh, and which produce in us holiness, and sureness: just as also the fear of God is pure, because it makes us pure: and the word of the Gospel is life, because it produces life: ”for the words, He says, ”that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life,” that is, spiritual and life-giving. But mark well the exactness of the prophecy. Isaiah, speaking as in the person of God the Father concerning Christ, says, ”Lo, I have given Him as a testimony unto the Gentiles,”

that is, to bear witness unto them, that these things are acceptable; that no one may imagine Him to be one of the holy prophets, but that all mankind may rather know, that He is radiant with the glory of lordship,----for being God, He appeared unto us;----and so he goes on to say, not merely that He was given for a testimony, but also as ”a ruler and commander of the gentiles.

For the blessed prophets, and before them even Moses, holding the station of servants, ever called out to their hearers, ”Thus saith the Lord,” not as being so much commanders, as ministers of the divine words. But our Lord Jesus Christ spake words most worthy of God; and was therefore admired even by the Jews themselves, because His word was with authority, and because He taught them as one that had authority, and not as their scribes. For His word was not of the shadow of the law, but as being Himself the lawgiver, He changed the letter into the truth, and the types into their spiritual meaning. For He was a ruler, and possessed a ruler’s authority to command.

4:35. And Jesus rebuked him. With godlike power He rebuked the unclean spirits, making the miracle follow immediately upon His words, that we might not disbelieve. We have seen the guilty Satan overcome by Him in the wilderness, and broken by three falls: we have seen his might again shaken, and the power that was against us falling: we have seen ourselves rebuking the wicked spirits in Christ as our firstfruits. For that this also has reference to the ennoblement of human nature, thou mayest learn from the Saviour’s own words. For the Jews indeed maligned His glory, and even said, ”This man casteth not out devils except in Beelzebub, prince of the devils:” but He in answer, having first said much and to the purpose, ended by declaring; ”But if I in the Spirit of God cast out devils, then has the kingdom of God come upon you unawares.” For if, says He, I, Who have become a man like unto you, chide the unclean spirits with godlike power and majesty, it is your nature which is crowned with this great glory: for ye are seen both through Me and in Me to have gained the kingdom of God.

The evil demons therefore were cast out, and made moreover to feel how invincible is His might; and being unable to bear the conflict with Deity, they exclaimed in imperious and crafty terms, ”Let us alone: what is there between us and Thee?” meaning thereby, Why dost Thou not permit us to keep our place, whilst Thou art destroying the error of impiety? But they further put on the false appearance of well-sounding words, and call Him the Holy One of God. For they supposed that by this specious kind of language they could excite the desire of vainglory, and thereby prevent His rebuking them, returning as it were one kindness for another. But though he be crafty, he will fail of his prey: for ”God is not mocked;” and so the Lord stops their impure tongues, and commands them to depart from those possessed by them. And the bystanders being made witnesses of so great deeds, were astonished at the power of His word. For He wrought His miracles, offering

up no prayer, to ask of any one else at all the power of accomplishing them, but being Himself the living and active Word of God the Father, by Whom all things exist, and in Whom all things are, in His own person He crushed Satan, and closed the profane mouth of impure demons.

4:38. He entered into Simon's house. Observe therefore how He Who endured voluntary poverty for our sakes, that we by His poverty might become rich, lodged with one of His disciples,----a man poor, and living in obscurity,----that we might learn to seek the company of the humble, and not to boast ourselves over those in want and affliction. Jesus arrives at Simon's house, and finds his wife's mother sick of a fever: and He stood, and rebuked the fever, and it left her, Now in what is said by Matthew and Mark, that "the fever left her," there is no hint of any living thing as the active cause of the fever: but in Luke's phrase that "He stood over her, and rebuked the fever, and it left her," I do not know whether we are not compelled to say that that which was rebuked was some living thing unable to sustain the influence of Him Who rebuked it: for it is not reasonable to rebuke a thing without life, and unconscious of the rebuke. Nor is it anything astonishing for there to exist certain powers that inflict harm on the human body: nor must we necessarily think evil of the soul of those who thus suffer for being harmed by these beings. For neither, when the Devil obtained authority to tempt Job by bodily torments, and struck him with painful ulcers, was Job therefore to be found fault with, for he manfully contended, and nobly endured the blow. God grant, however, that it be said, if at any time we are tempted by bodily pains, "but touch not his soul." The Lord then by a rebuke heals those who are possessed.

He laid also His hands upon the sick one by one, and freed them from their malady, so demonstrating that the holy flesh, which He had made His own, and endowed with godlike power, possessed the active presence of the might of the Word: intending us thereby to learn that though the Only-begotten Word of God became like unto us, yet even so is He none the less God, and able easily, even by His own flesh, to accomplish all things: for by it as His instrument He wrought miracles. Nor is there any reason for great wonder at this; but consider, on the contrary, how fire, when placed in a brazen vessel, communicates to it the power of producing the effects of heat. So therefore the all-powerful Word of God also, having joined by a real union unto Himself the living and intelligent temple taken from the holy Virgin, endowed it with the power of actively exerting His own godlike might. To put to shame, therefore, the Jews, He says, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe My works." We may, therefore, see, with the Truth Itself witnessing thereto, that the Only-begotten gave not His glory as to a man taken separately and apart by himself, and regarded as the woman's offspring; but as being the One only Son, with the holy body united to Him, He wrought the miracles, and is worshipped also by the creation as God.

He entered, then, into Peter's house, where a woman was lying stretched upon a bed, exhausted with a violent fever: and when He might as God have said, "Put away the disease, arise," He adopted a different course of action. For, as a proof that His own flesh possessed the power of healing, as being the flesh of God, He touched her hand, and forthwith, it says, the fever left her. Let us, therefore, also receive Jesus: for when He has entered into us, and we have received Him into mind and heart, then He will quench the fever of unbefitting pleasures, and raise us up, and make us strong, even in things spiritual, so as for us to minister unto Him, by performing those things that please Him. But observe again, I pray, how great is the efficacy of the touch of His holy flesh. For It both driven away diseases of various kinds, and a crowd of demons, and overthrows the power of the devil, and heals a very great multitude of people in one moment of time. And though able to perform these miracles by a word and the inclination of His will, yet to teach us something useful for us, He also lays His hands upon the sick. For it was necessary, most necessary, for us to learn, that the holy flesh which He had made His own was endowed with the activity of the power of the Word by His having implanted in it a godlike might. Let It then take hold of us, or rather let us take hold of It by the mystical "Giving of thanks," that It may free us also from the sicknesses of the soul, and from the assault and violence of demons.

4:41. And rebuking them, He suffered them not to speak. He would not permit the unclean demons to confess Him; for it was not fitting for them to usurp the glory of the Apostolic office, nor with impure tongue to talk of the mystery of Christ. Yea! though they speak ought that is true, let no one put credence in them: for the light is not known hy the aid of darkness, as the disciple of Christ teaches us, where he says, "For what communion hath light with darkness? or what consent hath Christ with Beliar?" 5:2. And He saw two ships standing by the lake, but the fishermen were gone out of them, and, were washing their nets. LET us admire the skilfulness of the method employed in making them a prey who were to make prey of the whole earth; even the holy Apostles, who, though themselves well skilled in fishing, yet fell into Christ's meshes, that they also, letting down the drag-net of the Apostolic preachings, might gather unto Him the inhabitants of the whole world. For verily He somewhere said by one of the holy prophets, "Behold I send many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall catch them as fish: and afterwards I will send many hunters, and they shall hunt them as game." By the fishers He means the holy Apostles; and by the hunters, those who successively became the rulers and teachers of the holy churches. And observe, I pray, that He not only preaches, but also displays signs, giving thereby pledges of His power, and confirming His words by the display of miracles: for after He had sufficiently conversed with the multitudes, He returns to His usual mighty works, and by means of their pursuits as fishers catches the disciples as fish: that men may know that His will is almighty, and that the creation ministers to His most godlike commands.

5:4. And when He ceased speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep. As He had now taught them sufficiently, and it was fitting also to add some divine work to His words for the benefit of the spectators, He bade Simon and his companions push off a little from the land, and let down the net for a draught. But they replied, that they had been labouring the whole night, and had caught nothing: in the name, however, of Christ, they let down the net, and immediately it was full of fish; in order that by a visible fact, and by a type and representation, miraculously enacted, they might be fully convinced that their labour would not be unrewarded, nor the zeal fruitless which they displayed in spreading out the net of the Gospel teaching; for that most certainly they should catch within it the shoals of the heathen. But observe this, that neither Simon nor his companions could draw the net to land; and therefore, being speechless from fright and astonishment:----for their wonder had made them mute:----they beckoned, it says, to their partners, those, that is, who shared their labours in fishing, to come and help them in securing their prey. For many have taken part with the holy Apostles in their labours, and still do so, especially such as search into the meaning of what is written in the holy Gospels; and others besides them, even the pastors and teachers and rulers of the people, who are skilled in the doctrines of truth. For still is the net drawn, while Christ fills it, and summons unto conversion those in the depths of the sea, according to the Scripture phrase; those, that is to say, who live in the surge and waves of worldly things.

5:8. And when Simon Peter saw it. For this reason also Peter, carried back to the memory of his former sins, trembles and is afraid, and as being impure ventures not to receive Him Who is pure: and his fear was laudable: for he had been taught by the law to distinguish between the holy and the profane. 5:12. And behold a man full of leprosy. The faith, however, of him who drew near is worthy of all praise: for he testifies that the Emmanuel can successfully accomplish all things, and seeks deliverance by His godlike commands, although his malady was incurable: for leprosy will not yield to the skill of physicians. I see, however, he says, the unclean demons expelled by a godlike authority: I see others set free from many diseases: I recognise that such things are wrought by some divine and resistless force: I see, further, that He is good, and most ready to pity those who draw near unto Him: what therefore forbids His taking pity on me also? And what is Christ's answer? He confirms His faith, and produces full assurance upon this very point. For He accepts His petition, and confesses that He is able, and says, "I will: be thou cleansed." He grants him also the touch of His holy and all-powerful hand, and immediately the leprosy departed from him, and his affliction was at an end. And in this join with mo in wondering at Christ thus exercising at the same time both a divine and a bodily power. For it was a divine act so to will, as for all that He willed to be present unto Him: but to stretch out the hand was a human, act:

Christ therefore is perceived to be One of both, if, as is the case, the Word was made flesh.

5:14. And He charged him to tell no man. Even though the leper had been silent, the very nature of the fact was enough to proclaim to all who knew him how great was His power Who had wrought the cure. But He bids him tell no man: and why? That they who receive from God the gift of working cures may hereby learn not to look for the applause of those whom they have healed, nor indeed any one's praises whatsoever, lest they fall a prey unto pride, of all vices the most disgraceful.

He purposely, however, bids the leper offer unto the priests the gift according to the law of Moses. For it was indeed confessedly His wish to put away the shadow, and transfbrm the types unto a spiritual service. As the Jews, however, because as yet they did not believe on Him, attached themselves to the commands of Moses, supposing their ancient customs to be still in force, He gives leave to the leper to make the offering for a testimony unto them. And what was His object in granting this permission? It was because the Jews, using ever as a pretext their respect for the law, and saying that the hierophant Moses was the minister of a commandment from on high, made it their endeavour to treat with contempt Christ the Saviour of us all. They even said plainly, "We know that God spake unto Moses: but This man, we know not whence He is. It was necessary, therefore, for them to be convinced by actual facts that the measure of Moses is inferior to the glory of Christ: "For he indeed as a servant was faithful over his house; but the other as a Son over His Father's house. From this very healing, then, of the leper, we may most plainly see that Christ is incomparably superior to the Mosaic law. For Mariam, the sister of Moses, was herself struck with leprosy for speaking against him: and at this Moses was greatly distressed;

and when he was unable to remove the disease from the woman, he fell down before God, saying, "O God, I beseech Thee, heal her. Observe this, then, carefully: on the one hand, there was a request; he sought by prayer to obtain mercy from above: but the Saviour of all spake with godlike authority, "I will: be thou cleansed. The removal therefore of the leprosy was a testimony to the priests, and by it those who assign the chief rank to Moses may know that they are straying from the truth. For it was fitting, even highly fitting, to regard Moses with admiration as a minister of the law, and servant of the grace that was spoken of angels; but far greater must be our admiration of the Emmanuel, and the glory we render Him as very Son of God the Father.

And whoever will may see the profound and mighty mystery of Christ written for our benefit in Leviticus. For the law of Moses declares the leper defiled, and gives orders for him to be put out of the camp as unclean: but should the malady ever be alleviated, it commands that he should then be capable of readmission. Moreover it clearly specifies the manner in which he is to be pronounced clean, thus saying;

”This is the law of the leper on whatsoever day he shall have been cleansed, and shall be brought unto the priest. And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall see him, and behold, the touch of the leprosy is healed from the leper: and the high priest shall command, and they shall take for him who is cleansed two living clean birds; and the high priest shall command, and they shall kill the one into an earthen vessel over living water: and he shall take the living bird, and dip it into the blood of the bird that was killed over the living water, and shall sprinkle it seven times over the man cleansed of the leprosy, and he shall be cleansed: and he shall send away the living bird into the field.” The birds then are two in number, both without stain, that is, clean, and liable to no fault on the part of the law: and the one of them is slain over living water, but the other, being saved from slaughter, and farther baptized in the blood of that which died, is let loose.

This type, then, represents to us the great and adorable mystery of our Saviour. For the Word was from above, even from the Father, from heaven; for which reason He is very fitly compared to a bird: for though He came down for the dispensation’s sake to bear our likeness, and took the form of a slave, yet even so He was from above.----Yea, He even, when speaking to the Jews, said so plainly, ”Ye are from beneath: I am from above. And again, ”No one hath ascended up into heaven, but the Son of man That came down from heaven. As therefore I just now said, even when He became flesh, that is, perfect man, He was not earthy, not made of clay as we are, but heavenly and superior to things worldly in respect of that wherein He is perceived to be God. We may see, then, in the birds (offered at the cleansing of the leper), Christ suffering indeed in the flesh according to the Scriptures, but remaining also beyond the power of suffering; and dying in His human nature, but living in His divine; for the Word is Life. Yea, too, the very wise disciple said, ”that He was put to death in the flesh, but made to live in the spirit. But though the Word could not possibly admit the suffering of death into His own nature, yet He appropriates to Himself that which His flesh suffered: for the living bird was baptized in the blood of the dead one;

and thus stained with blood, and all but made partaker of the passion, it was sent forth into the wilderness. And so did the Only-begotten Word of God return unto the heavens, with the flesh united unto Him. And strange was the sight in heaven, yea, the throng of angels marvelled when they saw in form like unto us the King of earth, and Lord of might: moreover they said, ”Who is This that cometh from Edom?----meaning thereby the earth:----the redness of ”His garments is from Bosor: the interpretation of which is flesh, as being a narrowing and pressing. Then too they inquired, ”Are such the wounds in the middle of Thy hands? and He answered, ”With these was I wounded in the house of My beloved. For just as after His return to life from the dead, when showing, with most wise purpose, His hands unto Thomas, He bade him handle both the prints of the nails, and the holes bored in His side: so also, when arrived in heaven, He gave full proof to the holy angels,

that Israel was justly east out and fallen from being of His family. For this reason, He shewed His garment stained with blood, and the wounds in His hands, and not as though He could not put them away; for when He rose from the dead, He put off corruption, and with it all its marks and attributes:

He retained them therefore, that the manifold wisdom of God, which He wrought in Christ, might now be made known by the Church, according to the plan of salvation, to principalities and powers.

But perhaps some one will say, How can you affirm that Jesus Christ is one and the same Son and Lord, when there were two birds offered? Does not the law very plainly hereby show that there are certainly two Sons and Christs? Yes, verily, men have ere now been brought to such a pitch of impiety, as both to think and say, that the Word of God the Father is one Christ separately by Himself, and that He Who is of the seed of David is another. But we reply to those who, in their ignorance, imagine such to be the case, what the divine Paul writes, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." If, therefore, they affirm that there are two Sons, necessarily there must be two Lords, and two faiths, and the same number of baptisms: and therefore, though he has Christ speaking within him, as he himself affirms, yet will his teaching be false. But this cannot be: away with such a thought! We therefore acknowledge one Lord, even the Only-begotten incarnate Word of God: not putting apart the manhood and the Godhead, but earnestly affirming that the Word of God the Father Himself became man while continuing to be God.

And next, let those who hold a contrary opinion be the speakers. 'If, they say, there are two Sons, one specially of the seed of David, and the other again separately the Word of God the Father; must not the Word of God the Father be superior in nature to him of the seed of David? What, then, shall we do in seeing the two birds, not distinct in nature from one another, but, on the contrary, of the same kind, and in no point, as regards specific difference, unlike one another.' But they gain nothing by their argument; for great is the distance between the Godhead and the manhood: and in the explanation of examples, we are to understand them according to their fitting analogy; for they fall short of the truth, and often effect but a partial demonstration of the things signified by them. We say, moreover, that the law was a sort of shadow and type, and a painting, as it were, setting things forth before the view of the spectators: but in the pictorial art, the shadows are the foundations for the colours; and when the bright hues of the colours have been laid upon them, then at length the beauty of the painting will flash forth. And in like manner, since it was fitting for the law of Moses to delineate clearly the mystery of Christ, it does not manifest Him as both dying and at the same time living in one and the same bird, lest what was done should have the look of a theatrical juggle; but it contained Him, as suffering slaughter in the one bird, and in the other displayed the same Christ as alive and set free.

But I will endeavour to shew that my argument here does not go beyond the bounds of probability by means of another history. For were any one of our community to wish to see the history of Abraham depicted as in a painting, how would the artist represent him? as doing every thing at once? or as in turn, and variously acting in many different modes, though all the while the same one person? I mean, for instance, as at one time sitting upon the ass with the lad accompanying him, and the servants following behind: then again the ass left with the servants, Isaac laden with the wood, and himself carrying in his hands the knife and the fire: then in another compartment, the same Abraham in a very different attitude, with the lad bound upon the wood, and his right hand armed with the knife ready to strike the blow. Yet it would not be a different Abraham in each place, though represented in very many different forms in the painting, but one and the same everywhere, the painter's art conforming itself constantly to the requirements of the things to be represented. For it would be impossible in one representation to see him performing all the above-mentioned acts.

So therefore the law was a painting and type of things travelling with truth, and therefore even though there were two birds, yet was He Who was represented in both but One, as suffering and free from suffering, as dying and superior to death, and mounting up unto heaven as a sort of second first fruits of human nature renewed unto incorruption. For He has made a new pathway for us unto that which is above, and we in due time shall follow Him. That the one bird then was slain, and that the other was baptized indeed in its blood, while itself exempt from slaughter, typified what was really to happen. For Christ died in our stead, and we, who have been baptized into His death, He has saved by His own blood.

5:17. And He Himself was teaching, and the Pharisees were sitting. Around Him verily was a company of the envious, scribes, that is, and pharisees, who were spectators of His wonderful works, and listened as He taught: "and the power of God was present, it says, to heal him." Is this spoken as though God gave Him the ability to perform the miracles? Did He borrow of another the power? But who would venture to affirm this? Rather it was He Himself, working by His own power, as God and Lord, and not as partaker of some divine grace. For men indeed often, even after being counted worthy of spiritual gifts, yet sometimes occasionally prove infirm, according to the proportion known to Him Who distributes these divine graces. But in the case of the Saviour of us all, there was nought such as this; but His power to heal him was not a human power, but rather one divine and irresistible: for He was God and the Son of God.

[From Cod. D.] Christ alone teaches as being the (true) teacher, and the wisdom of the Father. For all the rest teach as receiving from Him. "And there was also, it says, the power of the Lord upon Him to heal all;" which means that His power to heal was not human, but divine and irresistible. For the rest of the saints at

one time receive the power to work cures, and at another time, not: but Jesus, as being God, and the power of the Father, ever healed all. 5:18. And behold certain bringing on a bed a man who was paralytic.

[From Cod. D.] When, then, no small number, as it says, of scribes and pharisees, were assembled together, behold certain bringing upon a bed a man who was paralytic; and not being able to come in by the door, they carried him up to the roof, to attempt a strange and novel deed. For having pulled up the tiling, they removed the wood laid there: and still, while this was being done, both Jesus waited patiently, and those who were present; kept silence, watching for the result, and wishing to see what He would say and do. Having uncovered, therefore, the roof, they let down the bed, and lay the paralytic in the midst. What then does the Lord do? Having seen their faith, ----not that of the paralytic, but of the bearers; for it is possible for one to be healed by the faith of others; or, perceiving that the paralytic also believed, He healed him. It is possible, however, that the place into which they let down the bed of the paralytic through the tiles was open to the air, so that they would not have at all to break up the roof. But when the Saviour says to him, ”Man, thy sins are forgiven thee,” He addresses this generally to mankind: for those who believe in Him, being healed of the diseases of the soul, will receive forgiveness of the sins which formerly they had committed. Or He may mean this; I must heal thy soul before I heal thy body: for if this be not done, by obtaining strength to walk, thou dost but sin the more: and even though thou hast not asked for this, yet I as God see the maladies of the soul, which brought upon thee this disease.

And as it was necessary, now that so large a number of scribes and pharisees had assembled, that some especially divine miracle should be wrought for their benefit, because of the scorn with which they regarded Him, well does the Saviour provide again for them a most wonderful deed. For there was stretched upon a bod a paralytic, overcome with an incurable disease: and as the art of the physicians had proved altogether unavailing, he was carried by his relatives to the Physician Who is from above, even from heaven. And when he was in the presence of Him Who is able to heal, his faith was accepted: and that faith can take away sin, Christ immediately shews; for He proclaims to him as he lay there, ”Thy sins are forgiven thee. Now some one, I imagine, may say to this; What he wanted was to be delivered from his disease; and why, then, does Christ announce to him the forgiveness of his sin? It was that thou mayest learn that God silently and noiselessly observes the affairs of men, and watches the course of each one’s life; and so it is written, ”The paths of a man are before the eyes of God; and He looks at all his tracks. And as He is good, and willeth that all men should be saved, He often purifies those who are entangled in sins by inflicting sickness upon their body. For so He somewhere says by the voice of Jeremiah, ”Thou shalt be taught, O Jerusalem, by labour and the scourge.

And the writer of the book of Proverbs also has somewhere said, ”My son, despise not thou the teaching of the Lord, nor faint when thou art convicted by Him, for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He accepteth. Well, therefore, does Christ announce that He will cut away the cause of the disease, and the very root, as it were, of the malady, even sin: for if this be removed, necessarily must the disease which sprung from it be also at the same time taken away.

5:21. And the scribes and pharisees began to reason, saying. He then, as was said, being endowed with a most godlike authority, declared the forgiveness of sins. But the declaration disturbs again the ignorant and envious gang of the Pharisees: for they said one to another, ”Who is This That speaketh blasphemies?” But thou wouldest not have said this of Him, O Pharisee, if thou hadst known the divine Scriptures, and borne in mind the words of prophecy, and understood the adorable and mighty mystery of the incarnation. But now they involve Him in a charge of blasphemy, determining against Him the uttermost penalty, and condemning Him to death: for the law of Moses commanded that whoever spake blasphemies against God, should suffer death. But no sooner have they arrived at this height of daring, than He shews forthwith that He is God, to convict them once more of intolerable impiety. ”For what, saith He, reason ye in your hearts?” If thou, therefore, O Pharisee, sayest, who can forgive sins but One, God; I will also say to thee, Who can know hearts, and see the thoughts hidden in the depth of the understanding, but God only? For He saith Himself somewhere by the voice of the prophets, ”I am the Lord that searcheth hearts, and trieth reins.” And David also said somewhere concerning both Him and us, ”He Who singly formed their hearts.” He therefore Who as God knows both the hearts and reins, as God also forgives sins.

5:24. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power.

But inasmuch as a place still remains open for disbelief, in saying, ”Thy sins be forgiven thee:”----for man sees not the forgiven sins with the eyes of the body, whereas the putting off of the disease, and the paralytic’s rising up and walking carries with it a clear demonstration of a godlike power:----He adds, ”Rise up and carry thy bed, and go to thine house:” and this was done, for he returned unto his house, delivered from the infirmity under which he had so long suffered. It is proved therefore by the very fact, that ”the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins.” But of whom says He this? Is it of Himself, or also of us? Both the one and the other are true. For He forgives sins as being the Incarnate God, the Lord of the law: and we too have received from Him this splendid and most admirable grace. For He hath crowned man’s nature with this great honour also, having even said to the holy apostles, ”Verily I say unto you, whatsoever things ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever things ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” And

again, ”Whosesoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them: and whosesoever ye bind shall be bound.” And what is the occasion on which we find Him thus speaking unto them? It was after He had trampled upon the power of death, and risen from the grave, when He breathed upon them, and said, ”Receive the Holy Ghost.” For having made them partakers of His nature, and bestowed upon them the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, He also made them sharers of His glory, by giving them power both to remit and to bind sins. And as we have been commanded to perform this very act, how must not He much more Himself remit sins, when He giveth unto others authority to enable them to do so?

5:27. And He saw a publican named Levi. For Levi was a publican, a man insatiable after filthy lucre, of unbridled covetousness, careless of justice in his eagerness after what was not his own; for such was the character of the publicans: yet was he snatched from the very workshop of iniquity, and saved beyond hope, at the call of Christ the Saviour of us all. For He said unto him, Follow Me: and he left all and followed Him,” Seest thou that most wise Paul truly says, that ”Christ came to save sinners?” Seest thou how the Only-begotten Word of God, having taken upon Him the flesh, transferred unto Himself the devil’s goods?

FROM SERMON XXI. Explanation of what follows.

[From the Syriac MS.12,154.] ”Or how can a man enter the house of the strong man, and spoil his vessels, unless first he have bound the strong man, and then he will spoil his vessels.” By the house of the strong man, that is of Satan, He means this country upon earth, and his vessels are those who are likeminded with him. For just as we call the saints holy vessels, so there is nothing to prevent our giving the name of ”vessels of the devil” to those who are the contrivers of all wickedness. The Only-begotten Word therefore of God at His incarnation entered into the strong man’s house, even into this world, and having bound him, and ”sunk him in fetters of darkness,” as it is written, spoiled his goods. [From Mai.] And Levi verily was saved, while in us the deed suggests happy hopes; for by the very fact we are taught that repentance will save. Yea, moreover, God Himself, Who is Lord of all, shall be our surety, whore He says by the voice of the prophet, ”Return unto Me, and be ye saved, even from the ends of the earth.”

FROM THE SAME SERMON. Explanation of what follows.

[From the Syriac, as above.] ”Which of you that has a hundred sheep, and has lost one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the mountain, and go and seek that which has gone astray? And if he chance to find it, verily I say unto you, that he rejoices more in it, than in the ninety-nine which went not astray.” For the multitude of rational created beings which form Christ’s flock in heaven and on earth is innumerable, and so great as even to mount up unto a perfect number. For this is what is signified to us by the term ”one hundred.” The companies then of the holy angels are the ninety-nine; for, as I said, they are many: but the flock on

earth is one, but yet useful to complete the number, and sought for also by Christ. Did He then seek it as that which was lost, or as that which had not yet suffered this? But it is plain that that which is lost is sought for. In what manner then had it been lost? By being brought down into sin: by wandering from the divine will, and going far astray from the universal Shepherd.

But none of these things moved the Pharisees: on the contrary, they find fault with them to the disciples; for listen, 5:30. And their scribes and pharisees murmured, saying unto His disciples:

There are however some who endeavour to deprive those entangled in sin of the divine gentleness: for they do not admit of repentance, but as it were rebuke the Saviour for seeking His own, and gathering from every quarter that which was scattered: and to these we say, The pharisees set you the example of murmuring, when they saw Levi called, and a crowd of publicans gathered together, and feasting with Christ the Saviour of us all. And going up to the holy apostles, they vented their blame, saying, ”Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans? But they had for answer, ”They that are whole need not a physician. For the Saviour of all, as being the physician of spirits, does not withdraw from those in need of Him, but as being able to cleanse them, purposely conversed with those not as yet purified of their sins. But let us see, O pharisee, the overweening pride of thy disposition: for let us take Christ Himself, to Whom all things are known, as the expounder of the great blame that thou broughtest upon thyself by thy overbearing treatment of sinners. For speaking of a Pharisee who vaunted himself when praying, and of a certain publican who accused himself, He said, ”Verily I say unto you, that he went down justified to his house rather than that Pharisee. The publican therefore, who confessed his sin, is justified rather than the haughty Pharisee. But for what reason do the Pharisees blame the Saviour for eating with sinners?

Because it was the law to put a distinction between the holy and the profane: that is, that whatever was hallowed was not to be brought into contact with things profane. They made the accusation therefore as vindicating the law forsooth: but really it was envy against the Lord, and readiness to find fault. But He shews them that He is present now, not as a judge, but as a physician; and performs the proper duty of the physician’s office, in being in the company of those in need of healing. But no sooner had they received an explanation of their first accusation, than they bring forward another, finding fault because His disciples did not fast, wishing to obtain hereby an opportunity against Himself .

But observe their perseverance in malice: for no sooner have they received an explanation of their first accusation, than they change from one thing to another, in the hope of finding an opportunity of convicting the holy disciples, and Jesus Himself, of disregard of the law. But they are told in reply, now is the bride-chamber, the time of calling, the time of instruction: the children are being nursed up; those

who are called are being fed with milk: fasting is not yet seasonable. For yes! say they, you feast with publicans and sinners, although the law commands that the pure should not hold intercourse with the impure: and your pretext for transgressing the law is your love for mankind. But why fast ye not according to the custom of the just, and those who wish to live according to the law? But in answer to such objections one may say, Do you understand at all yourself, O Jew, the proper method of fasting? For as the prophet Isaiah says, "On the days of your fasts ye find your own wills, and goad all who are subject unto you. If ye fast for lawsuits and contentions, and strike the lowly with fists, why fast ye for Me? This is not the fast I have chosen, saith the Lord." And dost thou then, when thou thyself knowest not how to fast, blame the holy apostles for not fasting after thy fashion?

And to view it in another light, those who are made wise by the new covenant in Christ, fast rationally; that is, by humbling themselves in the eyes of God, and imposing upon themselves as it were a voluntary sentence of labour and abstinence, that they may obtain forgiveness of their offences, or win some fresh spiritual gift, or even to mortify the law of sin that is in their fleshly members. But this mode of fasting thou art ignorant of, O Pharisee! For thou hast refused to receive the heavenly Bridegroom, Who is the planter and teacher of every virtue, even Christ. Moreover, the saints indeed fast that they may quell the passions of the body by exhausting it: but Christ needed not to fast for the perfecting of virtue, because, as being God, He was free from all passion; nor did His companions, because they received of His grace, and were made strong, and wrought virtue oven without fasting. And even though He fasted for the forty days, it was not to mortify any passions in Himself, but to set an example for men in His own conduct of the law of abstinence. With good reason therefore He defends Himself by the words which the Evangelist goes on to record.

5:34. But He said unto them, Can ye make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? Observe, I pray again, the manner in which Christ shews that they have no share in the feast, but are altogether strangers to the joy felt on His account, and without part in the world's groat festival. For the revelation of our Saviour to the world was nothing else than a general festival, at which He spiritually united to Himself the nature of man, to be as it were His bride: that she who had been long barren might be fruitful, and blessed with a numerous offspring. All therefore are the children of the bridechamber who are called by Him through the new message of the Gospel: but not the scribes and Pharisees, who attached themselves solely to the shadow of the law. But as He had once granted permission to the children of the bridechamber not to afflict themselves, as a a concession suitable to the season, inasmuch as they were keeping a spiritual feast, that fasting might not be entirely rejected by us, He adds most suitably.

5:35. But the days will come, when also the bridegroom shall be taken away from them; then shall they fast in those days. For all things are good in their season. But what is the meaning of the bridegroom being taken away from them? It is His being taken up into heaven. 5:36. And He spake also a parable unto them.

But that the institutions of Christ cannot be received by those who live according to the law, nor admitted into the hearts of such as have not as yet received the renewing by the Holy Ghost, the Lord shews by saying, that ”a tattered patch cannot be put upon a new garment, nor can old skins hold new wine.” For the first covenant has grown old, nor was it free from fault. Those therefore who adhere to it, and keep at heart the antiquated commandment, have no share in the new order of things in Christ: ”For in Him all things are become new:” but their mind being decayed, they have no concord nor point of mutual agreement with the ministers of the new covenant. The God of all accordingly somewhere said of them by one of the holy prophets, that ”a new heart and a new spirit will I put into them.” And David also sings, ”Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” And we have been commanded also to put off the old man, and to put on the new man, renewed after the image of Him that created it.” And Paul also gives counsel, saying, ”Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” Those therefore who have not as yet received the renewing of the spirit, are also unable to prove the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

FROM SERMON XXII. Explanation of that which is below.
[From the Syriac, as before.] ”And no man puts now wine into old skins.” The heart of the Jews then is an old skin, and therefore cannot hold the new wine: for this is the saving commandment of the Gospel, making glad the heart of man. But Christ hath filled us with these great blessings, by bountifully endowing us with spiritual gifts, and opening the pathway wide unto all virtue. 6:2. Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbaths?

[From Mai.] Yet a new covenant God promiseth us, now that ”the first hath waxed old and is near to vanish away,” according to the words of the divine Paul. Yea, He even says by one of tho holy prophets, ”Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will perfect with the house of Israel, and with tho house of Judah, a new covenant: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in tho day when I took hold of their hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” If therefore the new covenant is the second, and different from the first, there is every necessity for those who wish to live according to it, to abandon the old laws, and conform to those which will guide them into the newness of the gospel polity. But of all this we can see that the Scribes and Pharisees comprehended nothing: for being altogether destitute of knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, they had but one sole purpose, on every occasion to find fault with the divine and heavenly preaching.

They lie in wait therefore for the holy apostles in their constant attendance upon our common Saviour Christ, and tell Him concerning them; ”Behold we see those who are under Thy instruction acting contrary to the precepts of the law: for they do what it is not lawful to do on the sabbaths: for while the law enjoins men to do no work on the sabbath, and to meddle with no labour whatsoever, tho disciples are rubbing ears of corn with their hands.” But tell me, dost not thou thyself, when setting thy sabbath meal, break the bread? Why then dost thou blame others? But that we may use against thee the bulwark of the Saviour’s words, listen;

6:3. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Have ye not even read what David did …? Now even though David thus acted contrary to what tho law approves, yet he is rightly and justly esteemed by us as worthy of all admiration: for he was in truth a saint and prophet. Since, therefore, the law of Moses expressly commands, ”Judge just judgment, and regard not the person in judgment;” how, saith He, condemn ye My disciples, while ye still admire as a saint and prophet the blessed David, although he did not keep Moses’ command? But by the loaves (of the shewbread), there is clearly indicated to us the bread that cometh down from heaven to be set forth upon the holy tables of the churches: and all the furniture of the table, used for the performance of its mystical service, was a plain type of the divine treasures. But spiritually [the bread signifies] the twelve Apostles: of whom we shall speak in duo order, when our discourse reaches the disciples themselves.

FROM SERMON XXIII. Explanation of what follows.

[From the Syriac, as before.] But God said, I require mercy, and not sacrifice: and the acknowledgment of God, and not whole burnt offerings. What is meant by mercy? and what by sacrifice? By mercy then is signified, Justification and grace in Christ: even that which is by faith. For we have been justified, not by the works of the law that we have done, but by His great mercy. And sacrifice means the law of Moses. 6:6. And He was teaching: and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. [From Mai.] But His teaching was ever of things too high for reason, and such as made plain to His hearers the pathway of salvation opened through Him: and immediately after His teaching He displayed His godlike power, having first by words smoothed, as it were, the road to belief. For the miracle sometimes converts unto faith those who had disbelieved the word. But the Pharisees watched Him, to see if He would heal on the sabbath: for such is the nature of an envious man, that he makes the praises of others food for his own disease, and wickedly is maddened by their reputation. And what once more said He to this, Who knoweth all things, Who searcheth the hearts, and understandeth whatever is therein? ”For with Him is the light,” as Scripture declares. ”He spake to him that had the withered hand, Stand forth into the midst.” And why did He do this? It might perhaps be to move the cruel and unpitying Pharisee to compassion: the man’s malady perhaps might shame them, and persuade them to allay the flames of envy.

6:9. I will ask you something: Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil?

Most wise in very deed is this question, and a statement most suitable to meet their folly. For if it be lawful to do good on the sabbath, and nothing prevents the sick being pitied by God, cease thus picking up opportunities for faultfinding against Christ, and bringing down on thy own head the sentence which the Father has decreed against those who dishonour the Son: for thou hast heard Him where He says of Him by the voice of David, ”And I will cut off His enemies from before His face, and put to flight those that hate Him.” But if it be not lawful to do good on the sabbath, and the law forbids the saving of life, thou hast made thyself an accuser of the law, thou hast slandered the commandment, for which the ministry of Moses is regarded with admiration. No, he replies, the God of all did not enact the law of the sabbath for Himself, but for us rather, whose neck is bowed to it. Thou sayest well; I assent to thy words; therefore that which is divine is free from the compulsion of the law. Why, then, dost thou blame Christ for wishing also to shew mercy on the sabbath, and benefit a living soul? And were it our wish to examine closely the law enacted for the sabbath, we should find it ordained by God for purposes of mercy. For He commanded to do no work on the sabbath, and entirely to abstain from labour, and even to give rest at the same time to the irrational animals. For He said, that its purpose was, ”that thy manservant may rest, and thy maidservant, thy ox, and thy beast of burden, and all thy cattle.” But He Who has mercy on the ox and other animals, how would not He pity on the sabbath day a man who was attacked by a severe and irremediable malady?

6:11. And they ware filled with madness. Is not the miracle enough to produce faith? Thou seest Him working with godlike dignity, and with supreme power healing the sick, and travaillest thou with murder, bred of envy and malice? 6:12. He went out into the mountain to pray. All that Christ did was for our edification, and for the benefit of those who believe in Him; and by proposing to us His own conduct as a sort of pattern of the spiritual mode of life, He would make us true worshippers. Let us see, therefore, in the pattern and example provided for us by Christ’s acts, the manner in which we ought to make our supplications unto God. We must pray secretly and in concealment, and with no one seeing us: for this is the signification of Jesus going into the mountain alone, and praying, as it were, leisurely. And this He has Himself taught us, saying; ”But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet.” For we ought to pray, not seeking after glory, but ”lifting up holy hands,” while the soul, as it were, mounts aloft to the contemplation of God, withdrawing from all tumult, and quitting worldly anxiety. And this we must do not with fickleness, nor with a listless feebleness; but, on the contrary, with earnestness and zeal, and a patience worthy of admiration: for thou hast heard that Jesus did not merely pray, but that He also passed the night in this duty.

But possibly the enemy of the truth will not endure us when thus speaking: for he says, 'He prays and requests from the Father what He hath not: how then do yo still say, that He is both consubstantial and equal to Him in all things, and in no way whatsoever unlike Him? "For without all controversy the less is blessed of the greater: and decidedly he who gives is greater than he who makes request to receive something.' Let then those who pervert the right faith teach us first of all, of what they imagine the Son to be in need? And what did He seek to obtain as not as yet possessing it? He is the true light; He is in His own nature life, and the cause of life; He is the Lord also of powers; He is wisdom and righteousness; the Creator and train or of the universe; superior to every thing that has been brought into being; is the King of the universe; the dispenser of heaven and earth; the giver, with God the Father, of every blessing. And this thou wilt learn by what the blessed Paul has somewhere written; "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. He is conspicuous on the throne far above, and is glorified by the whole rational creation. Accordingly He is by substance the heir of all the divine dignities of God the Father: and therefore spake He unto Him, that "all that is Mine is Thine; and Thine Mine:

and I am glorified in them. But He Who has every thing that belongs to God the Father as His very own, of what is He still in need? But if, in fine, He is in need of any thing, and they affirm that this is true, there is nothing to prevent our saying, that there are certain things of which the Father Himself is in need. For if all that the Son has is the Father's, but there is something of which the Son is in need, therefore must the Father too be similarly circumstanced: for all that the Son hath is the Father's. But the Father is all perfect, and is deficient of no good whatsoever that is suitable to Deity: therefore is the Son all perfect, as having all that the Father hath, and being His image and the impress of His substance: but in the impress there is displayed entirely the original form, and in the original form there exists entirely the impress. And thus much then as respects them.

And those too who have been caught by the empty declamations of Nestorius, say that it is entirely unbefitting the Son, considered as God by nature, to pray: and rather belongs to the man, coupled with Him by way of connexion, to him, that is, of the seed of David. He it was therefore who offered up the prayer. What reply, then, shall we make to this? That ye are utterly ignorant of the mystery of the incarnation of the Only-begotten. Remember the blessed Evangelist John, who says; "And the Word was made flesh." And of this the all-wise Paul has given us a plain proof by saying concerning Him: "For He taketh not hold at all of the angels, but taketh hold of the seed of Abraham: whence it became Him to be made like unto His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining unto God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." On what account therefore does Nestorius eject from the measure of human nature Him Who, though divinely begotten as the Word by God the Father, yet humbled

Himself unto emptying, even to becoming our brother, by being made like unto us, and similar in all things to the inhabitants of the earth, sin only excepted? For having become like unto us from His exceeding gentleness and love to mankind, He disdains not human things: but sets before us His conduct as a type of goodness unto the end, that as I said we may be earnest in following His footsteps.

6:13. And when it was day, He called His disciples, and of them having chosen twelve.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, having spent the night in prayer, and having conversed with His Father and God in heaven in a way ineffable and beyond our powers of understanding, and such as is known solely to Himself,----even therein making Himself an example unto us of that which is necessary for salvation; for He taught us in what way we too may rightly and blamelessly offer our prayers:----comes down from the mountain, and appoints those who were to be the world's teachers, according to the words He spake, "Ye are the light of the world. And of this appointment of the holy Apostles, the blessed David also makes mention, addressing himself, as it were, to Christ: "Thou shalt make them rulers over all the earth; they shall make mention of Thy name in every successive generation. For verily, while they were in the body, they made mention of the glory of Christ, telling His mystery both in cities and villages: and now that they have been called to the mansions that are above, none the less do they still even thus converse with us about Him, by the most wise history which they have written concerning Him. And those, indeed, who were appointed priests according to the law of Moses, even Aaron and his company, were made beautiful to the senses by vestments suitable to their priestly dignity; but the divine disciples, being adorned with spiritual gifts, had entrusted to them the ministry of the Gospel oracles. For it was said unto them, "Heal the sick: cast out daemons:

cleanse lepers: raise the dead. And being thus invested with Christ's power, they have filled the whole world with astonishment. But mark the extreme moderation of the Evangelist: for he does not simply say that the holy Apostles were appointed, but rather, by introducing the record of these chief ones each by name, takes care that no one should venture to enrol himself in the company of those that were chosen. For as Paul saith, "No man taketh this honour upon himself, but he that is called by God. And though the holy Apostles were called by name to this great and splendid dignity, yet from time to time some men have gone to such a pitch of madness and audacity, as even to name themselves Apostles of Christ, and to usurp an honour not granted unto them. Of these the divine disciples have made mention; for they say, "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into angels of righteousness. And no wonder: for Satan even transforms himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also transform themselves into angels of righteousness. But we neither acknowledge nor will

receive any one, except those only so named in the Evangelic writings, and him who was appointed after them, the most wise Paul: to whom also the Saviour Himself bore witness, saying, that he is a vessel of election for Me, to carry My name before all the heathen."

The law indeed pointed them out before in type, and the prophets also proclaimed them. As, for instance, it is written in the Mosaic record, "And ye shall take fine flour, and make it into twelve loaves: and he shall put them in two rows upon the pure table before the Lord. And ye shall put upon the row frankincense and salt: and they shall be for loaves, sot before the Lord for a memorial. For the bread that came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world, Who else can it be but Christ the Saviour of the universe? And in imitation too of Him, the blessed disciples also are named loaves: for having been made partakers of Him Who nourishes us unto life eternal, they also nourish by their own writings those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. And as the Saviour Who is the true light called the disciples also light:----"for ye are the light of the world:"----so also being Himself the broad of life, He has bestowed upon His disciples to be ranked as loaves. And observe, I pray, the marvellous art of the law: "for ye shall put, it says, upon the loaves frank-incense and salt. Now the frankincense is the symbol of a sweet odour; and the salt that of understanding and good sense: both of which existed in the highest degree in the holy Apostles. For their life was one of a sweet savour, as they also said, that "we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God:

and they were moreover also full of understanding, so that I hear the prophet David even singing of them in the Psalms: "There is Benjamin in entrancement: the princes of Judah are their leaders: the princes of Zebulon, the princes of Nephthalim. For the blessed disciples were chosen out of almost every tribe of Israel, and were the bearers of light to the world, "holding up the word of life. And the wonder indeed is this, that the sages of the Greeks possess a splendid copiousness of speech, and an admirable beauty of language: but the disciples of our Saviour were mere artificers, and boatmen, and fishers, having no boast of words, no fluency of picked phrases, and in expression indeed were simple men, but rich in knowledge: yet is the literature of the Greeks, with its sonorous phrases, silent; while the power of the Evangelic preaching has possession of the world. God also makes mention of them by the voice of Jeremiah, saying of the enemy of all, even Satan; "Woe to him, who multiplieth for himself that which is not his, and maketh his collar thick and heavy: for suddenly shall they arise that shall bite him, and thy adversaries shall wake up, and thou shalt be their prey. For Satan had gathered unto him all the inhabitants of the earth, though they were not his, and had caused them to be his worshippers, making his collar heavy: but those who were to plunder his goods woke up:

for the net of the apostolic teaching caught all those that were in error, and brought back unto God the whole world.

FROM SERMON XXV. Explanation of the saying of the Apostle that follows. Be ye like unto me, as I also am unto Christ. AND how was the wise Paul like unto Christ? Did he establish the heavens, as did the Word of God? Did he set the earth upon its firm foundation, and bring forth the sun and moon, and the stars, and light? How therefore was he like Him? By being an imitator of that human virtue, which Christ shewed forth for our example. 6:17. He stood upon level ground, and a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of the people. But observe, I pray, the manner of the election. For the most wise Evangelist says that it was not done in a corner and secretly, but rather when many disciples were gathered together, and a vast crowd from all the country of the Jews, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon. These latter were idolaters, lame in the hollow of both knees, in part observingthe customs of the Jews, but yet not altogether abandoning their idolatrous practices. The election, therefore, was held in the presence of all these spectators, and teachers appointed for all beneath the heaven: and this duty they also fulfilled, summoning the Jews from their legal worship, and those who served demons, from Grecian error to the acknowledgment of the truth.

And when He had appointed the holy Apostles, He performed very many wonderful miracles, rebuking demons, delivering from incurable diseases whosoever drew near unto Him, and displaying His own most godlike power: that both the Jews, who had run together unto Him, and those from the country of the Greeks, might know, that Christ, by Whom they were honoured with the dignity of the Apostolate, was not some ordinary man of those in our degree, but, on the contrary, God, as being the Word That was made man, but retained, nevertheless, His own glory. For ”power went forth from Him, and healed all.” For Christ did not borrow strength from some other person, but being Himself God by nature, even though He had become flesh, He healed them all, by the putting forth of power over the sick. If further you wish to learn the interpretation of the Apostles’ names, know that Peter is explained as meaning ”loosing,” or ”knowing:” Andrew as ”comely strength,” or ”answering:” James as ”one who takes labour by the heel:” John, ”the grace of the Lord:” Matthew, ”given:” Philip, ”the opening of the hands,” or ”the mouth of a lamp:” Bartholomew, ”the son suspending water:” Thomas, an ”abyss,” or ”a twin:” James, the son of Alphaeus, ”the supplanting ”of the passage of life:” Judas, ”thanksgiving:” and Simon, ”obedience.”

[Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

Introduction

FROM SERMON XXVII. Explanation of what follows.
6:20. Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. [From the Syriac] Those are the Saviour's words, when directing His disciples into the newness of the Gospel life after their appointment to the apostolate. But we must see of what poor it is that He speaks such great things: for in the Gospel according to Matthew it is written, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:" wishing us to understand by the poor in spirit the man who entertains lowly thoughts of himself, and whoso mind, so to speak, is closely reefed, and hi3 heart gentle, and ready to yield, and entirely free from the guilt of pride.

[From Mai.] Such a one is worthy of admiration, and the friend of God; yea, He even said by one of the holy prophets; "Upon whom will I look but upon the humble and peaceable, and that trembleth at my words?" And the prophet David also said, that "a contrite and humbled heart God will not set at nought." Moreover, the Saviour Himself also says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble in heart." In the lessons, however, now set before us, He says, that the poor shall be blessed, without the addition of its being in spirit. But the Evangelists so speak, not as contradicting one another, but as dividing oftentimes the narrative among them: and at one time they recapitulate the same particulars, and at another that which has been omitted by one, another includes in his narrative, that nothing essential for their benefit may be hidden from those who believe on Christ.----[From the Syriac.] It seems likely, therefore, that He here means by the poor, whom He pronounces blessed, such as care not for wealth, and are superior to covetousness, and despisers of base gifts, and of a disposition free from the love of money, and who set no value upon the ostentatious display of riches.

And so the most wise Paul manifestly guides us into the best doctrines, where he says, "Let your disposition be free from the love of money, being contented with what it has:" and to this he has added, that "having nourishment and the means of shelter, we will be therewith content." For it was necessary, absolutely necessary, for those whose business it would be to proclaim the saving message of the Gospel to have a mind careless about wealth, and occupied solely with the desire of better

things. The argument, however, does not affect all whose means are abundant, but those only whose desire is set upon riches: and who are these? All to whom our Saviour's words apply: "Store not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth." 6:21. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled.

In Matthew, however, again He says; "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled:" but here He simply says, that "those that hunger shall be filled." We say, therefore, that it is a great and noble thing to hunger and thirst after righteousness: that is, habitually to take part in earnest endeavours after piety:----for such is the meaning of righteousness:----as if it were our meat and drink. And inasmuch as we ought to give to this passage also a meaning, in accordance with the foregoing explanations, we say again as follows: The Saviour pronounced those blessed who love a voluntary poverty, to enable them honourably, and without distraction, to practise the apostolic course of life. For it is in plain keeping with the having neither gold nor silver in their purses, nor two coats, to endure also very great hardness in their way of life, and scarcely obtain food for their need. But this is a burdensome thing for those who are suffering poverty and persecutions, and therefore He That knoweth hearts, very suitably does not permit us to be dispirited because of the results of poverty: for He says, that those who hunger now for their piety's sake towards Him shall be filled: that is, they shall enjoy the intellectual and spiritual blessings that are in store.

6:21. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh. [From the Syriac.] He pronounces them that weep blessed, and says that they shall laugh. But by those who weep, we say that those are not meant who simply shed tears from their eyes: for this is a thing common to all without exception, whether believers or unbelievers, if ought happen of a painful nature; but those rather who shun a life of merriment and vanity, and carnal pleasures. ----[From Mai.] For of the one we say, that they live in enjoyment and laughter; whereas believers abandoning luxury and the careless life of carnal pleasures, and all but weeping because of their abhorrence of worldly things, are, our Saviour declares, blessed; and for this reason, as having commanded us to choose poverty, He also crowns with honours the things which necessarily accompany poverty: such, for instance, as the want of things necessary for enjoyment, and the lowness of spirits caused by privation: for it is written, that "many are the privations of the just, and the Lord shall deliver them out of them all."

6:22. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you.

Already did the Lord mention persecution, even before the Apostles had been sent on their mission. The Gospel anticipated what would happen. For it was altogether to be expected that those who proclaimed the Gospel message, and made the Jews abandon their legal mode of worship to learn the Gospel way of virtuous living, while too they won over idolaters to the acknowledgment of the truth, would come

in contact with many impious and unholy men. For such are they who, in their enmity against piety, excite wars and persecutions against those who preach Jesus. To prevent them, therefore, from falling into unreasonable distress whenever the time should arrive at which such events were sure to befal them from some quarter or other, He forewarns them for their benefit, that even the assault of things grievous to bear will bring its reward and advantage to them. For they shall reproach you, He says, as deceivers, and as trying to mislead: they shall separate you from them, even from their friendship and society: but let none of these things trouble you, He says: for what harm will their intemperate tongue do a well-established mind? For the patient suffering of these things, will not be without fruit. He says, to those who know how to endure piously, but is the pledge of the highest happiness. And besides, He points out to them for their benefit, that nothing strange will happen unto them, even when suffering these things: but that, on the contrary, they will resemble those who before their time were the bearers to the Israelites of the words that came from God above. They were persecuted, they were sawn asunder, they perished slain by the sword, they endured reproaches unjustly cast upon them. He would therefore have them also understand that they shall be partakers with those whose deeds they have imitated; nor shall they fail in winning the prophet’s crown, after having travelled by the same road.

SERMON XXIX.

(6:24) [From the Syriac. MS.14,551.] * * * * * * * * receive those things that will lead you unto life eternal. For it is written, that ”man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that goeth forth from the mouth of God.” All Scripture, indeed, is inspired of God; but this is especially true of the proclamations in the Gospels: for He Who in old time delivered unto the Israelites by the ministry of Moses the law that consisted in types and shadows, the very same having become man spake unto us, as the wise Paul testifies, writing; ”God, Who in divers manners spake in old time to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son:” and ”we are taught of God:” for Christ is in truth God and the Son of God. Let us therefore fix our careful attention upon what He says: and scrupulously examine the very depth of His meaning. For ”Woe, He says, unto you rich, in that ye have received your consolation.”

Very fitly is this added to His previous discourse: for having already shewn that poverty for God’s sake is the mother of every blessing, and said that the hungering and weeping of the saints would not be without a reward, He proceeds to speak of the opposite class of things, and says of them, that they are productive of grief and condemnation. For He blames indeed the rich, and those who indulge immoderately in pleasures, and are ever in merriment, in order that He may leave no means untried of benefitting those who draw near unto Him, and chief of all the holy Apostles. For if the endurance of poverty for God’s sake, together with hunger and tears:----by which is meant the being exposed to pain and afflictions in the cause of piety:----be profitable before God, and He pronounce a threefold blessedness on those who embrace them; as a necessary consequence, those are liable to the utmost blame, who have prized the vices, that are the opposites of these virtues.

In order therefore that men may be won by the desire of the crowns of reward unto willingness to labour, and voluntary poverty for God’s sake; and, on the other hand, by fear of the threatened punishment, may flee from riches, and from living in luxury and merriment, that is to say, in worldly amusements, He says that the one are heirs of the kingdom of heaven, but that the others will be involved in the

utmost misery: ”for ye have received, He says, your consolation.” And this truth we are permitted to behold beautifully delineated in the Gospel parables like as in a painting. For we have heard read that there was a rich man decked in purple and fine linen , at whose gate Lazarus was cast, racked with poverty and pain; and the rich man felt no pity for him.----But Lazarus, it says, was carried to Abraham’s bosom; while he was in torments and in flame. And when he saw Lazarus at rest and in happiness in Abraham’s bosom, he besought saying, ”Father Abraham have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” But what was blessed Abraham’s reply? ”Son, thou hast received thy good things in thy life, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is here in happiness, and thou art tormented.” True therefore is what is here said by Christ of those who live in wealth and luxury and merriment, that ”ye have received your consolation:” and of those who now are full, that they shall hunger, and that those who laugh now shall weep and lament.

But come and let us examine the matter among ourselves. Our Saviour in His parables has thus spoken: ”Two men went up unto the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. And the Pharisee forsooth prayed saying, God I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of mankind, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; or like this publican. I fast twice in the week: and I pay tithes of all that I possess. But the publican, He says, did not venture to lift up his eyes unto heaven, but stood smiting his breast and saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. Verily I say unto you, that this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.” For the proud Pharisee was boasting over the publican, and indecently assuming the rank of a lawgiver, would have condemned one, on whom it was rather his duty to have shewn pity: but the other was the accuser of his own infirmity, and thereby aided in his own justification; for it is written, ”Declare thou thy sins first, that thou mayest be justified.” Let us therefore unloose, that is, set free those who are suffering sicknesses from having been condemned by us, in order that God may also unloose us from our faults: for He condemneth not, but rather sheweth mercy.

Closely neighbouring, so to speak, upon the virtues which we have just mentioned is compassion, of which He next makes mention. For it is a most excelling thing, and very pleasing to God, and in the highest degree becoming to pious souls: and concerning which it may suffice for us to imprint upon our mind that it is an attribute of the divine nature. ”For be ye, He says, merciful, as also your heavenly Father is merciful. But that we shall be recompensed with bountiful hand by God, Who giveth all things abundantly to them that love Him, He has given us full assurance by saying, that ”good measure, and squeezed down, and running over shall they give into your bosom: adding this too, ”for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. There is however an apparent incompatibility between the two declarations: for if we are to receive ”good measure, and squeezed down, and running over,” how ”shall we be paid back the same measure wherewith we mete? for

this implies an equal recompense, and not one of far-surpassing abundance. What say we then? The all wise Paul frees us from our difficulties, by bringing us the solution of the matters in question. For he says, that ”he that soweth sparingly, meaning thereby, that he who distributeth the necessaries of life to those who are in penury and affliction moderately, and so to speak, with contracted hand, and not plentifully and largely,” shall also reap sparingly:

and he ”that soweth in blessings, in blessings shall also reap. By which is meant, he who bountifully * * * * * [From Mai] So that if anyone hath not, he has not sinned by not giving it; for a man is acceptable according to that which he hath, and not according to that which he hath not. [From the Syriac. And this the law of the very wise Moses has taught us in type: for those that were under the law brought sacrifices to God according to what they severally possessed, and were able to afford: some for instance bullocks, and some rams, or sheep, or doves, or pigeons, or meal mingled with oil, but even he who offered this * *, because he had no calf to offer, though so little and to be procured so cheaply, was equal to the other as regards his intention.

FROM SERMON XXIX. Explanation of what is below.
From the Syriac. MS.12,154. 6:24. Woe unto you rich; For ye have received your consolation. This too we must discuss among ourselves: For is it the case, that every one who is rich, and possesses abundant wealth, is determinately cut off from the expectation of God’s grace? Is he entirely shut out from the hope of the saints? Has he neither inheritance nor part with them that are crowned? Not so, we say, hut rather on the contrary, that the rich man might have shewn mercy on Lazarus, and so have been made partaker of his consolation. For the Saviour pointed out a way of salvation to those who possess earthly wealth, saying, ”Make unto yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon, that when ye depart this life they may receive you into their tents.” Love your enemies.

[From Mai.] The blessed Paul speaks the truth where he says, that ”if any one be in Christ, he is a new creation:” for all things have become new, both in Him and by Him, both covenant, and law, and mode of life. But look closely and see how thoroughly the mode of life here described becomes those holy teachers, who were about to proclaim the message of salvation to every quarter of the world: and yet from this very fact they must expect that their persecutors would be beyond numbering, and that they would plot against them in many different ways, if then the result had been that the disciples had become indignant at these vexations, and wished for vengeance on those that annoyed them, they would have kept silence and passed them by, no longer offering them the divine message, nor calling them to the knowledge of the truth. It was necessary therefore to restrain the mind of the holy teachers by so solemn a sense of the duty of patience, as to make them bear with fortitude whatever might befal, oven though men insulted them, yea and

plotted against them impiously. And such was the conduct of Christ Himself above all others for our example: for while still hanging upon the precious cross, with the Jewish populace making Him their sport, He put up unto God the Father prayers in their behalf, saying, ”Forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Yea, and the blessed Stephen too, while the stones wore smiting him, knelt down, and prayed, saying, ”Lord, lay not this sin upon them.” And the blessed Paul also says, ”being reproached we bless, being reviled we entreat.”

The exhortation of our Lord therefore was necessary for the holy apostles, and most useful for us also, to oblige us to live rightly and admirably: for it is full of all philosophy . But our mistaken preconceived ideas, and the fierce tyranny of our passions, render it a thing difficult for our minds to accomplish: and therefore knowing that the natural man does not admit of these things, regarding as folly and mere impossibilities the oracles of the Spirit, He separates such from those able to hear, and says, ”I speak unto you that hear and are prepared readily to perform My words.” For the gloriousness of spiritual fortitude is displayed in temptations and labours. Imitate therefore in these things Christ, ”Who when He was reviled, reviled not again, suffering He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” But perhaps thou wilt object, saying within thyself, ’Christ was God, but I a frail man, having but a feeble mind, and one unable to resist the attack of covetousness and pain.’ Thou speakest rightly: for the mind of man easily slides into wrong doing. Nevertheless, I say, The Lord has not left thee destitute of His compassion and love: thou hast Him by thee, yea within thee, by the Holy Ghost: for we are His abode, and He lodgeth in the souls of them that love Him. He gives thee strength to bear nobly whatever befals, and to resist manfully the attacks of temptations. ”Be not overcome therefore by the evil, but overcome the evil in the good.”

6:29. To him that striketh thee on the cheek, offer also the other. That Christ is the end of the law and the prophets, is declared by the most wise Paul: for the law served as a schoolmaster to guide men unto His mystery. ”But now that faith has come, as the blessed Paul has again himself said, we are no longer under a guide: for no longer are we children in mind, but, on the contrary, have grown up to the perfect man, to the measure of the mature age of the fulness of Christ.” We do not therefore require milk, but rather, food of a more solid nature, such as Christ bestows upon us, by setting before us the pathway of that righteousness which surpasses the power of the law. For He said Himself to the holy apostles, ”Verily I say unto you, except your righteousness be over and above, more than of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” This then it is necessary to discuss, what, namely, is meant by the ”over and above” in the righteousness in accordance with the saving message of the Gospel.

The law spoken by Moses to them of old time enacted like for like: and while it forbade the doing a wrong, it by no means commanded those who had already been injured to bear patiently, as the Gospel law requires. For it says, ”Thou shalt not kill: thou shalt not steal: thou shalt not forswear thyself.” But to this is added, ”Eye for eye, hand for hand, foot for foot, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.” Such an enactment required a man not to injure others; and supposing him to have sustained an injury, that his anger at the wrong doer must not go beyond an equal retribution. But the general bearing of the legal mode of life was by no means pleasing to God; it was even given to those of old time as a schoolmaster, accustoming them by little and little to a fitting righteousness, and leading them on gently to the possession of the perfect good. For it is written, ”To do what is just is the beginning of the good way:” but finally, all perfection is in Christ, and His precepts. ”For to him that striketh thee. He saith, on the check, offer also the other.” In this there is pointed out to us the pathway to the highest degree of patience. But He wills besides, that we pay no regard to riches; so that even if a man have but one outer garment, he must not count it a thing unendurable to put off with it also his undergarment, if it so befal. But this is a virtue possible only for a mind entirely turned away from covetousness: for ”do not, He says, ask back whatever any one taketh away that is thine: but even give to every one that asketh of thee:” a proof indeed of love and willingness to be poor; and the compassionate man must necessarily also be ready to forgive, so as to shew friendly acts even to his enemies.

6:31. As ye wish that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them. It was probable however that the holy apostles would perchance think these things difficult to put into practice: He therefore Who knoweth all things takes the natural law of self-love as the arbiter of what any one would wish to obtain from another. Shew thyself, He says, to others such as thou wishest them to be towards thee. If thou wouldest have them harsh and unfeeling, fierce and wrathful, revengeful and ill-disposed, shew thyself also such: but if on the contrary thou wouldst have them kind and forgiving, do not think it a thing intolerable to be thyself so. And in the case of those so disposed, the law is perchance unnecessary, because God writes upon our hearts the knowledge of His will: ”for in those days, saith the Lord, I will surely give My laws into their mind, and will write them on their heart.”

6:36. Be ye therefore merciful. Great is the glory of compassion, and so verily it is written, that ”man is a great thing, and the merciful man an honourable thing.” For virtue restores us to the form of God, and imprints on our souls certain characters as it were of the supreme nature. 6:37. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.

He cuts away from our minds a very unmanageable passion, the commencement and begetter of pride. For while it is men’s duty to examine themselves, and to order their conduct according to God’s will, they leave this alone to busy themselves

with the affairs of others: and if they see any infirm, forgetting as it seems their own frailties, they make it an excuse for faultfinding, and a handle for calumny. For they condemn them, not knowing that being equally afflicted with the same infirmities as those whom they censure, they condemn themselves. For so also the most wise Paul writes, ”for wherein thou judgest the other, thou condemnest thyself: for thou that judgest doest the same things.” And yet it were rather our duty to have compassion on the infirm, as those who have been overcome by the assaults of the passions, and entangled without hope of escape in the meshes of sin, and to pray in their behalf, and exhort them, and rouse them up unto soberness, and endeavour ourselves not to fall into similar faults. ”For he that judgeth the brother, as the disciple of Christ saith, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law.” For the lawgiver and judge is One: for the judge of the sinning soul must be higher than that soul: but since them art not so, the sinner will object to thee as judge, ”why judgest thou thy neighbour?” But if thou venture to condemn him. having no authority thereto, it is thyself rather that will be condemned, inasmuch as the law permits thee not to judge others.

Whoever therefore is guided by good sense, does not look at the sins of others, nor busies himself about the faults of his neighbour, but closely scans his own misdoings. Such was the blessed Psalmist, falling down before God, and saying on account of his own offences, ”If Thou, O Lord, O Lord, closely regardest iniquities, who can endure?” And once again, putting forward the infirmity of human nature as an excuse, he supplicates for a not unreasonable pardon, saying, ”Remember that we are earth.” 6:39. And he spake a parable unto them. This parable He added as a most necessary appendage to what had been said. The blessed disciples were about to be the initiators and teachers of the world: it was necessary for them therefore to prove themselves possessed of every thing requisite for piety: they must know the pathway of the evangelic mode of life, and be workmen ready for every good work, and able to bestow upon well-instructed hearers such correct and saving teaching as exactly represents the truth. This they must do, as having already first received their sight, and a mind illuminated with the divine light, lest they should be blind leaders of the blind. For it is not possible for men enveloped in the darkness of ignorance, to guide those who are afflicted in the same way into the knowledge of the truth: for should they attempt it, they will both roll into the ditch of licentiousness.

Next, overthrowing the vaunting passion of boastfulness, to which most men give way, that they may not emulously strive to surpass their teachers in honour, He added; ”The disciple is not above his teacher;” and even if some make such progress, as to attain to a virtue that rivals that of their teachers, they will range themselves no higher than their level, and be their imitators. And Paul shall again be our warrant, saying, ”Be ye imitators of me, as I also am of Christ.” Since therefore the Teacher as yet judgeth not, why judgeth thou? For He came not to

judge the world, but to shew pity. And according to the foregoing explanation, if I, He says, judge not, neither must you the disciple. But if thou art guilty of worse crimes than those for which thou judgest another, how canst thou keep thyself from shame when thou art convicted of it? And this the Lord made plain by another parable.

SERMON XXXIII.

From the Syriac. MS. 14,551 6:41. ”And why, saith He, beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” Having previously shewn us that the judging others is utterly wicked and dangerous, and the cause of final condemnation:----for ”Judge not, He said, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.” He now by conclusive arguments persuades us to avoid the very wish of judging others: and rather to examine our own hearts, and try to free them from the passions that dwell within them, and their frailties, by asking it of God: for He it is Who healeth the broken in heart, and freeth us from the maladies of the soul. For if thou, He says, art thyself sick with maladies more dangerous and severe than those of others, why, neglecting thy own, dost thou find fault with them, and whilst thou hast a beam in thine own eye, commencest a hot accusation against those who have a mote? Tell me by what boldness doest thou this? Deliver thyself first from thy great crimes, and thy rebellious passions, and then thou mayest set him right who is guilty of but trifling faults.

Wouldst thou see the matter clearly and plainly, and that it is a very hateful thing for men to give way to this feeling? Our Lord was once walking on the sabbath day among the cornfields, and the blessed disciples plucked some ears, and rubbing them in their hands, ate the grains. But some Pharisees drew near, and say, ”Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on sabbath days!” And yet they themselves in manifold ways were guilty of disregarding the law altogether. For even the prophet Isaiah cried out against them, saying, ”How has the faithful city Zion become a harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it:----but now murderers. Your silver is reprobate; thy merchants mix the wine with water; thy princes are contentious, the partners of thieves, loving bribes, pursuing after recompense; they judge not the orphans, and to the widow’s suit they have no regard.” Yet these very men, themselves liable to these most severe reproaches, accused the disciples of breaking the sabbath!

But they met with just rebuke from Christ, Who said unto them; ”Woe unto you, scribes and pharisces, hypocrites! who tithe mint and cummin, and have neglected

the weighty matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith." And again, "Ye are they who strain out a gnat, but gulp down a camel." For while their teaching was of mere trifles, and they condemned the people under them for the most contemptible matters, they had the hardihood, as I said, to treat as of no consequence those weighty crimes. For this reason the Saviour called them "whitened sepulchres, which outside appear indeed to men to be beautiful, but inside are full of the bones of the dead, and of all unclcanness."----And such is every hypocrite: and whenever they would cast an imputation upon others, who have yielded to infirmity in any particular, deservedly will they have it said to them, "First cast out the beam from thine own eye, and then thou wilt see to cast out the mote from thy brother's eye."

The commandment, therefore, is indispensable for every one who would live piously: but, above all, for those who have been intrusted with the instruction of others. For if they are good and sober-minded, and enamoured of the elect life, and not merely acquainted with, but also practisers of virtuous arts, and setting in their own conduct the pattern of a holy life, they can with open countenance rebuke those who will not do the same, for not having imitated their example, nor imprinted their virtuous manners on themselves: but if they are careless, and quickly snared by pleasures to do evil, how can they blame others when similarly affected? Wisely, therefore, did the blessed disciples write, saying; "Let there not be many teachers among you, my brethren: for ye know that we shall receive greater condemnation." For as Christ, Who is the Distributor of the crowns, and the Punisher of those who do wrong, Himself says; "He who shall do and teach, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven: but he who hath not done, but hath taught, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven."

But I can imagine some one saying, How are we to distinguish the man who has a beam in his eye, but finds fault with those who have a mote, and are infirm only in part? But there is nothing difficult in this, He says; for any one who will, may see it easily: "for it is not a good tree that brings forth evil fruit: nor a good tree that brings forth good fruit: for every true is known by its fruit." Each man's actual life, therefore, is that which decides what are his morals: for it is not by mere outside adornments, and fictitious virtues that the beauty of the truly honourable life is delineated, but by the deeds a man does: for they are the fruits of a mind that for the love of piety chooses a blameless life. It is by deeds, therefore, and not by outside shew, that we must see who is the man truly approved, and who is not so. Again, Christ somewhere says, "Beware of those who come to you in the likeness of sheep, but within are ravenous wolves." See again, Christ commands that those who come unto us must be distinguished not by their clothing, but by what they really are. "For by its fruit, He says, the tree is known:" and just as it is ignorance and folly for us to expect to find the choicer kinds of fruits on thorns, grapes for instance, and figs; so it is ridiculous for us to imagine that we can find in hypocrites and the profane ought that is admirable, the nobleness, I mean, of virtue.

Wouldst thou see the truth of this again? Wouldst thou see who the wolves are that clothe themselves in the sheep's skin? Examine the writings of the holy Apostles: hear what they say of certain men: "For they who are such are false Aposties: deceitful workers, transforming themselves into angels of righteousness: and no wonder, for Satan even transforms himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also transform themselves into angels of righteousness." These one may well call thorns and briars: in such there is no particle of sweetness, but every thing that is bitter and of an evil nature: for the fig grows not on thorns; nor will one find any thing pleasant in them, for grapes are not produced on briars. We must decide, then, the character of the teacher, not by appearances, but by the acts of each one's life.

This is also made clear by another declaration of our Lord: "for the good man, He says, as out of a good treasure, poureth forth from the heart good things:" but he who is differently disposed, and whose mind is the prey of fraud and wickedness, necessarily brings forth what is concealed deep within. For the things that are in the mind and heart boil over, and are vomited forth by the outflowing stream of speech. The virtuous man, therefore, speaks such things as become his character, while he who is worthless and wicked vomits forth his secret impurity. Every thing, therefore, that is to our benefit, Christ teaches us, and requires His disciples to be on their guard against deceit, and vigilant and careful. For this reason He shews them the straight way, and discloses the snares that lead down to wickedness, that thus escaping from offences, and being steadfast in mind beyond risk of sin, they may quickly reach the mansions that are above by Christ's blessing: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXXIV.

6:46-49. But why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Every one that cometh unto Me, and heareth My words, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like. He is like a man building a house, who dug and made it deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when there was a flood, the river beat against that house, and could not shake it, because it was well built. But he that hath heard and not done, is like a man who built a house upon the earth without foundation, against which the river beat, and that moment it fell, and the fall of that house was great.

THERE is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," for so the wise Paul writeth. For both the name of lordship, and also the reality, are appropriate solely to that nature Which transcends all, and is supreme; even That Which is divine, and to be worshipped, as possessing and governing all things. For so Paul again somewhere says of Him; "For even, if there be Gods many and Lords many, in heaven or in earth; yet for us there is one God, the Father, from Whom is all, and we by Him: and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom is all, and we by Him." As therefore we acknowledge God the Word alone, Who reigneth with God the Father, as by nature and verily Lord, we accordingly give this name to Him. "But why, He asks, call ye Me indeed Lord, but do not the things which I say?" For if He possess no real authority, nor glory of lordship, but, on the contrary, it is conferred upon Him from without, and bestowed by favour, do not offer Him thy obedience: refuse His service: consent not to be subject unto Him. But if He be verily, and in its precise meaning Lord, and the whole nature of things created bow beneath His sceptre, and as a thing set under the feet of its Lord, then pay what is due: accept the yoke: and as being due, offer Him thy obedience; that thou mayest not hear Him blaming thee in words spoken by one of the holy prophets to them of old time; A son honoureth his father, and a servant his lord: if I then am a father, where is My honour? and if I am a lord, where is My fear? saith the Lord Almighty."

For come, and let us see by what takes place among us the blame to which we become liable by disobedience. We are ourselves accustomed to require of our servants obedience mingled with tear: and when they plan rebellion, and throw

off the yoke of servitude; we make them humble by bonds and tortures and the scourge. When therefore we, who are of earth, and by nature the brethren of those who are bowed beneath the yoke, cannot tolerate them when rebellious, how will God endure it;----He Whom principalities, thrones, and lordships worship: in Whose presence the high-exalted Seraphs stand, readily rendering their service? For the divine David somewhere says of them in the Psalms; ”Bless the Lord, all ye His angels, who hearken to the voice of His words. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts: His ministers, who do all of them His pleasure.” It is dangerous, therefore, and merits final condemnation, to be unwilling to submit to Christ the Almighty: but those who prize His service, shall receive the most excellent blessings. For He has said by one of the holy prophets to those who run away from His yoke, and will not submit to be set under His authority; ”Behold, they that serve Me shall eat; but ye shall suffer hunger: behold, they that serve Me shall drink; but ye shall suffer thirst: behold, they that serve Me shall exult; but ye shall mourn: behold, they that obey Me, shall be merry with joy; but ye shall cry out for the grief of your heart, and howl for contrition of your spirit.” Thou seest that the crown of those who bear the yoke of servitude is very beautiful, worthy of being acquired, and precious: while severe and manifold condemnation is decreed against the rest.

And yet again in another place thou mayest see that the true servant is adorned with surpassing honour, while the disobedient and careless is rejected with disgrace, or rather is banished to the outer darkness. For they who received the talents, and doubled for the owner what had been given them, were honoured by him with praises: for he said to each one of them, ”O good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will set thee over many things: enter the joy of thy lord.” But him who hid in the ground what had been given him, as not loving service and indolent, he condemned to severe and inevitable punishment. Elsewhere too He has said, ”Who then is that faithful and wise servant, whom his lord shall set over his household to give them meat at its season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord shall come and find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath.”

Those therefore who keep our Saviour’s will are made glorious, and worthy of emulation, and adorned with praises for their fidelity: yea, moreover, they have a name given them, for He has said again of them in a certain place, ”On them that serve Me, there shall be called a new name, even That Which is blessed upon earth.” And there is yet another point which I think must be added to what has been already said, namely, that by being willing to submit to our Saviour’s words and serve Him, we shall gain in return the honour of freedom by His decree. For He said to those that believe in Him, ”If ye abide in My Word, ye are truly My disciples, and ye shall acknowledge the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” We gain therefore the glory of freedom by subjection: that is, by servitude under Him. This makes us sons and heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Christ: of which He again shall be thy

proof, saying; ”that every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin: but the servant abideth not in the house for ever. If therefore the Son make you free, ye are really free.”

The being willing therefore to serve is that which invites us to freedom, and the honour which is the especial prerogative of sons: but disobedience humbles us to a base and ignominious servitude, if it be true, as true certainly it is, that ”every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin.”

But yes! says some one, obedience unto Christ’s service is a most excellent thing, and highly to be appreciated; but it is by no means an easy matter: for there is much that stands in the way, and is able to exhaust our zeal. Yes, so say I too:----for first of all Satan resists whatever is excellent:----and the flesh, in its fondness for pleasure, strives against the Spirit, ”for they are contrary one to the other,” according to the expression of the wise Paul: and the law of sin that is in the members, savagely and very bitterly makes opposition. For I know that Paul, who was instructed in the law, excellently discusses these questions. For he said, ”For I rejoice in the law of God in the inner man: but I see another law warring against the law of the mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, that is in my members.” And again; ”I therefore in my mind serve indeed the law of God, but in my flesh the law of sin.” And besides this, there is a certain powerful inclination of the mind of man, which makes the will wander after pleasures: and engenders the delights of worldly lusts, and leads it away from the wish to labour in the cause of virtue. Shall we, therefore, on this account, refuse our service? Is He ever seen to command ought that is impossible, and that cannot be done? Does He demand of us anything that exceeds the limits of our nature? And who would venture to say this? For certainly He adapts to our minds whatever is commanded. When, therefore, thou tellest me of the difficulty of obedience,

I tell thee also: Do those things that are great and excellent come of themselves? or do those who seek to win them succeed without toil? or, on the contrary, are they attained to by earnestness and labours? Who are the men that in the conflicts of the palestra are accustomed to win the crown? Is it those who have entirely devoted themselves to skill in the art of wrestling, and have gone through bitter toils? for ”they endure all things,” according to the expression of St. Paul: or, on the contrary, is it the indolent and luxurious, and those entirely unacquainted with what is suitable for athletes? Who of those that till the ground have their threshing-floor full of sheaves? Is it such as neglect ploughing, and will not undertake the severe toil of the mattock: or, on the contrary, is it the diligent and industrious, and such as apply themselves to the labours necessary for ensuring a prolific crop? The answer is known, even if no one speak it; that it is with those who are willing to labour, and not with those whose wont it is to be at ease, that a life of happiness is to be found, and nothing wanting for a tranquil existence. The Psalmist also bears

witness, in a passage where he makes mention of the tillers of the ground as an exemplification of something else, ”They went out, and that with tears, carrying their seed: but they shall surely come with joy bringing their sheaves.” Joy therefore is the fruit of labour.

Moreover, the Lord Himself somewhere quickens us for the love of exertion in every praiseworthy pursuit, by saying, ”Enter at the strait gate: because narrow is the gate, and strait the way that leadeth unto life; but broad and wide is that which leadeth down those that run thereon unto destruction.” Observe therefore that the end of that strait path leadeth unto life, while the easy descent of the broad way sends men to the flame and never-ending torments.

If therefore we call Christ, the Saviour of us all. Lord, let us do the things which He says. For He teaches us Himself what the benefit is of our being willing to do that which is commanded: and what the loss of our refusing to obey: for He says, ”Every one that heareth My words and doeth them, is like a man who builds a house, and firmly places its foundations upon the rock:” while he who does not obey, he also is like a man building a house, but who has taken no care for its stability. For he who is obedient and tractable holds a thoroughly firm position in every thing that is honourable and good, by reason of his being not so much a hearer of the law, as a doer of its works: he resembles therefore a house firmly settled, and having a foundation that cannot be shaken, so that, even though temptations press upon him, and the savageness of the passions that dwell within us assail him like some winter torrent, or a waterflood, he will sustain no serious loss. But he who merely inclines his ear to what Christ saith, but stores nothing up in his mind, nor performs anything that is commanded, he, on the other hand, is like a house just ready to fall. For he will be led away at once into things unseemly whenever pleasure allures him, and leads him into the pitfalls of sin.

The service therefore of Christ invites us, as we affirm, unto every blessing: and if we will blamelessly fulfil it, Christ will crown us with His grace; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXXV.

7:1-10. And when He had ended all His words in the hearing of the people, He entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant who was dear unto him was sick, and near to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him elders of the Jews, beseeching Him to come and save his servant. And when they came unto Jesus, they besought Him earnestly, saying, that he is worthy that Thou shouldst grant this unto him: for he loveth our nation, and hath also built us himself a synagogue. And Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far distant from the house, the centurion sent his friends unto Him, saying unto Him, Lord, trouble not Thyself; for I am not sufficient that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: therefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but speak only with a word, and my child will be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And when Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned Himself, and said to the multitude that followed Him, I say unto you, that I have not found so great faith even in Israel. And when they who had been sent returned unto the house, they found the servant whole.

THE wise Evangelist filleth our minds with sacred lessons, and endeavours to throw abundant light upon whatever makes our faith assured: for this is the object of his tidings concerning Christ. Very appropriately therefore he introduces Him as at one time teaching the holy Apostles things superior to the service enacted in the law, and pointing out to them a path new and untrodden by them of old time of the conversation that becometh saints: and at another, he very beautifully displays to us the manifestation of a godlike power, in order that in every way it may be known that the Only-begotten Word of the Father is very God even though He became flesh, that is, man,----" and produces every thing by the word of his power:"----as is proved unto us by the examination of what is written concerning Him.

When then, so to speak, he had satiated the holy Apostles with the most perfect doctrines, and had set before them a banquet of evangelical commands, and had mingled the wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and very clearly told them the

means by which they would become triumphant and praiseworthy, He goes down to Capernaum. And there also He works a great and wonderful deed, worthy of the greatness of His majesty: there a glorious theatre was moved with astonishment, in which angels and men were spectators. For Israel is rebuked, and is dull of understanding, and unready for faith: while the multitude of the heathen, in mind at least, is ready thoroughly both to understand and believe: so that Christ is seen by just decree rejecting His servant Israel, while He accepts and honours and crowns by His grace those who of old served the creature apart from the Creator: who were in gloom and darkness, and without the knowledge of God: and had bowed the neck of their slavish mind to the wickedness of demons.

What, then, was that which was accomplished, or what was the miracle? There was a pious man, distinguished for the excellence of his conduct, and the commander of a body of soldiers, who was a fellow inhabitant with the people of Capernaum. A faithful servant of his as it chanced fell sick, and, so to speak, had already reached the gates of death, and to all appearance was now at his last gasp. ”And he was dear to him,” so that he was pierced with anguish. What remedy, then, can he find for what has happened, or what aid can he procure for him who is lying ill? ”He heard, it says, the things of Jesus;” and so he sends unto Him, asking of Him manifestly as of God things that exceed the nature and power of man. For his request was, that one who was laid prostrate in the last stage of sickness might be delivered from the bands of death. And whence, then, did he know Jesus, since he was not as yet of the number of those who believed on Him? for hitherto he had been one of the mass wandering in error. He heard, it says, the things concerning Him. And since certainly he had never heard His personal instruction, nor seen any of His miracles, nor had met with the writings of Moses, nor searched the divine Scriptures, he could only have attained to faith in Him from simple rumours and hearsays. But as being fully assured that by the mere act of His will He could accomplish his request, he sends as supplicants in his behalf the principal men of the Jews; and these wore the elders.

Upon their arrival they offer their request, saying, ”that he is worthy that Thou shouldest grant this unto him.” O marvellous act! They who slandered Christ’s glory, request Him to work a miracle! Those who refused to believe in Him, ask Him to display before men who had not yet believed such acts as lead on to faith! Tell me in what character dost thou approach with thy request? Dost thou know and believe that He is able to perform things that are the prerogative of God? Art thou fully convinced that it belongs solely to the supreme Substance, Who is above all, to be able to make alive, and to deliver men from the snares of death? If so, how then didst thou say when thou sawest Jesus working miracles, ”This man casteth not out devils but by Beelzebub, Prince of the devils?” And when that man who had been blind from his mother’s womb was wonderfully healed, and gained an unwonted light, thou advisedst him, saying, ”Give God the glory, we know that this

man is a sinner." Dost thou then ask this sinner, as thou calledst Him, to perform an act of Deity? Is not this madness, and sheer stupidity? Are not those who hitherto had not believed far better than those who had been taught by the law and the prophets?

Wouldst thou see the fact that such is the case and such only? Observe what follows; The Saviour had now sot out upon His way to restore the sick man: but the centurion sent unto Him, saying, "Lord, trouble not Thyself; but speak with a word, and my child will be healed. Consider then, that these elders of the Jews begged Jesus to go to the house of him who requested His aid, as not being able in any other way to raise him up who was lying ill, except by going to his side: ----whereas the other believed that He could do it even at a distance, and effect it by the inclination of His will. He asked for the saving word, the loving assent, the all mighty utterance; and justly therefore did he win a sentence of surpassing worth: for Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, that not even in Israel have I found so great faith. The proof then and demonstration, follows closely and immediately from what we have now said. Finally, He delivered that same hour from his sickness him who a little before had been the prey of death: for He Who willed the undoing of what had happened was God. As I said then at the beginning of this discourse, by God's holy decree Israel fell from his relationship unto Him, and in his stead the heathen wore called and admitted, as having a heart better prepared for that faith in Him, which justly is required.

And of this the divine Psalmist shall again be our proof, where he says concerning them; at one time, "Thou hast inclined Thine ear because of the preparation of their heart; and at another, "Many were their infirmities, and afterwards they went quickly. For many indeed were the offences laid to their charge, to which he gently gives the name of infirmities: for they were wandering in error, and guilty of abominable crimes, not merely in one way, but in many: but they went quickly to the faith, that is, they were not slow in accepting the commands of Christ, but very readily embraced the faith. For that they were to be caught in Christ's net, He teacheth thee where He saith by one of the holy prophets, "For this wait for Me, saith the Lord, until the day of My rising up to bear witness, because My judgment is for the congregations of the heathen. For when Christ rose from the dead, He bestowed on those that were in error that judgment which is for their happiness and salvation. For He even commanded the holy disciples, "Go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: and teaching them to observe all those things that I have commanded you."

By the holy decree therefore, and just sentence of our common Saviour Christ, the heathen were honoured; but Israel we see rejected from His love and affection. For what do we find the chief Shepherd of all saying to them by one of the holy

prophets? ”And I have declared, He says, that I will not feed you, and that which is dying shall die: and that which is fainting shall faint: and those that are left shall devour every one the flesh of his neighbour.” And again; ”God hath rejected them, because they have not heard Him: and they shall be wanderers among the heathen.” And again by the voice of the prophet Ezechiel, ”Thus saith my Lord, the Lord; that I will drive them among the heathen, and disperse them over the whole earth.” Take the actual result of facts for your persuasion and faith in what is here said. For they are vagabonds and strangers in every land and city, neither preserving in its purity the worship enjoined by the law, nor submitting to accept the gloriousness of the excellency of the Gospel life: while we, who have received the faith are fellow-citizens with the saints, and called the sons of the Jerusalem that is above, in heaven, by the grace of God which crowneth us. And Him we affirm to be the completion of the law and the prophets: we confess His glory; we admire Him as He worketh miracles; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXXVI.

7:11. And it came to pass the day after, He was going to a city called Nair, and His disciples were going with Him,... [From Mai and Cramer] * * * * * * But observe how He joins miracle to miracle: and in the former instance, the healing of the centurion's servant, He was present by invitation: but here He draws near without being invited. For no one summoned Him to restore the dead man to life, but He comes to do so of His own accord. And He seems to me to have purposely made this miracle also follow upon the former. For there was nothing improbable in supposing that at some time or other some one might rise up and say, in opposition to the Saviour's glory, 'What is the prodigy wrought in the case of the centurion's son? For though he was ailing, he was in no danger of death, even though the Evangelist has so written, shaping his narrative rather with a view to what was pleasant, than to what was true.' To stop therefore the intemperate tongue of such detractors, he says, that Christ met the dead young man, the only son of a widow. It was a pitiable calamity, able to arouse one's lamentation, and make one's tears gush forth; and the woman follows, stupified with her misfortune, and all but fainting, and many with her.

[From the Syriac] * * *: for that dead man was being buried, and many friends were conducting him to his tomb. But there meets him the Life and Resurrection, even Christ: for He is the Destroyer of death and of corruption: He it is "in Whom we live and move and are:" He it is Who has restored the nature of man to that which it originally was; and has set free our death-fraught flesh from the bonds of death. He had mercy upon the woman, and that her tears might be stopped, He commanded, saying, "Weep not." And immediately the cause of her weeping was done away: how, or by what method? He touched the bier, and by the utterance of his godlike word, made him who was lying thereon return again to life: for He said, "Young man, I say unto thee. Arise;" and immediately that which was commanded was done: the actual accomplishment attended upon the words, "And that dead man, it says, sat up, and began to speak, and He gave him to his mother."

Observe here too, I pray you, the accuracy of the expression: for the divine Evangelist not only says, that the dead man sat up, but lest any one should by false

arguments attack the miracle, saying,' What wonder! if by means of some artifice or other the body was set upright! for it is not as yet clearly proved to be alive, or delivered from the bonds of death:'----for this reason he very skilfully notes down two proofs one after the other, sufficient to produce the conviction that he did in very truth arise and was restored. "For he began, he says, to speak"----but an inanimate body cannot speak----"And He gave him to his mother:"----but assuredly the woman would not have taken her son back to her house if he had boon dead, and had breathed his last.

Those persons therefore who were restored to life by the power of Christ, we take as a pledge of the hope prepared for us of a resurrection of the dead: and these were, this young man, and Lazarus of Bethany, and the daughter of the chief of the synagogue. And this truth the company of the holy prophets proclaimed before: for the blessed Isaiah said, "The dead shall arise, and those in the graves shall be restored to life: for the dew from Thee is healing to them." And by dew he means the life-giving operation of Christ, which is by the instrumentality of the Holy Ghost. And the Psalmist bears witness, thus speaking concerning them in words addressed to God the Saviour of us all. "When Thou turnest away Thy face they are troubled, and return to their dust. Thou sendest Thy Spirit, and they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the ground." For it was by reason of Adam's transgression of the commandment that we, having our faces turned away from God, returned to our dust: for the sentence of God upon human nature was, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return:" but at the time of the consummation of this world, the face of the earth shall be renewed: for God the Father by the Son in the Spirit will give life to all those who are laid within it.

It is death that has brought men to old age and corruption: death therefore has made old, that is to say, has corrupted: for "that which is made old, and is growing aged, is near corruption," as Scripture saith: but Christ renews, in that He is "the Life." For He Who in the beginning created, is able again to renew unto incorruption and life. For one may well affirm that it is the office of one and the same energy and power, to effect both the one and the other. As therefore the prophet Isaiah says, "'He hath swallowed up death, having become mighty." And again, "The Lord hath taken away all weeping from every countenance. He hath taken away the reproach of the people from all the earth." By the reproach of the people he means sin, which disgraces and depraves men: and which, together with destruction, shall be slain, and sorrow and death shall perish, and the tears cease which are shed on its account.

Disbelieve not therefore the resurrection of the dead; for long ago Christ wrought it among us with a Godlike majesty. And let no man say, that He Who raised two, for instance, or three, and effected thus much, is not thoroughly sufficient for the life also of us all. Such words, foul with utter ignorance, are simply ridiculous. Right

rather is it for us to understand, that He is the Life, and the Life-giver by nature. And how can the Life be insufficient for making all alive? It would be the same thing as to say in one's excessive folly, that the Light also is sufficient indeed for little things, but not for the Universe.

He therefore arose who was descending to his grave. And the manner of his rising is plain to see; "for He touched, it says, the bier, and said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise." And yet how was not a word enough for raising him who was lying there? For what is there difficult to it, or past accomplishment? What is more powerful than the Word of God? Why then did He not effect the miracle by a word only, but also touched the bier? It was, my beloved, that thou mightest learn that the holy body of Christ is effectual for the salvation of man. For the flesh of the Almighty Word is the body of life, and was clothed with His might. For consider, that iron, when brought into contact with fire, produces the effects of lire, and fulfils its functions; so, because it became the flesh of the Word, Who gives life to all, it therefore also has the power of giving life, and annihilates the influence of death and corruption . May our Lord Jesus Christ also touch us, that delivering us from evil works, even from fleshly lusts, He may unite us to the assemblies of the saints; for He is the giver of all good, by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXXVII.

7:17-23. And this word concerning Him went forth in all Judaea, and in all the region round about. And his disciples told John of all these things: and John called certain two of his disciples, and sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another? When the men came to Him, they said, John the Baptist sent us to Thee, saying, Art Thou He that cometh, or look we for another? But in that same hour he healed many of sicknesses and scourges, and of evil spirits: and unto many that were blind He gave sight. And He answered and said to them, Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard: that the blind see; and the lame walk; and the lepers are cleansed; and the deaf hear; the dead arise, and the poor are preached unto; and blessed is he who is not offended in Me.

On the present occasion also the Word about to be addressed to you, and the investigation of the sacred doctrines cannot but be most certainly for your benefit. Come then, that together with the holy angels we may praise the universal Saviour: for He is worshipped, as in heaven so also in earth; and to Him every knee shall bow, as it is written. Be it therefore known to people everywhere, that the Lord is God, and even though He appeared in fashion like unto us, yet has He given us the indications of a godlike power and majesty on many occasions, and in a multitude of ways: by driving away diseases; by rebuking unclean spirits; by bestowing on the blind their sight; and finally, oven by expelling death itself from the bodies of men;----death which cruelly and mercilessly had tyrannized from Adam even unto Moses, according to the expression of the divine Paul. That widow's son then at Nain arose unexpectedly and wonderfully, and the miracle remained unknown to no one throughout the whole of Judaea, but was noised abroad as a divine sign, and admiration was upon every tongue. And some of his intimate friends, that is, his disciples, tell it also to the blessed Baptist: and he chose out and selected two persons from the rest, and sends them to Jesus to ask Him, if it is He Who cometh, or whether they must wait for another. What hast thou done, O excellent Baptist!

Dost thou not know Him Whom thou preachedst, being thyself the precursor of this rising, as the morning star proclaims the coming sun? Thou wentest before Him like a torch. Thou pointedst Him out to the holy apostles, saying very plainly,

”Behold the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sin of the world! Elsewhere also we heard Thee saying to the multitudes of the Jews, that ”after me cometh the man who was before me, because He is before me. And I knew Him not: but He who sent me to baptize in water, He said unto me, On Whom thou seest the Holy Ghost descend from heaven, and remain upon Him, He it is Who baptizeth in the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bore witness, that This is the Son of God. How then dost thou ask, if it is He that cometh? For thou saidst, ”I saw and bore witness, that He is the Son of God. But the blessed Baptist did not fail to recognise the Word of God Who had become man. Do not imagine so. Well and very clearly was he persuaded that He was He that cometh; but what He did was something wise and well-contrived, and fit in no slight degree to benefit his disciples. For they indeed, because they did not yet know Christ, inasmuch as His glory and all-excelling majesty was concealed from them, were even silently stung at His working miracles, and surpassing the Baptist in the greatness of the deeds wrought by Him.

For on one occasion they even drew near to him, pining with envy and vexation, and with their heart still requiring to set free from Jewish maladies, and said to the blessed Baptist concerning Christ the universal Saviour, ”Rabbi, He Who was with thee on the other side of Jordan, to Whom thou bearest witness, He baptizeth, and every man cometh to Him. For they did not wish any one else to baptize at all, and exalt himself against the honour of John. They learnt however from him the superiority of Christ’s glory, and the incomparable greatness of His splendour: for they heard him say in answer, ”Ye are yourselves my witnesses that I said, that I am not the Christ, but that I have been sent before Him. He who hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the bridegroom’s friend, who standeth and heareth his voice, joyfully rejoiceth because of the bridegroom’s voice: this therefore, which is my joy, is complete. He must grow great, but I must be made small. We do not however say that the blessed Baptist in any respect whatsoever decreased in dignity, himself of himself, during the time that Christ’s glory was constantly receiving addition from those that believed on Him: but inasmuch as the blessed John continued in the measure of human nature:----for it was not possible for him ever to advance to anything beyond:----but the incarnate Word, being in His nature God, and ineffably begotten of God the Father, advancing continually to His proper glory, was admired of all men;

for this reason it was he said, ”He must grow great, but I must be made small. For he who remains in exactly the same state seems to grow small, in comparison with one who is continually advancing. But that it was right that as being by nature God, He should surpass in might and glory human things, he explained to them saying: ”He Who cometh from above is above all: and he who is of the earth, belongeth to the earth, and speaketh of the earth. Who then is He Who cometh from above, and is above all as being God? Plainly the only-begotten Word of the Father, Who was in His likeness, and on an equality with Him: but for the love He

had unto the world, humbled Himself to our estate. As being such therefore, He must necessarily surpass one who was of the earth: one, that is to say, numbered among the things of earth, and their like in nature, such as was the Baptist. For he was indeed praiseworthy in virtue, and incomparable in piety, and had attained to the perfection of all righteousness, and was honourable and worthy of admiration: for the Lord bore him witness saying, ”There hath not risen among the sons of women one greater than John the Baptist. But he was not from above; not of the Substance, I mean, that is set above all: rather he was from below, a son of earth, and one of us.

Therefore, to return from this digression, as their heart was not free from Jewish maladies, they tell the blessed Baptist of the Saviour’s divine signs: and he, as thoroughly knowing Who it was That wrought the miracles, exulted indeed in himself, in seeing the Saviour’s glory spread abroad: but to produce a firm and steadfast faith in Him, in those, who as yet were halting, nor thus far convinced that He is the Christ, he puts on the appearance of ignorance, and so sends to Him certain to ask Him, saying, ”Art Thou He That cometh, or do we wait for another? Cometh whither perhaps some will say: for there are men who think that we ought to understand something of this sort: ----that as the Baptist was about before the precious cross to undergo death by the wickedness of Herod, and, so to speak, anticipate Christ’s departure, and as His forerunner, precede His arrival in Hades, he asks whether He will come there also, to redeem those in darkness and the shadow of death, and entangled in inevitable bonds. But such an opinion is utterly to be rejected: for nowhere do we find that the Scripture inspired of God has declared that the divine Baptist preached beforehand to the spirits in Hades the coming of the Saviour.

And this also we may truly say, that inasmuch as once for all he knew the whole effect of the dispensation in the flesh of the Only-begotten, he of course knew, in addition to the other particulars, that He will redeem those in Hades, and shine forth even upon them, as ”by the grace of God tasting death for every man,” that as Paul says, ”He may be Lord both of the dead and of the living.”

What then does he wish to understand by asking, ”Art Thou He that cometh, or do we wait for another? I said then, that he puts on the appearance of ignorance purposely, not so much that he might himself learn:----for as being the forerunner he know the mystery:----but that his disciples might be convinced, how great is the Saviour’s superiority, and that, as the word of the inspired Scripture had announced before, He is God, and the Lord That was to come. All the rest then were servants, sent before a master, preceding Him Who is beyond all, and preparing the way of the Lord, as it is written. By the holy prophets therefore the Saviour and Lord of all is called, ”He that cometh. For the prophet David in a psalm declares: ”Blessed be He That cometh in the Name of the Lord. And what means that ex-

pression ”in the Name of the Lord? it means in godlike glory, and lordship, and all transcending majesty. And this again he has signified in what follows: ”The Lord is God, and hath shone forth upon us. For Moses indeed came, and appeared in his season, and by his instrumentality the law was spoken to the Israelites: and then after him Jesus the son of Nun commanded the host, and then in order the blessed prophets. And they were indeed holy men, honourable beyond comparison, and endowed with a spiritual and all-excelling splendour:

but no one of them shone forth upon the inhabitants of earth in the name of the Lord, in the glory that is of Godhead and dominion. But the only-begotten Word of God shone forth upon us as being in His nature and verily God and Lord. So God the Father named Him by the prophet Habakuk, thus saying; ”Yet a little He That cometh will come, and will not tarry. And again also by another prophet the only-begotten Word of God thus speaketh: ”Rejoice, and be glad, O daughter of Zion: for behold! I come, and will lodge in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall find refuge in the Lord on that day; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Mo a people. And that this has come to pass, one may see by actual facts: for a multitude of nations has been caught in the net, and Christ is their God, and they are His people.

Having therefore taken from the inspired Scripture the name of ”He That cometh,” the divine Baptist sent certain of his friends to ask, ”if He were He that cometh. And what follows? Inasmuch as Christ by nature and in truth is God, the purpose of John did not escape Him, but as well knowing the cause of his disciples’ coming, He especially at that particular time began accomplishing divine miracles many times more numerous than those which He had hitherto wrought. For so the wise Evangelist has told us, saying, ”In that same hour He healed many of sicknessess and of scourges, and of evil spirits: and gave sight to many that were blind. Having then been made spectators and eyewitnesses of His greatness, and gathered into them a great admiration of His power and ability, they bring forward the question, and beg in John’s name to be informed, whether He is He Who cometh. Here see I pray the beautiful art of the Saviour’s management. For He does not simply say, I am; though had He so spoken, it would have been true: but He rather leads them to the proof given by the works themselves, in order that having accepted faith in Him on good grounds, and being furnished with knowledge from what had been done, they might so return to him who sent them. ”For go, He says, tell John the things that ye have seen and heard.

For ye have heard indeed, He says, that I have raised the dead by the all-powerful word, and by the touch of the hand: ye have seen also, while ye yourselves stood by, that those things that were spoken of old time by the holy prophets are accomplished: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the dumb hear, and the dead arise, and the poor are preached unto. All these things the

blessed prophets had before announced, as about in due time to be wrought by My hands. If then I bring to pass those things that were prophecied long before, and ye are yourselves spectators of them, return and tell those things which ye have seen with your own eyes accomplished by My might and ability, and which at various times the blessed prophets foretold. And then He added necessarily to these things; ”And blessed is he who is not offended in Me! For the Jews indeed were offended, cither as not knowing the depth of the mystery, or because they did not seek to know. For though the inspired Scripture announced beforehand, in every part of it, that the Word of God would humble Himself to emptiness, and be seen upon earth, plainly referring to when He was such as we are, and would justify by faith every thing under heaven, yet they stumbled against Him, and struck against the rock of offence, and fell, and were ground to powder.

For though they plainly saw Him invested with ineffable dignity and surpassing glory, by means of the wondrous deeds He wrought, they threw stones at Him and said: ”Why dost Thou, being a man, make thyself God? In answer to these things, Christ reproved the immeasurable infirmity of their intellect, and said; ”If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do, then though ye believe not Me, believe My works. Blessed therefore is he, who doth not stumble against Christ; that is, who believeth in Him.

And what the advantage is that is derived from this, and in what way we are benefitted by attaining to faith in Him, every one knows: nothing however forbids our enumerating a few particulars. For first indeed we obtain the light of the true knowledge of God: and next, when by the aid of holy baptism we have washed away the stains of sin, being purified that we may serve Him purely, we are also made partakers of His divine nature, and gain Him to dwell within us by having the communion of the Holy Ghost. And we are made also sons of God, and win for ourselves brotherhood with Him Who by nature and verily is the Son. Moreover, in addition to those things, we are exalted to the inheritance of the saints, and dwell in bliss in the enjoyment of those blessings which are bestowed on those who love Him, and which the divine Paul declares surpass understanding and description: ”for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and into the heart of man have not entered the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him.” Of those may we also be thought worthy by the grace and love of Him Who giveth to every one bountifully all good things, even of Christ, by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for over and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXXVIII.

7:24-28. And when the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed, shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? A man clad in soft garments? Behold they who wear soft clothing, are in the abodes of kings. But what went ye out to see? A Prophet? Yea, I say unto you: and more than a prophet: for this is he of whom it is written, Behold I send My messenger before Thy face, to prepare Thy way before Thee. Verily I say unto you, Among those born of women there is no one greater than John: but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

YE who thirst for the knowledge of the divine doctrines, open once again the treasure-house of your minds: satiate yourselves with the sacred words: or rather, give way to no feeling of satiety herein: for gluttony in things that tend to edification is a quality worth the gaining. Let us approach, then, the Saviour's words, not carelessly, and without due preparation, but with that attentiveness and vigilance which befits those who would learn. For so alone can those subjects for contemplation, which are difficult of comprehension, be rightly understood. Let us, therefore, ask of Christ that light, which He sends down upon the mind and heart, that thus being enabled correctly to understand the force of what is said, we may again admire the beautiful skill of the management. For He had been asked by the disciples of John, whether He is He that cometh? When then: He had answered them in a suitable manner, and commanded them to return to him that sent them. He began to say unto the multitudes concerning him, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken by the wind?" And what the instruction is which we gain from this, or what the end to which our Saviour's words have reference, how must it not be worth our while to inquire? Let us examine, therefore, the meaning of what is said: let us search it as a treasure: let us spy into its secrets: and fixing our mind upon the profundity of the mystery, let us be like careful moneychangers, proving every thing, as Scripture says.

There were then certain who prided themselves upon their performance of what was required by the law: the Scribes namely, and Pharisees, and others of their

party; who were regarded according to their professions as exact observers of the law, and claimed on this score, that their heads should be adorned with honours. This too is the reason why they neither accepted faith in Christ, nor paid due honour to that mode of life which truly is praiseworthy and blameless: even that which is regulated by the commands of the Gospel. The purpose, therefore, of Christ the Saviour of all, was to shew them that the honours both of the religious and moral service that are by the law, were of small account, and not worthy of being attained to, or oven perhaps absolutely nothing, and unavailing for edification: while the grace that is by faith in Him is the pledge of blessings worthy of admiration, and able to adorn with incomparable honour those that possess it. Many, then, as I said, were observers of the law, and greatly puffed up on this account: they even gave out that they had attained to the perfection of all that is praiseworthy, in the exact performance of the righteousness that consisted in shadows and types.

In order, then, that, as I said, He might prove that those who believe in Him are better and superior to them, and that the glories of the followers of the law are evidently but small in comparison with the evangelic mode of life, He takes him who was the best of their whole class, but nevertheless was born of woman, I mean the blessed Baptist: and having affirmed that he is a prophet, or rather above the measure of the prophets, and that among those born of women no one had arisen greater than he in righteousness, that namely, which is by the law, He declares, that he who is small, who falls short, that is, of his measure, and is inferior to him in the righteousness that is by the law, is greater than he:----not greater, in legal righteousness, but in the kingdom of God, even in faith, and the excellencies which result from faith. For faith crowns those that receive it with glories that surpass the law. And this thou learnest, and wilt thyself affirm to be the case, when thou meetest with the words of the blessed Paul: for having declared himself to be free from blame in the righteousness that is by the law, he added forthwith, ”But those things that were gain unto me, those I have counted loss for Christ’s sake: and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ: not having my own righteousness which is by the law, but the righteousness that is of the faith of Jesus Christ.

And the Israelites he even considers deserving of great blame, thus saying: ”For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, that namely which is by Christ, and seeking to establish their own; even that which is by the law; they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the completion of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth. And again, when speaking of these things: ”We, he says, who by nature are Jews, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of. the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Jesus Christ, that we may be justified in Him. The being justified, therefore, by Christ, that is to say, by faith in Him, surpasses the glories of the righteousness that is by the law. For this reason the blessed Baptist is brought forward, as one who had attained the foremost place in legal

righteousness, and to a praise so far incomparable. And yet even thus he is ranked as less than one who is least: ”for the least, He says, is greater than he in the kingdom of God. But the kingdom of God signifies, as we affirm, the grace that is by faith, by means of which we are accounted worthy of every blessing, and of the possession of the rich gifts which come from above from God. For it frees us from all blame;

and makes us to be the sons of God, partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of a heavenly inheritance.

Having prefaced therefore thus much by way of preparation, and to explain the connection of the ideas, come now. and let us examine the actual words. As I have already said then, He exalts the divine Baptist to a great height, and crowns the Forerunner with surpassing honours purposely; that thou mayest the more thoroughly admire faith; as that which makes believers to have a grandeur far surpassing even that of men thus illustrious. He asks the Jews, then, saying ”What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken by the wind?” Now He compares to a reed,----a thing tossed about, and, so to speak, reeling and shaken to and fro by the violence of the winds,----the man who lives in worldly honours and pleasures, and in the grandeur of temporal sovereignty. For there is nothing stable or firm or unshaken with such persons, but things change frequently in an unexpected manner, and to that which they did not anticipate, and their prosperity lightly passes away. For true it is, that ”all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower falleth.” Did ye then, He says, go out into the desert to see a man like a reed? This, however, possibly he is not, but of a different character; one of those who live in pleasures, and are wont to be clad in beautiful garments, and value childish honour. And yet one does not see persons such as these dwelling in the desert, but at the courts of kings: and as for the blessed Baptist’s raiment, it was of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle upon his loins.

What then did ye go out to see? Perhaps ye say, A Prophet. Yea, I also say as well as you. For he is a saint and a prophet: nay, he even surpasses the dignity of a prophet; for not only did he announce before that I am coming, but pointed Me out close at hand, saying? ”Behold the Lamb of God, That beareth the sin of the world.” Moreover, he was testified of by the prophet’s voice, ”as sent before My face, to prepare the way before Me.” And I bear him witness that there hath not arisen among those born of women one greater than he: but he that is least----in the life I mean according to the law----in the kingdom of God is greater than he. How and in what manner? In that the blessed John, together with as many as preceded him, was born of woman: but they who have received the faith, are no more called the sons of women, but as the wise Evangelist said, ”are born of God.” ”For to all, he says, who received Him, that is, Christ, He gave power to become the sons of God,

even to them who believe on His Name: who have been born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." For we have been born again to the adoption of the sons, "not of corruptible seed," but, as Scripture saith, "by the living and abiding Word of God." Those then who are not of corruptible seed, but, on the contrary, have been born of God, are superior to any one born of woman.

There is also another respect in which they surpass those born of women. For they have earthly fathers: but we Him Who is above in heaven. For we have received this also of Christ, Who calleth us to the adoption of sons and brotherhood with Him. For He has said, "Ye shall not call any one on earth father: for One is your Father, Who is in heaven. But ye, all of you, are brethren. And most wise Paul gives us surety of this, writing as follows: "For because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, calling Father, our Father. For when Christ rose, and spoiled hell, the spirit of adoption was then given to them that believed on Him, and first of all to the holy disciples; for "He breathed upon them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. If ye remit the sins of any, they are remitted them; and if ye retain the sins of any, they are retained. For inasmuch as they have become partakers of the divine nature, by being richly endowed with that lordly and all-governing Spirit; therefore He has also given them the godlike power of remitting the sins of whomsoever they will, and of retaining those of all others. But that previously to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and His ascent to heaven, there was not among men the spirit of adoption, the most wise Evangelist John makes plain where he says: "For the Spirit was not as yet:

because that Jesus was not yet glorified. And yet certainly, how can the Spirit be unequal in eternity to God the Father, and the Son? And when did He not exist, Who is before all? For He is equal in substance to the Father, and the Son. "But inasmuch as Christ, he says, was not yet glorified," that is to say, had not yet risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, the spirit of adoption did not as yet exist for men. But when the Only-begotten Word of God ascended up into heaven, He sent down for us in His stead the Comforter, Who is in us by Him. And this He taught us, thus saying: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but when I have departed, I will send Him unto you."

Even though, therefore, we be inferior to them who have fulfilled the righteousness that is by the law: inferior, I mean, in righteousness of life, yet are we who have received faith in Him endowed with greater privileges. We must, however, bear in mind, that although the blessed Baptist was thus great in virtue, yet he plainly confessed that he stood in need of holy baptism: for he somewhere said, speaking to Christ, the Saviour of us all, "I have need to be baptized of Thee." But he would have had no need of holy baptism, nor have requested leave to have it granted him,

had there not been in it something more and better, than the righteousness that is by the law. Christ therefore does not contend against the honours of the paints; nor is it His purpose to diminish and strip of their renown those holy men who had before attained to victory: but as I said, it rather is to prove that the Gospel mode of life is superior to the legal worship, and to crown with surpassing honours the glory of faith, that we all may believe in Him. For so we enter by Him, and with Him, into the kingdom of heaven: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

[Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

SERMON XXXIX.

7:31-35. To what therefore shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like to children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have played unto you, and ye have not danced: we have wailed unto you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came, neither eating bread, nor drinking wine, and ye say, that he hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking: and ye say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine drinker: a friend of publicans and sinners. And wisdom is justified of her children. THOSE who have a sound mind examine everything, rejecting the false, but receiving and praising that which is without blame. And such the wise Paul also requires us to be, where writing he said: "Be ye wise money-changers; prove all things, and hold that which is good: abstain from every evil kind." We therefore also, as I said, must closely examine with the discerning eye of the mind whatever is done, and search into the nature of actions, that so we may approve of that which is without blame, while we reject that which is counterfeit. But if, making no distinctions, we run the risk of passing an evil sentence upon things highly praiseworthy: and of deeming that which is evil fit for commendation and applause, the prophet's words will apply to us: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: who call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter: who put light for darkness, and darkness for light." Such was the character of the Israelites, and especially of those whose lot it was to be their chiefs, the Scribes namely and Pharisees: of whom Christ said, "To what shall I liken the men of this generation? and so on."

There was perchance a sort of game among the Jewish children, something of this kind. A troop of youths was divided into two parts: who, making sport of the confusion in the world, and the uneven course of its affairs, and the painful and rapid change from one extreme to the other, played some of them on instruments of music: while the rest wailed. But neither did the mourners share the merriment of those who were playing music and rejoicing: nor again did those with the instruments of music join in the sorrow of those who were weeping: and finally, they reproached one another with their want of sympathy, so to speak, and absence of affection. For the one party would say, "We have played unto you, and ye have not danced: to which the others would rejoin, "We have wailed unto you, and ye

have not wept. Christ declares, therefore, that both the Jewish populace, and their rulers, were in some such state of feeling as this; ”For John came, He says, neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and they say, that he hath a devil: the Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold! a man gluttonous, and a wine drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners. By what then wilt thou be won unto the faith, O foolish Pharisee, when thou thus blamest all things indifferently, nor countest anything worthy of thy praise? The blessed Baptist was the forerunner of the Saviour, saying, ”Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand.

For he was a man fit to win confidence, and able to persuade, as having even from them the testimony that his life was noble, and worthy of admiration. For he dwelt in the deserts, clad in poor and rough clothing, and scarcely allaying the necessities of the body with locusts and wild honey. Thou wentest out to see him as one who was holy, and had attained to the perfection of all virtue. And dost thou venture afterwards to speak ill of such a one? of one who ought rather to be counted worthy of all admiration? Dost thou say that he hath a devil, who by fastings is mortifying the law of sin that lurks in our fleshly members, and wars against the law of our mind? What is greater than a life of abstinence? For the very fact of being able to rebuke wisely those pleasures that lead to evil, and to cast over them as a bridle the laboriousness of a life of abstinence, how is not this a great and excellent thing! The blessed Baptist was entirely devoted to piety unto Christ; nor was there in him the very slightest regard either for fleshly lusts, or for the things of this world. Having altogether abandoned, therefore, the vain and unprofitable distractions of this world, he laboured at one, and that a very urgent task, of blamelessly fulfilling the ministry entrusted to him. For he was commanded to preach, saying: ”Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

Tell me, dost thou think that this man hath a devil?----one over whom the tyranny of Satan had no power; who was the captive of no evil lusts; who had overleapt the pitfalls of the base love of the flesh; who had commanded the herds of demons to be still, and manfully resisted their attacks. For verily he could not have attained to this glory and virtue but through Christ, Who is exalted above Satan, who tempts and gnashes his teeth at the prosperity of the saints. Art thou not ashamed, then, of slandering one who had attained to so great patience and endurance, and had wound chaplets of manly virtue round his head? Hast thou whetted thy tongue even at him, and ventured basely to calumniate him, by affirming that he is a madman, and contemptible, and not in his right mind?

Let us, then, see what is on the other side, and which seems, as it were, to follow a different course from the Baptist’s conduct. Christ was not in the wilderness, but rather made the city His habitation in company with the holy Apostles: He did not eat locusts and wild honey: His clothing was not of camel’s hair, nor had He a leathern girdle upon his loins. His mode of life rather was such as is usual in towns,

with no such hardness in it as that practised by the holy Baptist. Dost thou, then, praise Him at least? Dost thou approve of His easiness of approach, and His freely mixing with others, and entire carelessness about His diet? By no means. Thy censoriousness extended even unto Christ: for thou saidst, ”Behold a man gluttonous, and drinking wine! a friend of publicans and sinners!” Because thou hast occasionally seen Jesus faring luxuriously, does He appear to thee a drinker of wine, and a carouser, and gluttonous? How canst thou prove this? For when once upon a time Mary and Martha received Him at Bethany, and one of them was distracted with overmuch service, Christ is seen preventing excess, and reducing us to a bare sufficiency. For He said, ”Martha, Martha: thou art careful, and hurried about many things: but few things are required, or one.” And such He was constantly and everywhere.

But dost thou accuse Him because He went about with publicans and sinners? And is this the cause of thine offence? But what detriment can it be imagined that Christ suffered, from His willingness to be with sinners? He was not liable at all to be taken by their sins, being entirely beyond the reach of fault. He even said, at one time: ”The prince of this world cometh, and will find nothing in Me?” at another, again: ”Who of you rebuketh Me because of sin?” He could in no respect therefore be contaminated by being with sinners.

But thou sayest, the law of Moses commanded that ”we should not hold converse with the wicked. Let us, however, study the object of the law: let us see for what cause it forbade the Israelites holding intercourse with the wicked, and mingling with the deceivers. Now the truth most certainly is, that the law of Moses ordained these things, not so much that thou mightest vaunt thyself over others, and make the commandment a reason for boasting; but rather, because thy mind is weak, and readily drawn aside into folly, and because thy heart runs willingly after evil pleasures, it would free thee from the wish to be with those whose life is culpable, lest thou shouldst become like them in mind, and foolishly be caught in their snare. ”For evil communications corrupt good manners. Thou receivedst the commandment therefore as a safeguard for thy infirmity. For if thou hadst been established in virtue, and thy mind steadfast in the fear of God, the law would not have hindered thee from holding useful intercourse with those who were weak, in order that they might become imitators of thy piety, and learn to emulate thy doings: that walking in the steps of thy zeal, they might advance to that which is more excellent. Conceive, therefore, no proud imaginings, since, even in the commandment of Moses, thou art accused of infirmity. Thou blamest Christ for going about with sinners and publicans. Is it because thou art afraid lest He should suffer from their contamination?

Tell me, then, dost thou imagine that He also shares thy frailness? Art thou entirely ignorant of the mysteries respecting Him? That the Word being God was with us:

that is, was incarnate for our sakes? That the Father sent Him "not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Now it belongs to one who condemns, to avoid the company of such as are still in their sins: but it is the part of him who wishes to save to be with them, and admonish them, and prevail upon them to change from their disgraceful courses, and instead of the path of wickedness, to choose the way that leadeth to eternal life. "He came not to call the righteous, hut sinners, to repentance. And as He said Himself, "They that are whole need not a Physician: but they that are sick. Why therefore dost thou blame Him for loving man so well, and find fault with His godlike gentleness? Why reproach Him for being kind to us, and healing our sickness? And yet every body praises physicians, not when they avoid those who are sick, but when they are constantly with them, and by the resources of their art bring them gradually back to sound health. And why then, since Jesus is the Physician of souls and spirits, dost thou blame Him for saving sinners? He could sustain no pollution, even though He ate with sinners: for yon bright sun sheds its radiance upon, and visits every thing under heaven:

it chances, then, that impurities also are found lying exposed to it: but that which pours down this radiance is not in the least defiled, even though it shed it on matters so abominable.Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness: a wicked man, then, in no way whatsoever defiles Him, though close at His side, and eating with Him.

And thus much, then, we have said respecting Christ the Saviour of us all. It is not, however, perhaps unlikely, that some may object, and say; 'Does not also the new and saving preaching of the Gospel plainly command us to withdraw from the communications of impure men? For most wise Paul also wrote to some: "I have written unto you in the epistle, that ye hold no intercourse with fornicators: If any one called a brother be a fornicator, or a drunkard, or covetous, or an extortioner, or idolater: with such a one no not to eat. It had been fitting, therefore, for Christ to have been the type to us of this behaviour.' Thou hast missed thy measure, my beloved! Thou wishest to vie with thy Master's sovereign dignity: Thou catchest at that which is above thy nature. Consider the infirmity of thy mind. Christ was God: but thou art a man, tyrannized over by fleshly pleasures, with a mind easily beguiled into error, and readily made the prey of sins. If, however, thou feelest confident of thy ability manfully to maintain a blameless course of conduct, and also to admonish others, there is nothing to hinder even thee from wishing to be with the wicked and sinloving. For often the admonitions of spiritually-minded men have profited those who are in sin. If, on the contrary, thou thyself art scarcely saved, even when keeping far away from the company of the evil, maintain thy carefulness in this respect.

Call to thy remembrance the writer of the book of Proverbs, who says; ”He that walketh with the wise, shall become wise: but he who walketh with fools, shall become known. And again, ”He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled. And again also the blessed David: ”With the holy, thou wilt become holy; and with the pure, thou wilt become pure: with the elect, thou wilt become elect; and with the crooked, thou wilt be made crooked. In order, then, ”that thou mayest be delivered like a roc from the nets,” flee from wicked men; keep apart from those who cannot be restrained from pollution; and supplicate Christ to purify thy corruptions, or rather all thy human weaknesses. For the Word that came from God is God, even though He became flesh, that is, man: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father, be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XL.

7:36-50. And a certain Pharisee desired Him to eat with him. And having entered the Pharisee's house, He reclined at his table. And, behold, a woman who was a sinner in the city, when she knew that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood behind Him at His feet, and, weeping, began to wash His feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed, His feet, and anointed them with ointment. When the Pharisee who had bidden Him saw it, he said in himself, If this were a prophet, He would have known who and of what sort the woman is who toucheth Him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, Teacher, say on. He saith to him; A certain money-lender had two debtors; the one owed five hundred denarii, the other fifty: and when they could not repay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of them will love him most? and Simon answered and said, I suppose he that had most forgiven him. And He said to him, Thou hast rightly judged. And turning to the woman He said to Simon, Thou seest this woman. I entered into thine house: thou gavest no water for My feet; but she hath, washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair.

Thou gavest Me no kiss, but she from the time I came in hath not ceased kissing My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed My feet with ointment. For this reason, I tell thee, her many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much: but he to whom little is forgiven, loveth little. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven thee. And those who were reclining with Him at table began to say in themselves, Who is This That forgiveth sins also? But He said, to the woman, Thy faith hath made thee live: go in peace.

"ALL ye people, clap your hands, and praise God with the voice of thanksgiving." And what is the cause of the festival? It is that the Saviour hath newly constructed for us a way of salvation, untrodden by them of old time. For the law, which the all-wise Moses ordained, was for the reproof of sin, and the condemnation of offences: but it justified absolutely no one. For the very wise Paul writes, "Whosoever rejected the law of Moses, was put to death without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses. But our Lord Jesus Christ, having removed the curse of the law,

and proved the commandment which condemns to be powerless and inoperative, became our merciful High Priest, according to the words of the blessed Paul. For He justifies the wicked by faith, and sets free those held captive by their sins. And this He proclaimed to us by one of the holy prophets, saying, ”In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, they shall seek for the sin of Israel, and there shall be none: and for the sin of Judah, and thou shalt not find it: for I will be merciful to those that have been left in the land, saith the Lord. But lo! the fulfilment of the promise came to pass for us at the time of His Incarnation, as we are assured by the purport of the holy Gospels.

For he was invited by one of the Pharisees, and being kind and loving unto man, and ”willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth,” He consented, and granted the favour to him who requested it. And having entered, He reclined at table: and immediately there entered a woman defiled with filthy lewdness: who, like one scarcely roused from wine and intoxication, and made sensible of the guilt of her transgressions, offered supplication unto Christ, as able to cleanse her, and deliver her from all fault, and free her from her former sins, as ”not remembering iniquities. And this she did, washing His feet with tears, and anointing them with ointment, and wiping them with her hair. Thus a woman, who beforetime had been lewd, and guilty of sensuality, a sin difficult to wash away, missed not the path of salvation; for she fled for refuge to Him Who knoweth how to save, and is able to raise from the depths of impurity.

She then failed not in her purpose. But the foolish Pharisee, the blessed Evangelist tells us, was offended, and said within himself, ”If this were a prophet, He would have known who and of what sort the woman is that toucheth Him, that she is a sinner.” The Pharisee therefore was boastful, and utterly without understanding. For it was his duty rather to regulate his own life, and earnestly adorn it by all virtuous pursuits; and not to pass sentence upon the infirm, and condemn others. But we affirm of him, that having been brought up in the customs of the law, he gave too wide an influence to its institutions, and required the Legislator Himself to be subject to the commandments of Moses. For the law commanded the holy to keep apart from the impure: and God also blamed those whose lot it was to be the chiefs of the congregation of the Jews, for their unwillingness in this respect. For He thus spake by one of the holy prophets: ”they make no distinction between the holy and the profane.” But Christ arose for us, not to subject our state to the curses that are by the law, but to redeem those subject to sin by a mercy superior to the law. For the law was instituted ”because of transgressions,” as Scripture declares, ”that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God, because by the works of the law no flesh is justified.” For there was no one so far advanced in virtue, spiritual virtue I mean, as to be able to fulfil all that had been commanded, and that blamelessly. But the grace that is by Christ

justifieth, because, doing away with the condemnation of the law, it frees us by means of faith.

That proud and foolish Pharisee therefore did not even deem Jesus to have attained to the measure of a prophet: but He made the woman's tears an opportunity for clearly instructing him in the mystery. For He taught the Pharisee, and all who were assembled there, that the Word being God, "came into the world in our likeness, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved by Him. He came that He might forgive the debtors much and little, and shew mercy upon small and great, that there might be no one whatsoever who did not participate in His goodness. And as a pledge and plain example of His grace, He freed that unchaste woman from her many iniquities by saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Worthy indeed of God is a declaration such as this! It is a word joined with supreme authority. For since the law condemned those that were in sin, who, I ask, was able to declare things above the law, except Him only Who ordained it? Immediately therefore He both set the woman free, and directed the attention of that Pharisee, and those who were dining with him, to more excellent things: for they learned that the Word being God, was not as one of the prophets, but rather far beyond the measure of humanity, even though He became man. And one may say to him who invited Him, Thou was trained up, O Pharisee, in the sacred Scriptures;

thou knowest I suppose of course the commands given by most wise Moses: thou hast examined the words of the holy prophets: Who then is This That walking in a path contrary to the sacred commands, hath delivered from guilt? Who That hath pronounced them free who have boldly broken the things ordained? Recognise therefore by the facts themselves One superior to the prophets and the law: remember that one of the holy prophets proclaimed these things in old time of Him, and said, "They shall be in wonder at our God, and shall be afraid of Thee. Who is a God like unto Thee, That forgiveth the transgressions, and passeth over the iniquities of the remnant of His inheritance, nor retaineth His anger unto the end, because He willeth mercy?"

Those therefore who were at meat with the Pharisee, were astonished and wondered at seeing Christ the Saviour of all possessed of such godlike supremacy, and using expressions above the right of man. For they said, "Who is This That forgiveth sins also? Dost thou wish me to tell thee Who He is? He Who is in the bosom of God the Father, and was begotten of Him by nature: by Whom every thing was brought into being: Who possesses supreme sovereignty, and is worshipped by every thing in heaven and in earth. He submitted Himself to our estate, and became our High Priest, in order that He might present us unto God, pure and clean, having put off the ill savour of sin, and having Him instead in us as a sweet savour. For, as most wise Paul writes, "We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God. This is He Who spake by the voice of the prophet Ezechiel, "And I will be to you a God, and I will save

you from all your uncleannesses. See therefore, that the actual accomplishment agreed with what had before been promised by the holy prophets. Acknowledge Him as God----Him so gentle and loving unto men. Seize upon the way of salvation: flee from the law that killeth: accept the faith which is above the law. For it is written, ”That which is written killeth,” even the law: ”but the spirit giveth life,” even the spiritual purification that is in Christ.

Satan had bound the inhabitants of earth with the cords of sin: Christ has loosed them; He has made us free, has abolished the tyranny of sin, has driven away the accuser of our infirmities; and the Scripture is fulfilled, that ”all iniquity shall stop its mouth; ”for it is God That justifieth: ’Who is he that condemneth? This the divine Psalmist also prayed might be accomplished, when thus addressing Christ the Saviour of all. ”Let sinners perish from off the earth: and the wicked, so that they may not be found. For verily we must not say of one clothed with the Spirit, that he curseth those who are infirm and sinful:----for it is not fitting for the saints to curse any:----but rather that he prays this of God. For before the coming of the Saviour we all were in sin: there was no one who acknowledged Him Who by nature and verily is God. ”There was no one doing good, no not one; but they all had turned aside together, and become reprobate. But because the Only-begotten submitted Himself to emptiness, and became flesh, and was made man, sinners have perished, and exist no longer. For the dwellers upon earth have been justified by faith, have washed away the pollution of sin by holy baptism, have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have sprung out of the hand of the enemy; and having bidden as it were the hosts of devils to depart, dwell under the yoke of Christ.

Christ’s gifts therefore raise men to a hope long looked for, and to a most dear joy. The woman who was guilty of many impurities, and deserving of blame for most disgraceful deeds, was justified, that we also may have confidence that Christ certainly will have mercy upon us, when He sees us hastening to Him, and endeavouring to escape from the pitfalls of wickedness. Let us too stand before Him: let us shed the tears of repentance: let us anoint Him with ointment: for the tears of him that repenteth are a sweet savour to God. Call him to mind who saith, ”Awake, they who are drunken with wine: weep and howl all they who drink wine to drunkenness.” For Satan intoxicates the heart, and agitates the mind by wicked pleasure, leading men clown to the pollutions of sensuality. But while there is time, let us awake; and as most wise Paul says, ”Let us not be constantly engaged in revels and drunkenness, nor in chambering and wantonness; but rather let us work what is good: for we are not of the night, nor of darkness, but children of light and of the day. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and clothe ourselves with the works of light.” Be not troubled when thou meditatest upon the greatness of thy former sins: but rather know, that still greater is the grace that justifieth the sinner, and absolveth the wicked.

Faith then in Christ is found to be the pledge to us of these great blessings: for it is the way that leadeth unto life: that bids us go to the mansions that are above: that raises us to the inheritance of the saints: that makes us members of the kingdom of Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLI.

8:4-8. And when a large multitude was gathered together, and some of every city were come to Him, He spake by a parable. The Sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and was trampled upon, and the birds of heaven devoured it. And other fell upon the rock, and, when it had sprung up, it withered away because it had no moisture. And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up with it, and choked it. And other fell upon the good ground, and it grew up, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. While saying these things He cried out, He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

The blessed prophets have spoken to us in manifold ways respecting Christ the Saviour of us all. For some proclaimed Him as a Light that was to come: and others as One of royal rank and greatness. For one of them even says, ”Blessed is he who hath seed in Zion, and kinsmen in Jerusalem: for lo! her just king shall reign, and princes shall bear rule with judgment. And That Man shall be One That hideth His words.” For the word of the Saviour is constantly, so to speak, hidden. So also the blessed Psalmist has brought Him before us saying, ”I will open My mouth in parables.” See therefore that that which was spoken by Him in old time has come to pass. For a large multitude was assembled round Him of people from all Judaea, and He spake to them in parables. But inasmuch as they were not worthy to learn the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the word was wrapt for them in darkness: for they had killed the holy prophets, and being guilty of much blood of the righteous, heard themselves thus plainly addressed: ”Which of the prophets have not your fathers killed?” And again, ”O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her; how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you.”

But their wicked acts did not extend merely to the holy prophets, but even mounted up to Him Who is Lord of the prophets: that is Christ. For being insolent, and setting up against Him, so to speak, their haughty neck, they gave not the slightest heed to the duty of receiving faith in Him: and even wickedly resisted His public teaching, and rebuked those who wished to be constantly with Him, and thirsted

for His instruction, impiously saying, ”He hath a devil and is mad: why hear ye Him?” To them therefore it was not granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but rather unto us, who are more ready to embrace the faith. For He hath given unto us, as being perfect wisdom, the ability ”to understand parables, and the dark saying, the words of the wise, and their riddles.” For parables we may say are the images not of visible objects, but rather of those cognizable by the intellect and spiritual. For that which it is impossible to see with the eyes of the body, the parable points out unto the eyes of the mind, beautifully shaping out the subtilty of things intellectual, by means of the things of sense, and which are as it were palpable to the touch. Let us see therefore what benefit the Saviour’s word weaves for us.

The Sower, He says, went out to ”sow his seed, and so forth.” Concerning whom then did He thus speak? Evidently concerning Himself. For He verily is the Sower of all that is good, and we are His husbandry: and by Him and from Him is the whole harvest of spiritual fruits. And this He taught us when saying, ”Without Me ye can do nothing.” In the imaginations therefore of the mind, see, I pray, a husbandman walking along, and everywhere casting seed in the fields: of which some falls on the pathways, and some on the rocks; and some on thorny places: and again some on good, that is, on fertile ground. That however on the pathways was snatched away: and that on the rocks, when it had just sprouted, and scarcely shot up, quickly withered of drought: and that among thorns was choked: hut that which fell on good ground prospered, for it bore fruit, He says, a hundredfold.

Now what the aim is of the discourse, and what the profounder teaching of the parable, we shall learn from Him Who framed it. Before us even the blessed disciples found these things hard to understand, and drew near unto the Revealer of mysteries, supplicating Him and saying, ”What is the parable? And what was Christ’s reply? ”The seed is the word of God: those on the way are they who have heard, and afterwards the devil cometh, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved.” And as to the cause of the seed on the pathways being snatched away, we see in a moment that it is the hardness of the ground. A pathway always is hard and untilled, because it is exposed to every one’s feet, nor is any seed admitted into it, but lies rather upon the surface, ready for any birds that will to snatch it away. All those therefore, whose mind is hard and unyielding, and so to speak, pressed together, do not ”receive the divine seed: for the divine and sacred admonition finds no entrance into them, nor do they accept the words that would produce in them the fear of God, and by means of which they could bring forth as fruits the glories of virtue. They have made themselves a beaten and trampled pathway for unclean demons, yea, and for Satan himself, such as never can bear holy fruit. Let those therefore awake, whose heart is sterile and unfruitful: open your mind, receive the sacred seed, be like productive and well-tilled soil, bring forth unto God the fruits that will raise you to an incorruptible

life: guard your mind, shut the entrance against the thief, drive away from your hearts the flocks of birds, in order that the seed may abide with you; that ye may be ground luxuriant in corn, and very fertile, and rich abundantly in bringing forth fruit.

And next, let us also consider those others of whom Christ said, ”And those upon the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and they have no root: these for a while believe, and in time of temptation depart away.” For there are verily men whose faith has not been proved, depending on words simply, and not applying their mind to the examining of the mystery: of such the piety is sapless and without root. For when they enter the churches, they feel pleasure often in seeing so many assembled, and joyfully receive instruction in the mysteries from him whose business it is to teach, and laud him with praises: but this they do with no discretion or judgment, but with unpurified wills: and when they have gone out of the churches, at once they forget the sacred doctrines, and proceed in their customary course; not having stored up within them any thing for their future benefit. And if the affairs of Christians go on peacefully, and no trial disturb them, they even then scarcely maintain in them the faith, and that, so to speak, in a confused and tottering state. But if persecution trouble them, and the enemies of the truth attack the churches of the Saviour, their heart loves not the battle, and their mind throws away the shield and flees, being devoid of zeal, and destitute of love towards God, and ready for desertion. But O ye fearful and infirm, one may well say, why do ye flee from that which would be your glory? and escape from conflicts to which ye have been trained? For hereby those who wish may win for themselves the trophy of victory. Do ye also struggle: twine the chaplet of manliness, thirst for the rewards of perseverance, for the honours of patience.

I think too that I may rightly bring forward the following argument: they who glitter on lofty thrones, and govern earthly things, when is it they see the steadfast soldier, whose desire is set on victory? Is it in times when peace smiles, and the din of arms is still? Or is it rather when he goes courageously against those who are marshalling for the attack? As I imagine, it is the latter case that is true rather than the former. Therefore as the prophet Jeremiah has said, ”Take up arms and shields.” Especially as the right hand of God our Saviour is invincible in the battle, and as most wise Paul has said, ”He does not permit men to be tried more than they can bear, but with the trial will make also the way of egress, that they may be able to endure patiently.”

But even if it possibly be our lot to suffer when contending in defence of piety towards Christ, then altogether and in every way are we worthy of envy, and glorious, and possessed of splendid hopes. Moreover, a praised death is incomparably better than an ignominious life. For so also the Saviour said to the holy apostles, ”Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear

Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Did He therefore command us thus entirely to disregard these extreme dangers, while He Himself remained aloof from similar trials? But lo! He laid down His life for us, and with His blood purchased the world. We are therefore not our own, but His Who bought and redeemed us, and to Whom we owe our lives. For as the divine Paul said, "For this reason Christ died and lived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living." We ought therefore to possess a mind incapable of being shaken, that especially whenever temptation arrive, we may shew ourselves approved and victorious in the power of patience: and ready with joy to undergo conflicts, and seize the opportunity of suffering for piety's sake towards Christ.

Thus much then being disposed of and explained, let us next consider the thorns among which the divine seed is choked. What again says the Saviour? "But that which fell among the thorns are they who have heard, and by cares, and wealth, and pleasures of the world, go and are choked, and yield no fruit. For the Saviour scatters the seed, which having obtained a firm hold in the souls that have received it, and already, so to say, shot up, and just begun to be visible, is choked by worldly cares, and dries up, being overgrown by empty occupations, and as the prophet Jeremiah said, "it becomes a handful, that can produce no meal. In these things therefore we must be like skilful husbandmen: who having perseveringly cleansed away the thorns, and torn up by the root whatever is injurious, then scatter the seed in clean furrows; and therefore one can say with confidence, "that doubtless they shall come with joy, bearing their sheaves. But if a man cast his seed in ground that is fertile in thorns, and fruitful in briars, and densely covered with useless stubble, he sustains a double loss: of his seed first, and also of his trouble. In order therefore that the divine seed may blossom well in us, let us first cast out of the mind worldly cares, and the unprofitable anxiety which makes us seek to be rich, "For we brought nothing into the world, nor can we take any thing out. For what profit is there in possessing superfluities?

"Treasures profit not the wicked," as Scripture saith, "but righteousness delivereth from death. For immediately upon the possession of affluence, there run up, and, so to speak, forthwith hem us in, the basest wickednesses; profligate banquets, the delights of gluttony, and carefully prepared sauces; music, and drunkenness, and the pitfalls of wantonness; pleasures and sensuality, and pride hateful to God. But as the disciple of the Saviour has said, "Every thing that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of the world; and the world passeth away, and its lust; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

This is the good seed, and worthy of admiration: the land rich and well productive, that bringeth forth fruit a hundredfold. For men say, that the best soils do sometimes under cultivation produce a hundredfold; so that this is a mark of every fertile and productive spot. And of such it has been very justly said by one of the

holy prophets at the mouth of God, ”And all nations shall congratulate you; because ye are a desirable land.” For when the divine word falls upon a mind pure and skilful in cleansing itself from things hurtful, it then fixes its root deeply, and shoots up like an ear of corn, and so to speak, being strong in blade, and well flowered, brings its fruit to perfection.

But I think it may be useful to mention this to you, who wish to learn what is good. For Matthew, when relating this chapter to us, said that the good ground brought forth, fruit in three degrees. ”For one, he says, brought forth a hundred, and one sixty, and one thirtyfold.” Observe therefore, that just as Christ described three degrees of loss, so similarly the degrees of success are equal in number. For those seeds that fall upon the pathway are snatched away by the birds: and those upon the rocks, having merely shot up, within a little while wither away: and those among the thorns are choked. But that desirable land brings forth fruit in three several degrees, as I said: a hundred, sixty, and thirtyfold. For as most wise Paul writes, ”Each one severally of us has his own gift from God, one in one manner, and another in another.” For we do not at all find that the successes of the saints are in equal measure. On us however it is incumbent to emulate these things that are better and superior to those of meaner kind; for so will Christ bountifully bestow happiness upon us: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLII.

8:19-21. And there came to Him His mother, and His brethren, and were not able to speak with Him because of the multitude. Bui it was told Him, Thy mother, and Thy brethren stand without, wishing to see Thee. But He answered and said unto them, My mother and My brethren are these who hear the word of God and do it.

ONCE again let the words of praise in the book of Psalms be quoted by us; ”What shall I render unto the Lord for all He hath rendered unto me?” For what can we offer Him that is equal to His love towards us? Shall we choose for our guidance the commands of the law, and honour Him with sacrifices of blood? Does He feel pleasure in the slaughter of bullocks and goats? No certainly: for they are an abomination unto Him. For by one of His holy prophets He even plainly declared to those who were rendering Him the legal service, ”I hate, I abominate your feast days: nor will I smell at your festivals: because though ye bring Me whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not accept them; nor regard your displays for salvation.” What therefore ought to be the spiritual sacrifice which we offer Him, the wise Psalmist again teaches us saying, ”I said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord; because my good things Thou needest not.” When thus we approach Him, He will accept us: if this be the offering we make Him it will be dear and agreeable: this is the spiritual sacrifice, according as it is written, ”Hath the Lord delight in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in our hearkening to His voice? Behold! to hearken is better than sacrifices; and to listen than the fat of rams.” For that obedience and the hearkening unto God, is the cause of every blessing, the present lesson teaches us. For some entered and told Christ respecting His holy mother and His brethren. And He, it says, answered in these words, ”My mother and My brethren are they who hear the word of God and do it.”

Now let not any one imagine that Christ spurned the honour due to His mother, or contemptuously disregarded the love owed to His brethren: for He it was Who spake the law by Moses, and clearly said, ”Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee.” And how I pray could He have rejected the love due to brethren, Who even commanded us to love not merely our brethren, but those who stand in the relation to us of foes? For He says, ”Love your enemies.” What

therefore does Christ wish to teach? His object then is highly to exalt His love towards those who are willing to bow the neck to His commands: and in what way I will explain. The greatest honours; and the most complete affection is that which we all owe to our mothers and brethren. If therefore He says that they who hear His word and do it are His mother and brethren, is it not plain to every one, that He bestows on those who follow Him a love thorough and worthy of their acceptance? For so He would make them readily embrace the desire of yielding themselves to His words, and of submitting their mind to His yoke, by means of a complete obedience.

But that God greatly rejoices in those whose minds are thus disposed, He assures us by one of the holy prophets, thus saying, ”And on whom shall I look, except upon the humble and meek, and that trembleth at My words?” For just as our fathers after the flesh feel pleasure in those sons whose choice it is to perform the things that are good and agreeable to them, and who wish to accord with them in mind, so also the God of all loves the obedient, and deigns His mercy to him who thoroughly hearkens to Him. And the converse also is true: that he rejects him who is disobedient and untractable. For He also blamed the Jews who fell into this wickedness, saying, ”A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if I then am a father, where is My honour? and if I am a master, where is My fear? saith the Lord Almighty.” For either we ought to fear the Lord of all as a master, or to honour Him at least as a father,----a thing which is far greater and better than the former: for love casteth out fear.

For that there is no obedience without reward, and on the other hand, no disobedience without penalty, is made plain by what God spake by His holy prophet to those who disregarded Him: ”Behold, they who serve Me shall eat, but ye shall suffer hunger: behold, they who serve Me shall drink, but ye shall suffer thirst: behold, they who obey Me shall rejoice, but ye shall lament: behold, they who serve Me shall exult in happiness, but ye shall groan, and wail from contrition of your heart. For let us see, if you will, even from the writings of Moses, the grief to which disobedience has brought us. We have been driven from a paradise of delights, and have also fallen under the condemnation of death; and while intended for incorruption:----for so God created the universe:----we yet have become accursed, and subject to the yoke of sin. And how then have we escaped from that which befel us, or Who is He that aided us, when we had sunk into this great misery? It was the Only-begotten Word of God, by submitting Himself to our estate, and being found in fashion as a man, and becoming obedient unto the Father even unto death. Thus has the guilt of the disobedience that is by Adam been remitted: thus has the power of the curse ceased, and the dominion of death been brought to decay.

And this too Paul teaches, saying, ”For as by the disobedience of the one man, the many became sinners, so by the obedience of the One, the many became righteous. For the whole nature of man became guilty in the person of him who was first formed; but now it is wholly justified again in Christ. For He became for us the second commencement of our race after that primary one; and therefore all things in Him have become new. And Paul assures of this, writing, ”Therefore every man who is in Christ is a new creation; and the former things have passed away: behold, they have become new.”

In order then that Christ may win us all unto obedience, He promises us surpassing honours, and deigns us the highest love, saying, ”My mother and My brethren are those who hear the word of God and do it.” For who among men is so obdurate and ungentle, as to refuse to honour, and accord the most complete love to his mother and brethren? For the all-powerful law of nature, even without our will, obliges us to this. When therefore, bowing our neck to the Saviour’s commands, we become His followers, and so are in the relation of a mother and brethren to Him, how does He regard us before God’s judgment seat? Is it not with gentleness and love? What doubt can there be of this? And what is comparable to this honour and goodness? What is there worthy of being matched with a gift thus splendid and desirable? For He takes us unto Him, that where He is, there we also may be with Him. For this He even deigned to promise us, saying, ”I will go, and make ready a place for you: and return again and take you with Me, that where I am, there ye also may be with Me.”

Servitude, therefore, is a thing worth our gaining, and the pledge of noble honours. And this, we say, is fulfilled not by our merely hearing the words of God, but by our endeavouring to perform what is commanded. This thou learnest from what one of the holy Apostles declares: ”But become doers of the law , and not hearers only. If any be a hearer of the law, and not a doer, he is like a man regarding his natural face in a mirror. For he has regarded himself, and gone away: and at once forgotten what manner of person he was. But he who hath, looked into the perfect law of liberty, and wrought: not being a forgetful hearer, but an active doer,he shall be blessed in his doing.”

Now though the argument already brought forward is sufficient for the persuasion of right-thinking men, yet I will add for their advantage that also which is correctly said in the words of the blessed Paul: ”For the land that hath drunk in the rain that hath come oft upon it, and bringeth forth the root serviceable for them for whose sake it is tilled, receiveth a blessing from God. But if it bring forth thorns and thistles, it is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: and its end is to be burnt. For like rain, the Saviour sendeth down upon the hearts of those who hear, the word of spiritual consolation; even the sacred doctrine of salvation. If then a man be possessed of understanding, he will bring forth the fruits of an abundant intellectual harvest:

but if he be careless and negligent, he of course has no claim to the praises of virtue, and instead of grapes will bring forth thorns. And what his end will be, we learn from the words of Isaiah. For he says: ”For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the man of Judah: a plant new and well-beloved: and I looked that it would bring forth grapes, but it brought forth iniquity, and not righteousness, but a cry. And that Israel was thus punished for its neglect of that fruitfulness which was both fitting for itself and well pleasing to God; having neither obeyed His commands, nor consented to perform them; we learn again from’ His words, where He says:

”But now I will shew you what I will do to My vineyard. I will take away its fence, and it shall be wasted: and I will rend its wall, and it shall be trampled under foot. And I will abandon My vineyard: and it shall not be pruned, nor tilled: and thorns shall grow up in it as on waste ground; and I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it. It is plain, therefore, to every man, that God hath no respect for the wicked soul that beareth thorns. For it is left unprotected, and without a wall, and exposed to the depredations of whoever will; a place for thieves and wild animals; and sharing in no spiritual consolation. For this I consider, and this only, is the meaning of there falling upon it no rain. When Israel suffered these things, the Psalmist so to speak wailed over him, and said to the God of all: ”The vine that Thou broughtest out of Egypt, Thou castedst out the nations and plantedst it. And again thus proceeds: ”Its shade covered the mountains; and its boughs were as the cedars of God: it sent forth its branches to the sea, and its foliage to the river. He made too supplications for what they had suffered, saying; ”Why hast Thou broken down her hedges, and all the wayfarers pluck her? The boar out of the wood destroyeth her: and the ass of the desert feedeth upon her.

For the soul that is undefended, and deemed unworthy of protection from on high, becomes a pasture ground for evil beasts. For it is plundered by Satan and his angels.

In order, therefore, that we may not fall into such severe tribulations, let us bow the neck of our mind to Christ the Saviour of all. Let us receive the Word of God and do it: for if our choice be so to act, He will crown us with lofty honours; for He is the distributor of the crowns; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLIII.

8:22-25. But it came to pass on a certain day that He went into a ship with His disciples. And He said unto them, Let us go over to the other side of the lake: and they went. But as they were sailing, He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind upon the lake, and the ship was filled and they were in danger. And they drew near, and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then He arose, and rebuked the winds, and the raging of the waters, and they were still: and there was a great calm. But He said to them, Where is your faith? And they were afraid, and wondered among themselves, saying, Who, then, is This, that He commandeth even the winds, and waters, and they obey Him? ONCE again draw near, that as with the Psalmist's harp we may cry aloud: "I will bless the Lord at all times: and at all times shall His praise be in my mouth." For He ever doeth wonderful things; and giveth occasions thick and closely pressing one upon another for His praise: and every word falls short of His power, and of His majesty far exalted above all. For true is it that "the glory of the Lord covereth over the Word." But we must not on this account forget the glory that is His due and fitting right: but rather must hasten joyfully to offer such fruits as are proportionate to our power. For certainly there is nothing whatsoever that a man can affirm to be better than praise, even though it be but little that we can offer. Come, therefore, and let us praise Christ the Saviour of all: let us behold the supremacy of His might, and the majesty of His godlike dominion.

For He was sailing, together with the holy Apostles, across the sea, or rather lake of Tiberias, and an unexpected and violent tempest arose upon the vessel; and the waves, piled up high by the gusts of the winds, filled the disciples with the fear of death. For they were terrified not a little, although well acquainted with seamanship, and by no means inexperienced in the tumults of the waves. But inasmuch as the greatness of the clangor made their terror now unendurable, as having no other hope of safety except Him only Who is the Lord of powers even Christ, they arouse Him, saying, Master, Master, save us, we perish: for the Evangelist says that He was asleep. With most wise purpose, as it seems to me, was this also done. For some one, I imagine, may say, Why did He fall asleep at all? To which we reply, that the event was so arranged as to be good and profitable. For that they might

not ask aid of Him immediately when the tempest began to dash upon the ship, but when, so to speak, the evil was at its height, and the terrors of death were troubling the disciples; that so the might of His godlike sovereignty might be more manifest, in calming the raging sea, and rebuking the savage blasts of the wind, and changing the tempest to a calm, and that the event might thus become a means of improvement to them that were sailing with Him, He purposely fell asleep.

But they, as I said, wake Him, saying: Save me, We perish. See here, I pray, smallness of faith united with faith. For they believe that He can save; and deliver from all evil those who call upon Him. For had they not so far had a firm faith in Him, they certainly would not have asked this of Him, And yet as having but little faith, they say, Save me, we perish. For it was not a thing possible, or that could happen, for them to perish when they were with Him Who is Almighty.

The vessel, then, was severely tossed by the violence of the tempest, and the breaking of the waves: and along with the whip the faith of the disciples also was tossed, so to speak, by similar agitations. But Christ, Whose authority extends over all, immediately arose, and at once appeased the storm, restrained the blasts of wind, quieted their fear, and yet further proved by deeds that He is God, at Whom all created things tremble and quake, and to Whose nods is subject the very nature of the elements. For He rebuked the tempest: and Matthew says that the manner of the rebuke was with godlike authority. For he tells us, that our Lord said to the sea: ”Peace, be thou still.” What can there be more grand than this in majesty? or what can equal its sublimity? Right worthy of God is the word, and the might of the commandment, so that we too may utter the praise written in the book of Psalms: ”Thou rulest the power of the sea: and stillest the turbulence of its waves.” He too has Himself said somewhere by one of the holy prophets: ”Why fear ye not Me, saith the Lord? nor tremble at My presence? I Who have set the sand as the bound of the sea, a commandment for ever, and it hath not passed it.” For the sea is subject to the will of Him Who made all creation, and is, as it wore, placed under the Creator’s feet, varying its motions at all times according to His good pleasure, and yielding submission to His lordly will.

When, therefore, Christ had calmed the tempest, He also changed into confidence the faith of the holy disciples, which had been shaken along with the ship, no longer permitting it to be in doubt; and wrought in them, so to say, a calm, smoothing the waves of their weak faith. For He said, ”Where is your faith?” Another Evangelist, however, affirms of Him, that He said, ”Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” For when the fear of death unexpectedly befals, it troubles sometimes even a well-established mind, and exposes it to the blame of littleness of faith; and such also is the effect of any other trouble too great to boar upon those who are tried by it. For this reason there once drew near certain unto Christ, and said: ”Increase our faith.”’ For the man who is still exposed to blame for littleness of faith falls short

of him who is perfect in faith. For just as gold is tried in the fire, so also is faith by temptations. But the mind of man is weak, and altogether in need of strength and help from above, in order that it may be well with him, and that he may be able to maintain a steadfast course, and be strong, manfully to endure whatsoever befal. And this our Saviour taught us, saying; ”Without Me ye can do nothing.” And the wise Paul also confesses the same, where he writes; ”I am able to do all things through Christ, That strengtheneth me.”

The Saviour, therefore, wrought miracles, changing by His all-prevailing nod the tempest into a calm, and smoothing the raging storm into a settled peace. But the disciples wondering at the divine sign, whispered one to another, saying: ”Who, then, is This, that He commands even the winds and the waters, and they obey Him? Did the blessed disciples, then, thus say to one another, ”Who is This? from not knowing Him? But how is not this utterly incredible? For they knew Jesus to be God, and the Son of God. For also Nathaniel plainly confessed, ”Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Yes, and Peter too, that chosen one of all the Apostles, when they were in the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi, and Christ put a question to them all, and said, ”Whom do men say that the Son of man ”is? and certain had answered, ” Some, indeed, Elias; but others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets”----made a correct and blameless confession of faith in Him, saying, ”Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Christ praised him for thus speaking, honoured him with crowns, and counted the disciple worthy of surpassing honours: for He said, ” Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven. And how could Peter, who was taught of God, not know Him Whom he plainly said was the Son of the living God?

It was not then as being ignorant of His glory, that the wise disciples say, Who is This? but rather as wondering at the immensity of His power, and at the lofty and incomparable greatness of His sovereignty. For the wretched Jews, either as being entirely ignorant of the mystery of Christ, or as not deigning Him, in their great wickedness, any regard, rebuked Him, and threw stones at Him, when He called God His Father. For they ventured even to say, ”Why dost Thou, being a man, make Thyself God? For they did not comprehend in their mind the depth of the mystery. God was in visible form like unto us: the Lord of all bore the likeness of a slave: He Who is high exalted was in lowliness: and He who surpasses all intellectual comprehension, and transcends every created being, was in the measure of us men. And as the disciples knew this, they wonder at the glory of the Godhead; and as they view It present in Christ, and yet see that He was like unto us, and visible in the flesh, they say, ”Who is This? instead of, How great He is! and of what nature! and with how great power, and authority, and majesty. He commands even the waters and the wind, and they obey Him!

There is also in this much for the admiration and improvement of those who hear: for creation is obedient to whatsoever Christ chooses to command. And what excuse can avail us, if we do not submit to do the same? or can deliver from the fire and condemnation him who is disobedient and untractable, setting up, so to speak, the neck of his haughty mind against Christ's commands, and whose heart it is impossible to soften? It is our duty, therefore, understanding that all those things that have been brought into existence by God entirely agree with His will, ourselves to become like the rest of creation, and avoid disobedience as a thing that leads to perdition. Let us rather, then, submit to Him Who summons us to salvation, and to the desire of living uprightly and lawfully, that is, evangelically: for so Christ will fill us with the gifts that come from above, and from Himself: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and over, Amen .

SERMON XLIV.

8:26-36. And they went to the country of the Gerasenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He went out on land, there met Him a certain man who had devils, and for a long time had not worn clothing, nor abode in a house, but in the tombs. And when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I beseech Thee, Torment me not. But He had commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man: for from a long time it had seized him, and he was kept bound with chains and fetters, and was watched: and breaking his bonds, he was driven, by the devil into the wilderness. And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because that many devils had entered into him. And they besought Him not to command them to go into the abyss. But there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought Him to suffer them to enter into them. And He suffered them. But when the devils had gone out of the man, they entered into the swine. And the herd rushed over the precipice into the lake, and was drowned. When then the keepers saw what had happened, they fled, and told it in the city and villages. And they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed, and sober-minded. And they were afraid. But they who saw it told them in what manner the demoniac had been saved.

THE prophet Habakkuk foresaw the glory of the Saviour, and, overcome by His wonderful deeds, he offered up praises unto Him, saying: ”O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and been afraid: I have considered Thy doings, and been astonished.” For of which of the deeds wrought by our common Saviour Christ can any one say, that it is not worthy of all admiration? which of them is not great, and highly to be praised, and a proof of His godlike authority? And this we can very clearly see in what has been here read to us from the evangelic Scriptures. Let us behold, then, the tyranny of the enemy shaken by Christ, and the earth set free from the wickedness of demons: let us see the heads of the serpent bruised by Him, and the swarm of venomous reptiles driven away overpowered and in terror: and those who in old time had been full of cunning and audacity; who had held subject to their sway all that lies beneath the heavens; who had prided themselves upon their temples of

vast cost, and on their beautifully sculptured altars; who had been honoured with sacrifices; and crowned with universal praises; fall from their former glory, and as though retaining sovereignty over no one single man, beg for a herd of swine! A very plain proof is this of the unexpected misery that had befallen them, and of their being broken utterly.

But no more: for I perceive that in my discourse I have taken a leap, as it were, from what we began with, and have hurried to the latter part of the lesson. Come, therefore, that, like a fleet and strong-limbed horse, we may as with a bridle, turn it back to the beginning. For the Saviour, in company with the holy disciples, had landed in the country of the Gerasenes; and immediately a man met them, in whom dwelt many unclean spirits: and he was void of mind and understanding, and in no respect different from those already dead, and laid in the earth: or rather, perhaps, even in a more miserable state. For they, carefully wrapped in their grave-clothes, are laid in the earth, like one on his mother's bosom: but he, in great misery and nakedness, wandering among the graves of the dead, was in utter wretchedness, leading a disgraceful and ignominious life: and so was a proof of the cruelty of the demons, and a plain demonstration of their impurity. And besides this, it is a charge and accusation against them of hatred unto mankind: for they would have no man whatsoever upon earth sober, but wish them like one intoxicated, and crazed, to know nothing to their profit, but be left in ignorance even of Him Who is the Maker of all. For of whomsoever they have possession, and have subjected to their power, him at once they make an example of great misery, deprived of every blessing, and destitute of all sobriety, and bereft moreover entirely even of reason itself.

But why, say some, have they possession of men? To such, then, as wish to have this explained, I answer, that the reason of these things is very deep: for so somewhere God is addressed by one of His saints, "Thy judgments are a vast abyss." But as long as we bear this in mind, we shall perchance not shoot beside the mark. The God of all, then, purposely permits some to fall into their power, not so much that they may suffer, as that we may learn by their example in what way the demons treat us, and so may avoid the wish of being subject to them. For by the suffering of one, many are edified.

But the Gerasene, or rather the herd of demons lying concealed within him, fell down before Christ's feet, saying, "What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I beseech Thee, torment me not.'" Here observe, I pray, the mixture of fear with great audacity, and overweening pride: and that the words which he is forced, as it were, to ejaculate, are coupled with inflated haughtiness! For it is a proof of the pride of the enemy, that he ventures to say, "What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High? Thou knowest, then, for certain, that He is the Son of God Most High: thou therefore confessest that He is also God, and Lord of heaven and earth, and of all things therein: and how, then,

having usurped that which is not thine, or rather that which is His, and assumed to thyself a glory which in no possible way is thy right:----for thou claimedst to be worshipped:----didst thou affirm that He had nothing to do with thee, Whom, as far as thy endeavours went, thou causedst to be expelled from that dignity which most fitly is His alone? All men upon earth are His; and these thou wickedly corruptedst, removing them far from the knowledge of Him Who truly is the Lord and Maker of all, and plungedst them into the mire of sin, making them thy worshippers:----and afterwards dost thou say, ”What is there between me and Thee?

What earthly king would endure to have those placed under his sceptre harrassed by barbarians? Or what shepherd is so unfeeling and indifferent, as when savage beasts attack his flocks, to take no heed of the calamity, nor endeavour to aid his sheep? Confess, even though against thy will, who thou art, and to Whom thou speakest. Utter words such as befit thee: such namely as, ”I pray Thee, torment me not. ”For He had commanded, it says, the spirit to go out of the man.”

Observe, I pray again, the incomparable majesty of Him Who transcends all, even of Christ. With irresistible might and unequalled authority He crushes Satan by simply willing that so it should be. He does not permit him to venture to give one look of opposition to His commands. Fire and flames unto him was Christ’s will: so that it is true as the blessed Psalmist said, that ”the hills melted like wax before the face of God.” And again elsewhere, ”Touch the hills, and they shall smoke.” For he compares to the hills those high and boastful powers of wickedness; which nevertheless, as though in contact with fire, melt like wax before the might and sovereignty of our Saviour. And besides this they smoke: now smoke is an indication of tire about to burst into a blaze; and this it is the lot of the impure spirits to suffer. But Christ asked him, and commanded him to tell, What was his name. And he said, ”Legion, because that many devils had entered into him.” Did Christ then ask because He did not know it, and like one of us, wished to learn it as something that had escaped Him? But how is it not perfectly absurd for us to say or imagine any thing of the kind? For as being God, ”He knoweth all things, and searcheth the hearts and reins.” He asked therefore for the plan of salvation’s sake, that we might learn that a great multitude of devils shared the one soul of the man, engendering in him a wretched and impure madness. For he was their work, and they indeed are ”wise to do evil,” as the Scripture saith, but to do ”good they have no knowledge.”

As therefore the Psalmist said, ”let us keep the feast with flowers.” And ”Let all the people clap their hands.” For let us bear in mind what was the character of our enemies; and who were those princes of all beneath the heavens before the coining of our Saviour: bitter were they, impure, murderers, and full of all immorality. But Christ setteth us free from the hatred of these noxious beings. Let us therefore with exultation and gladness in our great joy exclaim, ”We will cut asunder their

cords, and cast away their yoke from us." For we have been set free, as I said, by the might of Christ, and delivered from those bitter and iniquitous beings, who in old time had the dominion over us.

The herd then of impure spirits asked for a herd----worthy of and like itself----of swine! And Christ purposely gave them leave, though He well knew what they would do. And I can imagine some one saying, Why did He grant their request? To which we answer, That He gave them the power, in order that this, like all His other conduct, might be a means of benefit to us, and inspire us with the hope of safety. But perhaps thou wilt say, How, and in what manner? Listen therefore. They ask for power over swine: plainly as something which they do not possess. For what possible doubt can there be, that they would not have asked it, if it had been in their power to take it without hindrance? But those who have no power over things thus trifling and valueless, how can they injure any one of those whom Christ has scaled, and who place their hope on Him? Comfort therefore thy heart: for perhaps thou wast terrified at hearing that a crowd of wicked spirits dwelt in one man, and made him wander among the graves of the dead in shame and nakedness, and bereft of mind and understanding. Inasmuch as thou too art a man exposed to temptations, thou fearedst a misery thus bitter and unendurable, should Satan attack thee. Rouse therefore thy heart to confidence: do not suppose that any such thing can happen while Christ surrounds us with protection and love. It is certain that they possess no power even over swine.

So great is the providence which the Almighty Governor of our affairs deigns to bestow on human things. For He even said to the holy apostles, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them falleth to the ground without your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. For if He bestow His protection upon things thus trifling and valueless, how will He not deem us worthy of all regard, for whose sake He Who by nature is God, even became man, and endured the contumelies of the Jews? Away therefore with fear: for God aids, and encircles with the armour of His good pleasure those whose wish it is to live for Him, and who seek to perform those things that are pleasing in His sight.

And this too we may learn, from what befel the herd of swine, that wicked demons are cruel, and mischievous, and hurtful, and treacherous to those who are in their power. This the fact clearly proves, that they hurried the swine over a precipice and drowned them in the waters. Christ therefore granted their request, that we might learn from what happened, that their disposition is ruthless and bestial, incapable of being softened, and solely intent on doing evil to those whom they can get into their power. if therefore there be any one among us wanton and swinish, filth-loving and impure, and willingly contaminated with the abominations of sin, such a one by God's permission, falls into their power, and sinks into the abyss of perdition.

But it can never happen to those who love Christ, to become subject unto them: nor to us, as long as we walk in His footsteps, and, avoiding negligence in the performance of what is right, desire those things which are honourable, and belong to that virtuous and laudable conversation, which Christ has marked out for us by the precepts of the Gospel: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLV.

8:40-48. And when Jesus returned, the multitude received Him; for they were all waiting for Him. And behold there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought Him to come to his house; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. And as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. A woman who had had an issue of blood twelve years, and had spent all her substance upon physicians, and could be healed of none, came near behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment: and immediately her issue of blood staunched. And Jesus said, Who touched Me? And when all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitudes press and throng Thee. But Jesus said, Some one touched Me; for I know that power has gone forth from Me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid from Him, she came trembling, and fell down before Him, and declared before all the people, for what cause she had touched Him, and that she was healed immediately. And He said unto her, My daughter, thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.

Those who are skilful in elucidating the mystery of the dispensation of the Only-begotten in the flesh, and whose minds are illuminated with divine light, the Spirit commanded, saying, "Declare His praise among the Gentiles, and His miracles among all nations." Did He then command them to declare the praise of our universal Saviour Christ among the multitudes of the Gentiles, to the inhabitants, that is, of the whole world, for no other reason than that He might be admired, or was it not that He might also be believed on by all men? I verily affirm that it was both in order that He might be admired, and also that we might believe that the Word of God the Father is very God, even though, as John says, He was made flesh. For He also somewhere declares unto the Jews, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do them, though ye believe not Me, believe the works."

Let us then once again behold Him benefiting multitudes by the miracles He wrought for their good. For there was a ruler and teacher of the synagogue of the Jews, called Jairus; and him the Gospel narrative here announces to us. For he fell down before the feet of Christ our common Saviour, to ask for the unloosing of death, and the annulling of corruption. For his daughter was, so to speak, at the

very gates of the grave. Come then, and let us ask Jairus to tell us in what light he regards Him to Whom he offers his request. For if thou drawest near regarding Him as a mere man, and like unto one of us; as one, that is, Who possesses no power superior to ourselves, thou missest thy mark, and hast wandered from the right road, in asking of a man that which requires the power of God. The supreme nature alone is able to give life to the dead. It alone has immortality: and from It every thing that is called into being borrows its life and motion. Ask therefore of men the things that belong unto men, and of God the things that belong unto God.

Moreover thou worshippest Him as the Almighty God: and doest so, as certainly knowing and testifying that He is able to give thee the accomplishment of thy requests. What argument therefore is sufficient for thy defence, that once thou stonedst Christ the Saviour of all; and with the rest didst persecute Him, and most foolishly and impiously say, "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy: because that Thou being a man, makest Thyself God."

And not only must we wonder at this, but at the following as well. For Lazarus indeed arose from the dead at the summons of Christ, Who made him come forth from the very grave, when he had been there four days, and corruption had already begun. And those indeed who were spectators of the miracle were astonished at the majesty of the deed. But the rulers of the synagogue of the Jews made the very miracle food for envy, and an act thus great and excellent was stored up in their memory as a seed whence sprung the guilt of murder. For when they had assembled, they took counsel one with another, certainly for no lawful deed, but for one rather that brought upon them their final doom. For they said, "What do we? for This man doeth many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, the Romans will come, and take away both our nation and our place." What then sayest thou to this, O Jairus? Thou sawest death abolished in the case of Lazarus; death which always and to every one before had been stern and unyielding. Thou sawest destruction lose its power, from which no one on earth had escaped. And how then dost thou imagine thou canst make Him subject unto death Who is supreme over death: the Overthrower of destruction, and the Giver of life? How can He Who delivered others from the snares of death, Himself be liable to suffer it, unless He wills so to do for the plan of salvation's sake. The text therefore concerning them is true, "that they are foolish children, and unwise."

But the fate of the damsel was not without profit to her father. For just as sometimes the violence of the reins brings the spirited steed that has bounded away from the road back to its proper course, so also trouble often compels the soul of man to yield obedience to those things which are for its good, and are commanded. To this effect we find the blessed David also addressing God over all, concerning those men who, not being as yet willing to walk uprightly, were led on, so to speak, by the disorderly impulses of their mind to the pit of destruction. "With bridle and

bit Thou shalt restrain the jaws of those who draw not near to Thee. For the force of circumstances brings men, as I said, even against their wills to the necessity of bowing their neck to God, as we may see indirectly shewn in the Gospel parables. For Christ somewhere said, that when the banquet was ready, a servant was sent to call them to the supper, and gather those that were bidden: but they, employing fictitious excuses of various kinds, would not come. Then the Lord, it says, spake to that servant: ”Go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in that My house may be filled. What then is the meaning of men being invited from the hedges,----and that as it were by force,----if it be not what is here referred to? For sometimes misfortunes beyond the power of endurance hedge men into extreme misery:

and meeting, it may be, with care and assistance from those who fear Christ, they are thus led on unto faith in Him and love: and being weaned from their former error received by tradition from their fathers, they accept the saving word of the Gospel. And such we may well affirm to be those who are called from the hedges. It is indeed more excellent and praiseworthy, when the withdrawal from former error to hasten to the truth is the fruit of freewill: and such converts gathering the confirmation of their belief from the sacred Scriptures, and enjoying the instruction of such as are skilful in initiating men into the mysteries, will advance onwards to a correct and blameless faith. But those others, who are kindled, if we may so speak, by force and the troubles they meet with to the acknowledgment of the truth, are not upon an equality with the former, but when admitted must be careful to maintain constancy, and flee from a fickle levity: for it is their duty to preserve an unwavering faith, lest they be found reprobate and feeble workers, deserters after the seal , cowards and traitors after taking up arms. Let them not hasten back to their former deeds, lest that be said of them which was spoken by one of the holy apostles: ”For it had been better for them not to have known the way of truth, than having known it to turn back from the holy commandment that was delivered unto them.

The case of the true proverb has befallen them: the dog that returns to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to wallowing in the mire.”

Not however to make this digression too long, let us return to our original subject. Jairus then drew near; but we deny that his coming was the fruit of freewill; rather it was the fear of death which made him thus act against his will: for it had already, so to speak, assailed his daughter; and she was his only one. He set utterly at nought then the reputation of consistency in his wicked words and thoughts. For he who had ofttimes made the attempt to slay Christ, for raising the dead from the grave, asks of Him the unloosing of death. In order then that his character may be seen to be harsh and abominable, and that he may be convicted of being such by the very facts, Christ accompanied him, and yielded to his request.

But there was also a sort of wise management in what was done. For had He not yielded to his request for grace, both himself and whosoever else suffered under the same ignorance, or rather, want of common sense, would have said forsooth, that He was not able to raise the damsel, nor drive death away from her, even if He had gone to the house: that being then without power, and unequal to the accomplishment of the divine miracle, He made His displeasure at Jairus a pretext for keeping away. To put a stop therefore to the impure and unbridled calumny of the Jews, and restrain the tongues of the numerous persons ever ready for fault-finding, He consents immediately, and promises to raise up her who was in danger. And the promises were followed by the fulfiment, in order that disbelief on their part might be without excuse, and that this miracle, like the rest, might be for their condemnation. For Christ also said of them, ”If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.”

The Saviour then wont to raise the damsel, and to implant in the dwellers upon earth the sure hope of the resurrection of the dead. But as He was midway on His road, another miracle, not unlike the former, was wonderfully wrought. For there was a woman afflicted with an issue of blood, the prey of a severe and violent malady, which refused to yield to the skill of physicians, and set at nought all the appliances of human remedies. For she could ”not be healed, it says, by any,” even though she had unsparingly lavished all her substance upon those who promised to deliver her from her disease. When therefore the unhappy woman had given up all hope from men, and now survived only for utter misery, she conceived in her a wise plan. For she had recourse to the Physician Who is from above, from heaven, as One Who is able readily and without effort to effect those things that are beyond our power, and Whose decrees, whatever it be He would accomplish, nothing can oppose.

Her faith in this was perhaps occasioned by seeing Jairus leading Him to his house, to prove Himself mightier than death, by delivering his daughter from its inevitable bonds. For she thought perchance within herself, that if He be mightier than death, and the destroyer of corruption, how much more can He also alleviate the malady that afflicts her, staunching by ineffable power the fountains of her issue of blood! She draws near therefore and touches the hem of His garment; but secretly and not openly: for she hoped to be able to escape notice, and. as it were, to steal healing from One Who knew not of it. But why, tell me, was the woman careful to escape notice? For why should she not draw near to Christ with more boldness than that leper, and ask for the remission of her incurable pain?, For he said, ”Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” Why should not she act like those blind men, who when Christ passed by called out and said, ”Have mercy upon us, Lord Jesus, the Son of David”? What then was it made that sick woman wish to remain hid? It was because the law of the all-wise Moses imputed impurity to any woman who was

suffering from an issue of blood, and everywhere called her unclean: and whoever was unclean, might neither touch any thing that was holy, nor approach a holy man. For this reason the woman was careful to remain concealed, lest as having transgressed the law, she should have to bear the punishment which it imposed. And when she touched, she was healed immediately and without delay.

But the miracle did not remain hid; for the Saviour, though knowing all things, asked as if He knew it not, saying, 'Who touched Me?' And when the holy apostles with good reason said, "The multitudes throng Thee and press Thee ," He sets before them what had been done, saying, "Somebody touched Me: for I know that power has gone forth from Me." Was it then for love of glory that the Lord did not allow this instance of His godlike working----the miracle, I mean, that had happened to the woman to remain concealed? By no means do we say this, but rather, that it was because He ever keeps in view the benefit of those who are called to grace through faith. The concealment then of the miracle would have been injurious to many, but being made known, it benefited them in no slight degree; and especially the ruler of the synagogue himself. For it gave security to the hope to which he looked forward, and made him firmly trust that Christ would deliver his daughter from the bonds of death.

But it is itself a fit subject for our admiration. For that woman was delivered, being saved from a state of suffering thus bitter and incurable; and thereby we again obtain the firm assurance, that the Emmanuel is very God. How and in what manner? Both from the miraculous event itself, and from the words which with divine dignity He spake. "For, I know, He said, that power has gone forth from Me." But it transcends our degree, or probably that even of the angels, to send forth any power, and that of their own nature, as something that is of themselves. Such an act is an attribute appropriate solely to the Nature That is above all, and supreme. For every created being whatsoever that is endued with power, whether of healing, or the like, possesses it not of itself, but as a thing given it by God. For to the creature all things are given, and wrought in it, and of itself it can do nothing. As God therefore He said "I knew that power has gone forth from Me."

And the woman now made confession; and inasmuch as with her malady, with the disease, I mean, which had afflicted her, she had put off the fear, which made her wish to remain concealed, she proclaimed the divine miracle: and therefore was very fitly deemed worthy of His tranquillizing words, and received security that she should suffer from her malady no more; for our Saviour Christ said unto her, "Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." And this too was for the benefit of Jairus, though it was indeed a hard lesson. For he learns, that neither the legal worship, nor the shedding of blood, nor the slaying of goats and calves, nor the circumcision of the flesh, nor the rest of the sabbaths, nor ought besides of these temporary and typical matters, can save the dwellers upon earth; faith only in

Christ can do so, by means of which even the blessed Abraham was justified, and called the friend of God, and counted worthy of especial honours. And the blessing of God has been given also to those, who according to the terms of the promise were to be his sons: even unto us. ”For they are not all Israel; who are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all sons: but the children of the promise are accounted as the seed.” To us then this grace belongs: for we have been adopted as Abraham’s sons, ”being justified not so much by the works of the law, as by faith in Christ;” by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen .

SERMON XLVI.

8:49-56. And while He is speaking, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead: trouble no more the Teacher. But when Jesus heard it, He answered and said, Fear not: believe only, and she shall live. And when He came unto the house, He suffered no one to go in with Him, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept and bewailed her. But He said, Weep not: for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed at Him, knowing that she was dead. But He made them all go out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit returned, and she arose immediately: and He commanded to give her somewhat to eat. And her parents were astonished. And He commanded them to tell no one what was done.

O COME, all ye who love the glory of the Saviour, and thereby weave crowns for your heads, come once again, that we may rejoice in Him, and as we extol Him with endless praises, let us say in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "O Lord, my God, I will praise Thee; and I will laud Thy name; for Thou hast wrought wonderful works, even a counsel true from the beginning. What then is the counsel and purpose of God the Father, which was from the beginning, and was true? Plainly that respecting us. For Christ foreknew, even before the foundations of the world, His mystery: but it was in the last ages of the world that He arose for the inhabitants of earth, that having borne the sin of the world, He might abolish both it and death, which is its consequence, and was brought upon us by its means. For so He Himself plainly said, "I am the resurrection and the life: and "he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but hath passed from death unto life. And this then we shall see fulfilled in actual facts. For the ruler of the synagogue of the Jews drew near, and embracing the Saviour's knees, besought Him to deliver his daughter from the bonds of death:----for lo! already she had been brought down unto this, and was in extreme danger.

And the Saviour consented, and set out with him, and was even hastening onward to the house of him who asked the favour, as well knowing that what was being done would profit many of those who followed Him, and would also be for His own glory.

And thus on the way the woman was saved, who was the victim of a severe and incurable malady. For she had an issue of blood, which no one could stanch, and which set at nought the art of physicians: but no sooner had she touched the hem in faith, than she was forthwith healed; and a miracle thus glorious and manifest was, so to speak, the work merely of Christ's journey.

And afterwards there met them from the ruler of the synagogue's house a messenger, saying: "Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Teacher." What, then, was Christ's answer, seeing that He possesses universal sovereignty; that He is Lord of life and death; and by the all-powerful determination of His will accomplishes whatsoever He desires? He saw the man oppressed with the weight of sorrow, swooning, and stupefied, and all but despairing of the possibility of his daughter being rescued from death. For misfortunes are able to disturb even an apparently well-constituted mind, and to estrange it from its settled convictions. To aid him, therefore, He gives him a kind and saving word, fit to sustain him in his fainting state, and work in him an unwavering faith, saying, "Fear not: only believe, and she shall live."

And having now come to the house of His supplicant, He quiets their lamentations, silences the musicians, and stops the tears of the weepers, saying, "The damsel is not dead, but rather sleepeth." And they, it says, laughed at Him. Observe here, I pray, the great skill of the management. For though He well knew that the damsel was dead, He said, "She is not dead, but rather sleepeth." For what reason? That by their laughing at Him, they might give a clear and manifest acknowledgment that the damsel was dead. For probably there would be some of that class who always resist His glory, who would reject the divine miracle, and say, that the damsel was not yet dead; and that in being delivered from sickness, there was nothing done by Christ very extraordinary. To have, therefore, the acknowledgment of many that the damsel was dead, He said, that she was rather sleeping. And let no man affirm that Christ spake untruly. For to Him, as being Life by nature, there is nothing dead. And this is the reason why we, having a firm hope of the resurrection of the dead, call them "those that sleep." For in Christ they will arise: and, as the blessed Paul says, "They live to Him," in that they are about to live.

But observe this also. For as if to teach us to avoid vainglory;---- though certainly no such admirable deeds can be wrought by us;----when He came to the house in which the damsel was lying dead, He took in with Him but three of the holy Apostles, and the father and the mother of the damsel. And the manner in which He wrought the miracle was worthy of God. For having taken her, it says, by the hand, He said, Damsel, arise: and she arose immediately. O the power of a word, and the might of commands that nothing can resist! O the life-producing touch of the hand, that abolishes death, and corruption! These are the fruits of faith, for the sake of which the law also was given to those of old time by the hand of Moses. But perhaps some

one may say to this: 'But lo! any one can see that the ceremonial ordained by the law is unlike and at variance with faith in Christ: for the law commands us to

make use of bloody sacrifices; but faith rejects everything of the kind, and has brought in for mankind a worship to be offered in spirit and in truth. For even Christ is somewhere found thus speaking by the harp of the Psalmist to God the Father in heaven: "Sacrifices and offerings Thou didst not desire: whole burnt offerings, and for sins, Thou hadst no pleasure in: but a body hast Thou framed for Me. Then said I, Lo! I come: for in the chapter of the books it is written of Me: I delight to do Thy will, O God," Offerings therefore by blood are unavailing; but the sweet savour of spiritual worship is very acceptable to God. And this no man can present unto Him, unless first he possess that faith which is by Christ. And the blessed Paul bears witness to this, where he writes: "Without faith, no man can ever do that which is well pleasing."'

It is necessary, therefore, for us to explain in what sense we say that the law was given because of faith. The blessed Abraham then was justified by obedience and faith. For it is written: "That Abraham believed God; and he was called the friend of God, and faith was counted to him for righteousness." And God promised him both that he should be the father of many nations, and that all nations should be blessed in him; that is to say, by the imitation of his faith. One can see, therefore, that the grace that is by faith is prior to the ceremonial enjoined by the law, in that Abraham attained unto it while still uncircumcised. And afterwards, in process of time, the law entered by the hand of Moses. Did it then thrust away the justification that is by faith,----that I mean which God promised to those who follow the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had while still uncircumcised? But how can this be true? The blessed Paul, therefore, writes: "This I say then, that the covenant, which was confirmed of old by God, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years afterwards, does not disannul, so as to make the promise given to the fathers of no effect." And again: "Is the law then against the promises of God? It may not be." And the same divine Paul further teaches us the reasons for which the law at length entered by the ministration of angels, and the manner in which it confirms the faith in Christ, by having been brought in before the time of the incarnation of the Only-begotten, saying at one time, that "the law entered that sin might abound:" and at another again, "that the Scripture hath included all things under sin:" and again, "The law, therefore, was added, because of transgressions."

Do you wish to learn how the Scripture included all things under sin? If so, I will explain it to the best of my ability. The heathen, then, as those who were without God, and destitute of hope, were in this world as men imprisoned in the pitfalls of baseness, and entangled without hope of escape in the cords of sin. On the other hand, the Israelites possessed indeed the law as a schoolmaster: but no man could be justified by its moans. For there is no profit to them that are in their sins in an

offering by blood. And to this Paul again bears witness, saying; ”For the blood of bulls, and of goats, cannot take away sins.” The law is the proof of the infirmity of all men: and therefore the blessed Paul calls it ”the ministry of condemnation.” Sin abounded by its means: and that, not as though it made any man sin, but rather because it declared the condemnation of him who was subject to offences. It was enacted, therefore, because of transgressions, that as now no man was able to attain to a blameless life, the bringing in of the justification that is by Christ might be altogether necessary. For there was no other way by which the inhabitants of earth could escape from the tyranny of sin. The law, then, entered first for the sake of faith, to declare the guilt of those who were liable to infirmities, and prove them to be sinners. It sent men, therefore, so to speak, to the cleansing that is in Christ by faith. And for this reason the blessed Paul again wrote: ”Therefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” For we are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Faith, then, in every way, is the cause of life, as that which slays sin, the mother and nurse of death. Excellently, therefore, said Christ to the ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, when his daughter was dead; ”Fear not: only believe, and she shall live.” For, as I said, Christ makes those live who approach Him by faith, in that He is life; ”for in Him we live and move, and are:” and He will raise the dead ”suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,”” as it is written. And having this hope in Him, we shall both attain to the city that is above, and reign as kings with Him; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen. [Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

SERMON XLVII.

9:1-5. And when He had called the twelve Apostles, He gave them power and authority over all the devils, and to heal sicknesses. And He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. And He said unto them, Take nothing for the way: no staff: no scrip: neither bread nor money: nor shall ye have two coats. And into whatsoever house ye enter, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye depart from that city, shake off the dust from your feet for their testimony. IT is a true saying, that the fruit of good deeds is honourable. For those who wish to lead lives pure and undefiled as far as is possible for men, Christ will adorn with His gifts, and grant them an abundant recompense for all their saintly deeds, and make them partakers of His glory. For it is impossible that He should ever lie who says: ”As I live, saith the Lord, those who honour Me, I will honour.”

As a plain and clear proof of this, I take the glorious and noble company of the holy Apostles. Behold them highly distinguished, and crowned with more than human glory, by this fresh gift bestowed by Christ. ”For He gave them, it says, power and authority over all the devils, and to heal sicknesses.” Observe again, I pray, that the Incarnate Word of God exceeds the measure of humanity, and is radiant with the dignities of the Godhead. For it transcends the limits of human nature, to give authority over unclean spirits to whomsoever He will: as does also the enabling them to deliver from sicknesses such as were afflicted with them. For God, indeed, bestows on whom He will powers of this kind; and on His decree alone it depends that any are able, according to His good pleasure, to work divine miracles, and act as ministers of the grace that is from above: but to impart to others the gift bestowed on them, is altogether an impossibility. For the majesty and glory of the supreme nature is found existing essentially in nothing that has being, except in Itself, and It only. Be it, therefore, angel or archangel, that any one mentions, or thrones and dominions, or the seraphim, which again are higher in dignity, let him wisely understand this: that they indeed possess pre-eminent authority by the powers given them from above, such as language cannot describe, nor nature bestow: but reason altogether forbids the supposition of their imparting

these powers to others. But Christ bestows them, as being God therefore, and as out of His own fulness: for He is Himself the Lord of glory and of powers.

The grace then bestowed upon the holy Apostles is worthy of all admiration; but the bountifulness of the Giver surpasses all praise and admiration: for He gives them, as I said, His own glory. Man receives authority over the evil spirits, and reduces unto nothingness the pride that was so high exalted, and arrogant, even that of the devil: his wickedness he renders ineffectual, and, by the might and efficacy of the Holy Ghost, burning him as with fire, he makes him come forth with groans and weeping from those whom he had possessed. And yet in old time he had said: "I will hold the whole world in my hand as a nest, and will take it as eggs that are left: and there is no one that shall escape from me, or speak against me." He missed, then, the truth, and fell from his hope, proud and audacious though he was, and vaunting himself over the infirmity of mankind. For the Lord of powers marshalled against him the ministers of the sacred proclamations. And this verily had been foretold by one of the holy prophets when speaking of Satan and the holy teachers: "That suddenly they shall arise that bite thee: and they shall awake that afflict thee, and thou shalt be their prey." For, so to speak, they bit Satan by attacking his glory, and making his goods a spoil, and bringing them unto Christ by means of faith in Him: for so they attacked Satan himself. Great therefore was the power given unto the holy Apostles by the decree and will of Christ, the Saviour of us all. "For He gave them power and authority over the unclean spirits."

We will, in the next place, also inquire, if it seem good, whence a grace, thus illustrious and famous, descended upon mankind. The Only-begotten Word therefore of God crowned human nature with this great honour by becoming flesh, and taking upon Him our likeness. And thus, without in one single particular departing from the glories of His majesty;----for He wrought deeds worthy of God, even though He became, as I said, like unto us, and was of flesh and blood;----He broke the power of Satan by His almighty word. And by His rebuking the evil spirits, the inhabitants of earth became able to rebuke them also.

And that what I say is true, I will endeavour to make quite certain. For the Saviour, as I said, was rebuking the unclean spirits: but the Pharisees, opening their mouth to deride His glory, had the effrontery to say, "This man casteth not out devils, but by Beelzebub, prince of the devils." But the Saviour rebuked them for so speaking, as men prone to mockery, and ill-disposed, and utterly without understanding, thus saying; "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons east them out? Therefore shall they be your judges." For the blessed disciples, who were sons of the Jews by their descent according to the flesh, were the terror of Satan and his angels: for they broke their power in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And our Lord further said: "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come upon you." For He, as the Only-begotten Son of the Father,

and the Word, both was and is omnipotent, and there is nothing that is not easy to Him: but inasmuch as He rebuked evil spirits while He was man, human nature was triumphant in Him, and crowned with godlike glory; for it was capable of rebuking even the evil spirits with power. By Christ's casting out devils, therefore, the kingdom of God came unto us: for one may affirm that it is the perfection of godlike majesty to be able to beat down Satan in spite of his resistance.

He glorified therefore His disciples by giving them authority and power over the evil spirits, and over sicknesses. Did He then thus honour them without reason, and make them illustrious without any cogent cause? But how can this be true if For it was necessary, most necessary, that having been publicly appointed ministers of the sacred proclamations, they should be able to work miracles, and by means of what they wrought convince men of their being the ministers of God, and mediators of all beneath the heaven, inviting them all to reconciliation and justification by faith, and pointing out the way of salvation and of life that is thereby. For the devout and intelligent need generally only reasoning to make them understand the truth: but those who have wandered without restraint into rebellion, and are not prepared to receive the sound speech of him who would win them for their true profit;----such require miracles, and the working of signs: and scarcely even so are they brought to thorough persuasion.

For we often find that the discourse of the holy Apostles prospered in this way. For, for example, Peter and John delivered from his malady that lame man who lay at the beautiful gate. And upon his entering the temple, they had his aid, as it were, in testimony of the great deed that had been wrought, and spake with great boldness concerning Christ, the Saviour of us all; even though they saw that those whose lot it was to be rulers of the synagogue of the Jews, were still travailling with bitter ill-will against Him. For they said: "Ye men of Israel, why wonder ye at this, or why gaze ye at us, as though by our own might or righteousness we made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, Whom ye delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he would have let Him go. But ye denied the Holy One, and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted you. And Him the Prince of Life ye killed; Whom God raised from the dead. And of Him we are witnesses: and His Name, through faith in His Name, hath made this man strong whom ye see and know: and faith in Him hath given him this soundness in the presence of you all." But although many of the Jews were embittered at a loftiness of speech such as this, yet against their will they put, so to speak, a bridle upon their wrath, being ashamed because of the greatness of the miracle.

And there is another point we must not omit. For having first invested the holy Apostles with powers thus splendid, He then bids them depart with speed, and commence their office of proclaiming His mystery to the inhabitants of the whole earth.

For just as able generals, having equipped their bravest soldiers with weapons of war, send them against the phalanxes of the enemy; so too does Christ, our common Saviour and Lord, send the holy teachers of His mysteries, clad as it were in the grace that He bestows, and fully equipped in spiritual armour, against Satan and his angels; that so they may be unconquerable and hardy combatants. For they were about to do battle with those who in old time held mastery over the inhabitants of earth; even against the wicked and opposing powers, who had divided among them all under heaven, and had made those their worshippers who had been created in the image of God. These, then, the divine disciples were about to vex, by summoning to the knowledge of the truth those that were in error, and giving light to them that were in darkness: while those who in old time worshipped them, they rendered earnest followers of such pursuits as become saints.

For this reason very fitly He bade them take nothing with them, wishing them both to be free from all worldly care, and so entirely exempt from the labours that worldly things occasion, as even to pay no regard to their necessary and indispensable food. But manifestly One Who bids them abstain even from things such as these, entirely cuts away the love of riches and the desire of gain. For their glory, He said, and, so to speak, their crown, is to possess nothing. And He withdraws them even from such things as are necessary for their use, by the command to carry nothing whatsoever, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money, nor two coats. Observe, therefore, as I said, that He withdraws them from vain distractions, and anxiety about the body, and bids them have no cares about food, repeating to them, as it were, that passage in the Psalm: ”Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall feed thee.” For true also is that which Christ said: ”Ye are not able to serve God and Mammon.” And again; ”For where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.”

That they may lead, therefore, a consistent and simple life, and, being free from vain and superfluous anxiety, may devote themselves entirely to the duty of proclaiming His mystery, and labour without ceasing in publishing to men everywhere the tidings of salvation, He commands them to be indifferent both as regards clothing and food. And to the same effect the Saviour elsewhere spake: ”For let your loins, He says, be girt, and your lights burning.” But by their loins being girt, He means the readiness of the mind for every good work: and by their lights burning, that their heart be filled with divine light. And in like manner the law also of Moses plainly commands those who ate of the lamb: ”Thus shall ye eat it: your loins shall be girt: and your staves in your hands: and your sandals on your feet.” Observe, therefore, that those in whom Christ, the true Lamb, dwells, must be like men girt for a journey: for they must ”shoe their feet with the readiness of the Gospel of peace,” as blessed Paul wrote unto us; and be clad as becometh wayfarers. For it is not fitting for those charged with the divine message, if they would prosper in their office, to remain stationary; but, as it were, they must constantly be moving

forward, and run, not for an uncertainty, but to win a glorious hope. For even those who once had fallen under the hand of the enemy, if by faith they fight for Christ, the Saviour of us all, will inherit an incorruptible crown.

But I can imagine some one saying, O Lord, Thou hast commanded thy ministers to carry with them no supply whatsoever of necessaries for food and raiment: whence, then, will they obtain what is essential and indispensable for their use? This too He at once points out, saying; ”Into whatsoever house ye enter, there abide, and thence depart.” The fruit, He says, which you will obtain from those you instruct, shall be sufficient. For those who receive from you things spiritual, and gain the divine seed for their souls, shall take care of your bodily needs. And this no one can blame: for the wise Paul also sent word as follows: ”If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your bodily things? ”So the Lord also commanded, that those who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel.” And that this same truth is signified by the command of Moses, he clearly shews, saying, ”It is written, Thou shalt not muzzle the trampling ox.” And what the intention of the law is he again showed, saying, ”Doth God care for oxen? or sayeth He it altogether on our account, because it is fit that he who plougheth should plough in hope: and he who trampleth the corn as having hope to share in it?” For the teachers, therefore, to receive from those taught these trifling and easily procurable matters is in no respect injurious.

But He commanded them both to abide in one house, and from it to take their departure. For it was right, both that those who had once received them should not be defrauded of the gift: and that the holy Apostles themselves should not place any impediment in the way of their own zeal and earnestness in preaching God’s message, by letting themselves be carried off to various houses by those whose object was, not to learn of them some necessary lesson, but to set before them a luxurious table, beyond what was moderate and necessary. And that it is by no means without its reward to honour the saints, we learn from our Saviour’s words. For He said unto them; ”Whosoever receiveth you receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth Him That sent Me.” For He purposely makes His own, and takes unto Himself, the honours paid to the saints, in order that on every side they may have security. For what is there better, or what is comparable unto the honour and love due unto God? But this is rendered by giving honour to the saints. And if he who receiveth them is right blessed, and of glorious hope, how must not also the converse be entirely and absolutely true! For he must be full of utter misery, who is indifferent to the duty of honouring the saints. For this reason He said, ”that when ye go out from that house, shake off the very dust from your feet for their testimony.”

And next, we must see what this signifies. And it is this: That from those who would not receive them, nor set store by the charge confided to them, nor obey the sacred

message, nor receive the faith;----from such they should refuse to receive any thing whatsoever. For it is unlikely that those who despise the master of the house, will shew themselves generous to the servants: and that those who impiously disregard the heavenly summons, will ask a blessing of its preachers, by offering them things of no value, and such as the disciples could without trouble obtain from their own people. For it is written, ”Let not the oil of the wicked anoint my head.” And besides they ought to feel that their love was due to those only who love and praise Christ; and avoid all others of a different character: for it is written: ”Have I not hated, O Lord, them that hate Thee: and been hot exceedingly at Thy enemies? I have hated them with a perfect hatred: they have become my enemies.” So is the love proved of earthy soldiers: for it is not possible for them to love foreigners, while paying a due regard to their king’s interests. We learn this too by what Christ says: ”that he who is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me altogether scattereth.”

Whatsoever, therefore, Christ commanded his holy Apostles was exactly fitted for their use and benefit: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLVIII.

9:12-17. And the day began to decline: and the twelve drew near, and said unto Him, Send the multitudes away, and let them go into the villages, and fields round about, and lodge, and find victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But He said unto them, Give ye them to eat. But they said, We have no more than five loaves and two fishes: unless we go and buy food for all this people. But they were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, Make them sit down in companies of fifty each. And they did so, and made them all sit down. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven and blessed them, and brake, and gave to His disciples to set before the multitudes. And they did eat, and were all filled: and that which remained over unto them was taken up, even twelve baskets of fragments.

THE Jews, in my opinion, have not a single argument thai can serve before the tribunal of God as a defence for their disobedience: for their opposition had no appearance of reason on its side. And why so? Because the law of Moses, by shadows and figures, led them unto the mystery of Christ. For the law, or rather the things it contained, was symbolical, and in it the mystery of Christ was depicted by type and shadow as in a painting. And the blessed prophets also foretold long before that in due time there should come One to redeem all beneath the heaven, and further proclaimed the very place of His birth in the flesh, and the signs that He would accomplish. But they were so obdurate, and their mind so indiscriminately set upon that alone which agreed with their prejudices, that they would not receive the words of instruction, nor be brought to obedience even by miracles so splendid and glorious.

Such then was their conduct: but let us, who have acknowledged the truth of His appearing, offer Him our praises for His godlike works; such as that which the passage before us records. For we learn by it, that our Saviour from time to time went out from Jerusalem and other cities and towns, followed by multitudes, some seeking deliverance from the tyranny of devils, or recovery from sickness; but others desiring to receive instruction from Him, and constantly with great earnestness, remaining with Him, that they might be made fully acquainted with His sacred

doctrines. When then the day was declining, as the Evangelist says, and evening had all but arrived, the disciples had care of the multitudes, and drew near, offering requests on their behalf. For they said, "Send them away, that they may go into the neighbouring villages and fields, and lodge and find victuals; for we are in a desert place."

But let us carefully inquire what is the meaning of the expression "Send them away." For we shall see by it both the admirable faith of the holy apostles, and also the supernatural and wonderful power of Christ the Saviour of us all, in whatsoever He willeth to perform. For, as I said, some of them followed beseeching Him to deliver thorn from the evil spirits that oppressed them, while others sought recovery from various maladies. Since, therefore, the disciples knew that by the mere assent of His will he could accomplish for those sick persons what they wanted, they say "Send them away:" not so speaking as though they were themselves at all annoyed, and considered that the proper time had gone by; but seized with love toward the multitudes, and beginning to have a concern for the people, as being already intent upon their pastoral office: so that we may even take pattern by them ourselves. For to draw near, and make supplication on the people's behalf, is an act becoming to the saints, and the duty of spiritual fathers, and the proof of a mind that has regard not to selfish objects alone, but already considers as its own the interests of others: of which surpassing love this is a clear and very evident instance. And if we may be permitted to carry our argument above the level of human things, we say, for the benefit of such as meet with it, that when in earnest prayer we continue with Christ, whether asking of Him healing for the maladies of our souls, or deliverance from other sicknesses, or desiring to obtain anything whatsoever for our advantage; there is no doubt that when we ask in prayer any thing that is good for us, there supplicate in our behalf both the intelligent powers, and those holy men who have freedom of access unto Him.

But observe the incomparable gentleness of Him Whom they supplicate. For not only does He grant all that they ask Him to bestow on those who followed Him, but also adds thereto of His own bountiful right hand; refreshing in every way those that love Him, and nurturing them unto spiritual courage. And this we may see from what has now been read. For the blessed disciples besought Christ that those who were following Him, having had their requests granted them, might be sent away, and disperse as they best could. But He commanded them to supply them with food. The thing, however, was impossible in the eyes of the disciples, for they had brought nothing with them but five loaves and two fishes: and this they drew near and confessed to Him. To magnify, therefore, the greatness of the miracle, and make it in every way evident that He is in His own nature God, He multiplies that little many times, and looks up to heaven to ask a blessing from above, being intent in this also upon our good. For He is Himself That which filleth all things, being the blessing that cometh from above from the Father. But that we

may learn that when we commence a meal, and are about to break bread; it is our duty to offer it to God, placing it, so to speak, upon our stretched out hands, and calling down a blessing upon it from above, He purposely became our precedent, and type, and example in the matter.

But what was the result of the miracle? It was the satisfying a large multitude with food: for there were as many as five thousand men besides women and children, according to what another of the holy Evangelists has added to the narrative. Nor did the miracle end here; but there were also gathered twelve baskets of fragments. And what do we infer from this? A plain assurance that hospitality receives a rich recompense from God. The disciples offered five loaves: but after a multitude thus large had been satisfied, there was gathered for each one of them a basketful of fragments. Let nothing therefore prevent those who are willing from receiving strangers, whatever there may be likely to blunt the will and readiness of men thereunto: and let no one say, "I do not possess suitable means; what I can do is altogether trifling and insufficient for many." Receive strangers, my beloved; overcome that unreadiness which wins no reward: for the Saviour will multiply thy little many times beyond expectation, and though thou givest but little, thou wilt receive much. "For he that soweth blessings shall also reap blessings," according to the blessed Paul's words.

The feeding, therefore, of the multitudes in the desert by Christ is worthy of all admiration; but it is also profitable in another way. For we can plainly see that these new miracles accord with those in old time, and that they are the acts of one and the same power. "He rained manna in the desert upon the Israelites; He gave them bread from heaven; man did eat angels' food," according to the words of praise in the Psalms. But lo! again in the desert He has abundantly supplied those in need of food, bringing it down, as it were, from heaven. For His multiplying that little many times, and feeding, so to speak, with nothing so large a multitude, is not unlike that former miracle. And to address myself once again to the throng of the Jews, Thou wast in need of the natural water, when thou wast walking in that long wilderness; and God gave thee thy desire beyond thy hopes, and from an unlooked-for quarter. For, as the Psalmist says, "He clave the rock in the desert; He gave them drink as from the vast abyss; and He brought forth water out of the rock, and made water flow like rivers. Tell me then, when thou hadst drunk, didst thou praise the Worker of the miracle? Didst thou raise thy tongue for thanksgiving? or wast thou induced by what had happened to acknowledge the ineffable power of God? Not so: for thou murmuredst against God, saying, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?

If He smote the rock, and the waters flowed, and He made the streams overflow; can He also give bread, or prepare a table for His people? Thou wast not astonished at seeing the flint rock the source of copious rivers; fountains issuing marvellously

from stones, and streams running with rapid force, but imputedst weakness to Him Who is Almighty. And yet how was it not rather thy duty to perceive that He is the Lord of powers? How indeed could He be unable to prepare a table, Who made the flint rock a fountain and a stream, flowing over for that multitude?

But since thou hast brought thyself to so great folly as to imagine that there is anything impossible with God, and with empty babble hast said that He cannot prepare a table for His people in the wilderness, answer the question we now put to thee: Wilt thou embrace the faith now that thou seest a table prepared by Christ in the wilderness, and an innumerable multitude so abundantly supplied with food that twelve baskets of remnants were collected? or wilt thou still refuse to believe, and ask another sign? When, therefore, wilt thou be found believing? When wilt thou cease from finding fault with the ineffable power of Christ? When wilt thou put a door and bolt to thy tongue? and delivering it from the language of blasphemy, change it to a better use by praising Him, so that thou also mayest be a partaker of the blessings He bestows? For His mercies are revealed upon those who love Him, and He delivers them from all sickness. He supplies them also with spiritual food, by means of which each one attains to manliness in every thing that is praiseworthy. But upon the unbelieving and contemptuous He bestows no such gifts, but rather brings upon them that condemnation which they fitly deserve. For by one of His holy prophets He as it were said unto them, ”Behold, they who serve Me shall eat, but ye shall suffer hunger. Behold, they who serve Me shall drink, but ye shall thirst. Behold, they who submit themselves to Me shall rejoice in happiness, while ye shall lament from sorrow of heart, and wail from contrition of spirit.” And again it is written, ”The Lord killeth not the righteous soul with hunger, but wasteth the life of the wicked.”

For the flocks of the believers have, as it were, a pasture full of divers plants and flowers, in the holy Scriptures, which are their wise guides: and filled with spiritual joy at the glorious doctrines and instructions which they contain, they frequent the sacred courts. And this it is which long ago was proclaimed in the words of Isaiah: ”And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, running waters upon that day.” And again; ”And the mountains shall drop sweetness: and the hills flow with milk.” For it is the custom of divine Scripture to compare to mountains and hills those set over others, and whose office it is to teach, inasmuch as they are high exalted, in respect, I mean, of their thoughts being occupied with elevated subjects, and withdrawn from things earthly: while the waters and the sweetness and the milk are the instructions which flow from them as from fountains. ”There shall be then, He says, at that time from every high mountain, and from every high hill, flowing waters, and sweetness and milk.” And these are the spiritual consolations of holy instructors, offered to the people under their charge. Of these the Jewish congregations are deprived, because they did not receive Christ, the Lord of the hills and mountains, the Giver of spiritual consolation, Who offers Him-

self as the bread of life to those who believe in Him: for He it is Who came down from heaven, and gave life to the world: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XLIX.

9:18-22. And it came to pass that as He was alone, praying, His disciples were with Him: and He asked them, saying, Whom do the multitudes say of Me that I am? And they answered and said, Some, indeed, John the Baptist: and others, Elijah: and others, that some prophet of those in old time has risen again. And He said unto them; But whom do ye say that I am? And Peter answered and said, The Christ of God. And He charged and commanded them to tell this to no man, saying, The Son of man is about to suffer many things, and to be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes: and be slain, and rise again the third day.

WELL may we call out to those who would search the sacred Scriptures, "Arouse ye, and awake. For it is a thing impossible to perceive the exact meaning of the mystery of Christ, if we use for this end a debauched mind, and an understanding drowned, so to speak, in sleep. Need rather is there of a wakeful mind, and a penetrating eye; for the subject is one difficult to comprehend in the highest degree. And this is apparent now that our discourse has come to the explanation of the passage before us. For what says the Evangelist? "And it came to pass that as He was alone, praying, His disciples were with Him; and He asked them, saying; Whom do the multitudes say of Me that I am? Now the first thing we have to examine is, what it was which led our Lord Jesus Christ to propose to the holy apostles this question, or inquiry, For no word or deed of His is either at an unseasonable time or without a fitting reason; but rather, He does all things wisely and in their season. What therefore do we say, or what suitable explanation do we find for His present acts? He had fed in the desert a vast multitude of five thousand men: and how had He fed them? With five loaves! breaking with them into morsels two small fish! And these so multiplied out of nothing, that twelve baskets of fragments even were taken up.

The blessed disciples therefore were astonished as well as the multitudes, and saw by what had been wrought, that He is in truth God and the Son of God. And afterwards, when they had withdrawn from the multitude and He was alone, He occupied Himself in prayer, in this too making Himself our example, or rather instructing the disciples how to discharge efficiently their office as teachers. For it

is, I think, the duty of those who are set over the people, and whose lot it is to guide Christ's flocks, constantly to occupy themselves with their necessary business, and openly practise those things with which God is well pleased: even that saintlike and virtuous conduct which gains great admiration, and is certain to profit the people under their charge. For they ought either to be actively engaged in those duties which are to the glory of God: or such as in their retirement bring upon them a blessing, and call down upon them power from on high: of which latter, one and the most excellent is prayer. Knowing which the divine Paul said, "Pray without ceasing."

As I said, then, the Lord and Saviour of all made Himself an example to the disciples of saintlike conversation, by praying alone, with them only in His company. But His doing so might perchance trouble the disciples, and beget in them dangerous thoughts. For they saw Him praying in human fashion, Whom yesterday they beheld working miracles with godlike dignity. It would not therefore have been entirely without reason, had they said among themselves; Oh, strange conduct! Whom must we consider Him to be? God, or man? If we say man, and like one of us; like one, that is, of the holy prophets; we see from the ineffable miracles which He works, that He far transcends the limits of human nature: for in manifold ways He doeth wonders as God. If we say He is God, surely to pray is unbefitting One Who is God by nature. For of whom can God ask what He wishes to receive? And of what can God at all be in want? To chase away therefore such confusing thoughts, and to calm their faith, which, so to speak, was tempest-tossed, He makes this inquiry; not as though He were at all ignorant of what was commonly said of Him, either by those who did not belong to the synagogue of the Jews, or by the Israelites themselves: His object rather was to rescue them from the general mode of thinking, and implant in them a correct faith, "Whom, therefore, He asks, do the multitudes say that I am?

Thou seest the skilfulness of the question. He did not at once say, "Whom do ye say that I am? but refers to the rumour of those that were without, that having rejected it, and shewn it to be unsound, He may then bring them back to the true opinion. Which also happened: for when the disciples had said, "Some John the Baptist, and others Elijah, and others, that some prophet of those in old time has risen up;" He said to them, "But ye, whom do ye say that I am?" Oh! how full of meaning is that "ye!" He separates them from all others, that they may also avoid their opinions, and not conceive an unworthy idea of Him, nor entertain confused and wavering thoughts, themselves too imagining that John had risen again, or one of the prophets. Ye therefore, He says, who have been chosen; who by My decree have been called to the apostleship; who are the witnesses of My miracles; whom do ye say that I am?

First before the rest Peter again springs forth, and makes himself the mouthpiece of the whole company, pouring forth the expression of love to God, and giving utterance to a correct and faultless confession of faith in Him, saying, ”The Christ of God. The disciple is unerring: a thoroughly intelligent explainer of the mystery. For he does not simply say, that He is a Christ of God; but ”the Christ” rather: for there are many who have been called ”Christ,” from having in various ways been anointed of God. For some have been anointed as kings; and some as prophets; while others, having received salvation by That Christ Who is the Saviour of all, even we ourselves, obtain the appellation of christ, as having been anointed by the Holy Ghost. For it is said in the words of the Psalmist, of those in old time, that is, before the coming of our Saviour: ”Touch not My christs, and do My prophets no harm. But the words of Habakkuk refer to us; ”Thou hast gone forth to the salvation of Thy people: to save Thy christs. Christs therefore there are many, and they have so been called from the fact [of having been anointed]: but He Who is God the Father’s Christ is One, and One only: not as though we indeed are christs, and not God’s christs, but belonging to some other person: but because He and He alone has as His Father Him that is in heaven.

Since therefore most wise Peter, confessing the faith correctly and without error, said, ”The Christ of God,” it is plain, that distinguishing Him from those to whom the appellation generally belongs, he referred Him to God, as being His sole (Christ). For though He be by nature God, and shone forth ineffably from God the Father as His only begotten Word, yet He became flesh according to the Scripture. The blessed Peter therefore professed faith in Him, lending, as I before said, his words to the whole company of the holy apostles, and acting as spokesman for them all, as being more accurate than the rest.

And this too we ought to observe: that in Matthew’s account we find that the blessed disciple said, ”Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God: but the wise Luke, summing up so to speak the purport, agrees with him in the thoughts, but using fewer words, tells us that he said, ”The Christ of God. Moreover no mention is here made of that which the Saviour spake to him: but in Matthew again we find that He said to Him plainly: ”Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven. The disciple therefore was verily taught of God; nor did he make this profession of faith for us of his own thoughts merely, but because the divine light shone upon his understanding, and the Father led him to a correct knowledge of the mystery of Christ. What therefore do those mistaken innovators say to this, who unwarrantably pervert the great and adorable mystery of the incarnation of the Only Begotten, and fall from the right way, walking in the path of crookedness? For the wise Peter acknowledged one Christ: while they sever that One into two, in opposition to the doctrines of truth. ’But yes, he replies, the disciple acknowledged one Christ; and so do we also affirm

that there is one Christ, by Whom we mean the Son, even the Word that, is from God the Father .' To this then what do we reply?

Is it not plain then, we say, to every one, that Christ asks the holy apostles, not, Whom do men say that the Word of God is? but, who "the Son of man is? and that it was of Him that Peter confessed, that He is "the Christ of God? Let them also explain this to us: How is Peter's confession worthy of admiration, if it contain nothing profound and hidden, and, so to speak, not apparent to the generality? For what verily did God the Father reveal to him? That the Son of man is a man? Is this the God-taught mystery? Is it for this that he is admired, and deemed worthy of such surpassing honours? For thus he was addressed, "Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah."

The reason, however, for which he was thus admired is a very just one; for it was because he believed that He Whom he saw as one of us, that is, in our likeness, was the Son of God the Father, the Word, namely, That sprang forth from His substance, and became flesh, and was made man. See here, I pray, the profundity of the thoughts, the importance of the confession, the high and weighty mystery. For He Who was there in the likeness of mankind, and as a portion of creation, was God, Who transcends all created things! He Who dwells in the high and lofty place was abased from His glory to be in poverty like unto us! And He Who, as God, is Lord of all, and King of all, was in the likeness of a slave, and in the measure of a slave! This is the faith the Saviour crowns; to those thus minded He extends His bountiful right hand. For when He had praised Peter, and said that he was taught of God, as one who had obtained the revelation from above, from God the Father, He makes him more assured and more abundantly confirmed in the faith he had professed concerning Him, by saying: "And I say unto thee, that thou art a stone; and upon this stone I will build My church: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

For observe how He makes Himself at once the Lord of heaven and of earth. For He promises things that exceed our nature, and surpass the measure of humanity; yea, rather, even that of the angelic rank: and are suitable for that nature only to bestow, Whose glory and sovereignty transcend all. For, first He says that the church belongs to Him; the sacred Scriptures nevertheless distinctly ascribe it rather to God, and to Him only, saying that it is "the church of God." For they say that "Christ presented it to Himself, having neither spot nor stain, but holy rather, and blameless." As being God therefore He says that it is His, and promises moreover to found it, granting it to be unshaken, as being Himself the Lord of powers. And next He says that He gives him the keys of heaven. Who is it then that thus pours forth language appropriate to God? Is it an angel? or some other intelligent power, whether principality, or throne, or dominion? or those holy seraphs? Not

at all: but, as I said before, such language belongs to Almighty God alone, Whose is the sovereignty of earth and heaven. Let not, then, these innovators divide the one Christ, so as to say that one Son is the Word of God the Father, and that He Who is of the seed of David is another Son. For Peter made mention of one Christ; even the Only-begotten Who became man and was made flesh: and for this confession was counted worthy of these extraordinary honours.

When, however, the disciple had professed his faith, He charged them, it says, and commanded them to tell it to no man: ”for the Son of man,” He said, ”is about to suffer many things, and be rejected, and killed, and the third day ”He shall rise again. And yet how was it not rather the duty of disciples to proclaim Him everywhere? For this was the very business of those appointed by Him to the apostle-ship. But as the sacred Scripture saith, ”There is a time for everything. There were things yet unfulfilled which must also be included in their preaching of Him: such as were the cross; the passion; the death in the flesh; the resurrection from the dead; that great and truly glorious sign by which testimony is borne Him that the Emanuel is truly God, and by nature the Son of God the Father. For that He utterly abolished death, and effaced destruction, and spoiled hell, and overthrew the tyranny of the enemy, and took away the sin of the world, and opened the gates above to the dwellers upon earth, and united earth to heaven: these things proved Him to be, as I said, in truth God. He commanded them, therefore, to guard the mystery by a seasonable silence until the whole plan of the dispensation should arrive at a suitable conclusion.

For then, when He arose from the dead, He gave commandment that the mystery should be revealed to all the inhabitants of the earth, setting before every man justification by faith, and the cleansing efficacy of holy baptism. For He said, ”All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth: Go ye, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all those things which I have commanded you. And lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. For Christ is with us and in us by the Holy Ghost, and dwells in the souls of us all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion and honour with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON L. Fit to be read at a time of persecution.

9:23-26. And He said to them all, Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross every day, and come after Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall save it. For what is a man profited, who hath gained the whole world, but hath lost himself, or fallen short? For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His glory, and in His Father's, and of His holy angels.

MIGHTY generals encourage their trained warriors to deeds of courage, not only by promising them the honours of victory, but even by telling them that the very fact of suffering brings them glory, and gains for them all praise. For it is impossible for those who would win fame in battle not sometimes to have to endure wounds also from their opponents. But their suffering is not without its reward, for they are praised as those who bravely assaulted the enemy; and the very wound bears witness to the courage and valour of their mind. And much the same arguments we see our Lord Jesus Christ also using in a discourse, the occasion of which was as follows; He had just shewn the disciples that it was altogether necessary for Him to endure the wicked enterprizes of the Jews, and be mocked by them, and spit upon in the face, and put to death, and the third day rise again. To prevent them, therefore, from imagining that He indeed for the life of the world would suffer the scorn of those murderers, and the other cruelties which they inflicted upon Him; but that they would be permitted to live quietly, and might without blame avoid the suffering readily for their piety's sake, and the endurance even of death itself in the flesh, should it so befal, and by so doing would incur no disgrace, He of necessity, so to speak, testifies that those who would be thought worthy of the glory He bestows, must attain to it by proportionate acts of bravery, saying, "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross every day, and come after Me."

Here, too, we must wonder at the love of Christ the Saviour of us all towards the world; for He not only consented Himself to suffer and bear so great ignominy,

humbling Himself even to the cross and death for our sakes, but also rouses His chosen followers to the same excellent desire: even those who were to be the instructors of men every where, and hold the post of commanders-in-chief over the people committed to their care. For those who were appointed to so great a ministry must in very deed be thoroughly brave and valiant, armed with an unshaken mind and invincible courage, so as to dread no difficulties, and even if death befal, to deride its terrors, and set at nought every fear. He who thus acts denies himself, since, so to speak, he resigns this temporal life, and deems its concerns worthy of no regard, inasmuch as his choice is to suffer for the blessedness and love that is in Christ. So does a man follow Christ. For the company of the holy Apostles is, as it were, set before us by the Psalmist's harp, as crying out unto Christ the Saviour of all: "For Thy sake we are killed every day; we have been counted as sheep for the slaughter." For in this also they are like unto the Emmanuel, "Who for the joy that He had, endured the cross, having despised the shame."

He would have those, therefore, who were to be the teachers of all beneath the sun superior to timidity and the base love of the world, laying it down as their duty to suffer for love of Him. And He has Himself taught us what is the character of those of His apostles who love Him, where he said to the blessed Peter, "Simeon, son of Jonah, lovest thou Me? Feed My lambs; feed My sheep. "He was the good Shepherd; He laid down His life for the sheep. For He was not a hireling; rather, those that were saved were His own: He saw the wolf coming; He made no attempt to flee; He despised not the flock; but, on the contrary, yielded Himself to be torn by it, that He might deliver and save us: "For by His bruises we have been healed," "and He was afflicted for our sins. Those, therefore, who would follow Him, and earnestly desire to be like Him, and are set over His intelligent flocks, must undergo similar labours. For numerous savage beasts encircle them, violent, and implacable, and that slay cruelly, and hurry souls to the pit of destruction. For the more learned and skilful of the heathen possess great eloquence, and adorn their false doctrine with beautiful language: and thus they pervert some simple-minded men, making them often wish to share their malady, and depart from the God Who is over all, to worship others in His stead which are no gods.

These heaped upon the holy Apostles unendurable persecutions, and exposed them again and again to dangers. For the blessed Paul commemorates the things he had been seen to suffer at Iconium and Lystra, and at Ephesus and Damascus, For at one time he says, "In Damascus the chief captain of Aretas the king watched the city of the Damascenes wishing to seize me, and from a window they let me down from the wall in a basket, and I was delivered from his hands. And again at another time, "Alexander the smith caused me much evil. What then is the testimony of this mighty Evangelist, this courageous and valiant champion, who everywhere despised the utmost dangers? "For to me," he says, "that I live is Christ; and that I die is gain. And again, "I am crucified with Christ; but henceforth I no more live,

but Christ liveth in me: and that which I live here in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me, and yielded up Himself for my sake."

But the violence of the Jews broke forth frequently against the other apostles also: they persecuted them; they summoned them before their synagogues; they scourged them wickedly, commanding them to keep silence, and desist from their sacred preachings: for they said, "Did we not strictly command you not to speak to any man in this Name?----even the Name of Christ, the Saviour of us all;----and behold! ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. But after the disciples had borne their violent accusation for the firm love they had to Christ, they went out "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name. But had they been timid, and abject, and frightened at words, and overpowered by the terrors of death, how would they have been proved? or how have offered as fruits to God those who were called by their means? For, also, the wise Paul whom no difficulty whatsoever could overpower, when on his way to Jerusalem the prophet Agabus loosed his girdle, and bound his own feet, and said, "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind that man to whom this girdle belongs," answered and said, "What do ye, that ye weep and break my heart? for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Excellently, therefore, did He command them manfully to prevail over every persecution, and boldly to undergo trials, as being well assured that if thus they will be zealous in His cause, they will become His friends, and share His glory. If, therefore, a man be ready to endure and despise the terrors of death, has he lost himself and departed, and is there nothing more in store for him? By no means: for in that he loses his life, he especially finds it; while to find it is to bring upon himself destruction. What fear, therefore, can the saints now feel, if that which seemed to be hard proves rather joyous to them that bear it; while that which is dear to men, as being exempt from pain, leads them especially downwards to destruction and the snare of hell, according to the Scripture.

But that it is incomparably better, far above the splendour and pleasure of the world, to excel in the love of Christ, He shows us by saying, "For what is a man profited who hath gained the whole world, but hath lost himself, or fallen short?" For when a man looks chiefly to that which is pleasant and profitable for the moment, and therefore avoids suffering, and desires to live joyously, even though he have wealth and abundance of possessions, yet what profit hath he therefrom when he has lost himself? "Treasures profit not the wicked," but "the fashion of this world passeth away:" and "like clouds those pleasures recede," and riches flies away from those that possess it: "but righteousness delivereth from death." And further, to set plainly before us the reward of our being willing to labour, He says: "For whosoever shall be ashamed at Me and at My words, at Him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His glory, and of His Father, and of His

holy angels." Much that is both useful and necessary does He effect by these words. For in the first place He shews that entirely and altogether it follows that those who are ashamed at Him and at His words will meet with the reward they merit. And what could so give us joy as this? For if there are some in whose presence the Judge feels shame, as owing them the reward of obedience, and the dignities and crown due to their love and affection for Him, and the honours won by their bravery, how may we not without fear of contradiction say that they most certainly will henceforth live in never-ending honours and praises who have attained to such splendid blessings?

But, next, He also begets in them fear as well, in that he says that He shall descend from heaven, not in His former lowliness and humiliation, like unto us, but in the glory of His Father; even in godlike and transcendent glory, with the holy angels keeping guard around Him. Most miserable, therefore, and ruinous would it be to be condemned of cowardice and indolence when the Judge has descended from above, and the angelic ranks stand at His side. But great and most blessed, and a foretaste of final blessedness is it to be able to rejoice in labours already accomplished, and await the recompense of past toils. For such as these shall be praised, Christ Himself saying unto them: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May we also be deemed worthy of these rewards by the grace and lovingkindness of Christ the Saviour of us all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LI.

9:27-36. But I say unto you truly, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death, until they have seen the kingdom of God. And there were after these things about eight days, and He took Peter, and John, and James, and went up to the mountain to pray. And while He was praying, the look of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white, shining like lightning: and behold! two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah: who having appeared in glory, spake of His departure, that He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but having roused themselves, they both saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, that when they were separating from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee: and one for Moses: and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said. While he spake these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered the cloud. And there was a voice from the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, hear Him. And when there was the voice, Jesus was found alone; and they kept silence, and told no man in those days ought of the things they had seen.

THOSE who are skilful in the combat rejoice when the spectators clap their hands, and are roused to a glorious height of courage by the hope of the chaplets of victory: and so those whoso desire it is to be counted worthy of the divine gifts, and who thirst to be made partakers of the hope prepared for the saints, joyfully undergo combats for piety's sake towards Christ, and lead elect lives, not setting store by a thankless indolence, nor indulging in a mean timidity, but rather manfully resisting every temptation, and setting at nought the violence of persecutions, while they count it gain to suffer in His behalf. For they remember that the blessed Paul thus writes, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory that is about to be revealed in us."

Observe, therefore, how perfectly beautiful is the method which our Lord Jesus Christ uses here also for the benefit and edification of the holy Apostles. For He had said unto them, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross every day, and follow Me. For he that will save his life shall lose it;

and he that will lose his life for My sake shall find it. The commandment is indeed both for the salvation and honour of the saints, and the cause of the highest glory, and the means of perfect joy: for the choosing to suffer for the sake of Christ is not a thankless duty, but on the contrary makes us sharers in everlasting life, and the glory that is prepared. But as the disciples had not yet obtained power from on high, it probably occasionally happened, that they also fell into human weaknesses, and when thinking over with themselves any such saying as this, may have asked "how does a man deny himself? or how having lost himself does he find himself again? And what reward will compensate those who thus suffer? Or of what gifts will they be made partakers? To rescue them therefore from such timid thoughts, and, so to speak, to mould them unto manliness, by begetting in them a desire of the glory about to be bestowed upon them, He says, "I say unto you, there are some of those standing here, who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God.

Does He mean that the measure of their lives will be so greatly prolonged as even to reach to that time when He will descend from heaven at the. consummation of the world, to bestow upon the saints the kingdom prepared for them? Even this was possible for Him: for He is omnipotent: and there is nothing impossible or difficult to His all-powerful will. But by the kingdom of God He means the sight of the glory in which He will appear at His manifestation to the inhabitants of earth: for He will come in the glory of God the Father, and not in low estate like unto us. How therefore did He make those who had received the promise spectators of a thing so wonderful? He goes up into the mountain taking with Him three chosen disciples: and is transformed to so surpassing and godlike a brightness, that His garments even glittered with rays of fire, and seemed to flash like lightning. And besides, Moses and Elijah stood at Jesus' side, and spake with one another of His departure, which He was about, it says, to accomplish at Jerusalem: by which is meant the mystery of the dispensation in the flesh; and of His precious suffering upon the cross. For it is also true that the law of Moses, and the word of the holy prophets, foreshewed the mystery of Christ: the one by types and shadows, painting it, so to speak, as in a picture;

while the rest in manifold ways declared beforehand, both that in due time He would appear in our likeness, and for the salvation and life of us all, consent to suffer death upon the tree. The standing, therefore, of Moses and Elijah before Him, and their talking with one another, was a sort of representation, excellently displaying our Lord Jesus Christ, as having the law and the prophets for His body guard, as being the Lord of the law and the prophets, and as foreshown in them by those things which in mutual agreement they before proclaimed. For the words of the prophets are not at variance with the teachings of the law. And this I imagine was what Moses the most priestly and Elijah the most distinguished of the prophets were talking of with one another.

But the blessed disciples sleep awhile, as Christ continued long in prayer:----for He performed these human duties as belonging to the dispensation:----and afterwards on awaking they became spectators of changes thus splendid and glorious: and the divine Peter, thinking perchance, that the time of the kingdom of God was even now come, proposes dwellings on the mountain, and says that it is fitting there should be three tabernacles, one for Christ, and the others for the other two, Moses and Elijah: ”but he knew not,” it says, ”what he was saying.” For it was not the time of the consummation of the world, nor for the saints to take possession of the hope promised to them; for as Paul says, ”He will change our humble body into the likeness of His,----that is, Christ’s----glorious body.” As therefore the dispensation was still at its commencement, and not yet fulfilled, how would it have been fitting for Christ to have abandoned His love to the world, and have departed from His purpose of suffering in its behalf? For He redeemed all under heaven, by both undergoing death in the flesh, and by abolishing it by the resurrection from the dead. Peter therefore knew not what he said .

But besides the wonderful and ineffable sight of Christ’s glory, something else was done, useful and necessary for the confirmation of their faith in Him: and not for the disciples only, but even for us too. For a voice was given forth from the cloud above, as from God the Father, saying: ”This is My beloved Son, hear Him. And when there was the voice,” it says, ”Jesus was found alone.” What then will he who is disputatious and disobedient, and whose heart is incurable, say to these things? Lo! Moses is there, and does the Father command the holy apostles to hear him? Had it been His will that they should follow the commandments of Moses, He would have said, I suppose, Obey Moses; keep the law. But this was not what God the Father here said, but in the presence of Moses and the prophets, He commands them rather to hear Him. And that the truth might not be subverted by any, affirming that the Father rather bade them hear Moses, and not Christ the Saviour of us all, the Evangelist has clearly marked it, saying, ”When there was the voice, Jesus was found alone.” When therefore God the Father, from the cloud overhead, commanded the holy apostles, saying, ”Hear Him,” Moses was far away, and Elijah too was no longer nigh; but Christ was there alone. Him therefore He commanded them to obey.

For He also is the end of the law and the prophets: for which reason He cried aloud to the multitudes of the Jews: ”If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed Me also: for he wrote of Me .” But as they persevered even unto the end in despising the commandment given by most wise Moses, and in rejecting the word of the holy prophets, they have justly been alienated and expelled from those blessings that were promised to their fathers. For ”obedience is better than sacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of rams,” as the Scripture saith. And thus much then of the Jews: but upon us who have acknowledged the revelation, all these blessings have necessarily been bestowed, by means of and as the gift of the same Christ: by

Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON LII.

9:37-43. But it came to pass, the day after, as they came down from the mountain, a great crowd met Him. And, behold, a man cried out from the crowd, saying, Teacher, I beseech Thee to regard my Son, for he is my only one. And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out, and it convulseth and teareth him, and he foameth; and having bruised him scarcely departeth from him. And I besought Thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not. And Jesus answered, and said: O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And when he was yet coming, the devil threw him down, and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and gave him to his father. And all wondered at the majesty of God.

ALL Scripture is inspired of God and profitable: but especially above all besides this is the case with the holy Gospels. For He Who in old time spake the law to the Israelites by the ministry of angels, has in person spoken unto us, when having taken our likeness, He appeared upon earth, and went about among men. For most wise Paul writes: ”That while in old time God spake to the fathers by the prophets in manifold parts, and manifold manners, He hath in these latter days spoken unto us by the Son.” And by one of His holy prophets, He somewhere Himself saith, ”I Who speak am near as the brightness upon the mountains, as the feet of him that proclaimeth tidings of peace; as one that proclaimeth good things.” For lo! He frees us from the tyranny of the enemy, that we may in purity follow Him; and that having brought to nought ”the world rulers of this darkness,” even wicked spirits, He may present us unharmed unto God the Father.

For that it is by Him that we have gained deliverance from the power of unclean spirits, this lesson proves. For we heard read that a man ran towards Him from among the multitude, and related the intolerable malady of his son. For he said that he was cruelly torn by an evil spirit, and suffered violent convulsions. But the manner of his approach was not free from fault: for he made loud outcries against the company of the holy apostles, saying that they could not rebuke Satan: whereas it would have been more fitting, had he honoured Jesus when asking His aid, and imploring grace. For He grants us our request when we honour and confide in

Him, as being the Almighty, Whose power nothing can withstand. For He verily is the Lord of powers , and nothing can offer resistance to His will. Yea rather, everything whatsoever that is capable of possessing power obtains entirely from Him the possibility of being what it is. For just as He sheds His light upon those who are capable of being illuminated, as being Himself the true light; and just as in like manner He is the bestower of wisdom upon those who are capable thereof, as being Himself Wisdom, and perfect understanding: so, inasmuch as He is Power, He bestows power on those capable of receiving it. When then by our disbelief we despise His glory, and wickedly scorn His supreme majesty, we can receive nothing from Him: for ”we must ask in faith, nothing wavering,” as His disciple said.

And that this saying is true, we may perceive even from what takes place among us. For such as present petitions to those who preside over affairs upon earth, and govern mighty thrones, preface their requests with suitable praises, and confess their universal power and majesty; addressing the memorial they present, ”To the Lords of earth, and sea, and of every people and race among mankind:” and afterwards they add an account of what they would ask. The father therefore of the demoniac was rude and uncourteous: for he did not simply ask the healing of the child, and in so doing crown the healer with praises, but, on the contrary, spake contemptuously of the disciples, and found fault with the grace given them. ”For I brought him, he says, to Thy disciples, and they could not cast it out.” And yet it was owing to thy own want of faith that the grace availed not. Dost thou not perceive that thou wast thyself the cause that the child was not delivered from his severe illness?

For that we must have faith when we draw near to Christ, and whosoever have obtained from Him the grace of healing, He teaches us Himself, by everywhere requiring faith of those who approach Him, desiring to be counted worthy of any of His gifts. For, for instance, Lazarus died at Bethany, and Christ promised to raise him. When then one of his sisters doubted of this, and had no expectation that the miracle would take place, Christ said, ”I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, even though he die, shall live.” And we find elsewhere a similar occurrence. For Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, when his only daughter was now breathing her last, being caught, so to speak, in the meshes of death, besought Jesus to deliver the damsel from what had happened: and Christ accordingly promised so to do upon arriving at the house of the supplicant. But as He was on His way, a man met Him from the relatives of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, ”Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Teacher.” And what was Christ’s reply? ”Fear not: only believe, and she shall live.”

It was the duty therefore of the father of the lad rather to lay the blame upon his own unbelief, than upon the holy apostles. For this reason Christ justly called out, ”O faithless and perverse generation: how long shall I be with you, and suffer

you?" He justly therefore calls both the man himself, and those like him in mind a faithless generation. For it is a wretched malady, and whosoever is seized by it is, as He shews, perverse, and utterly without knowledge to walk uprightly. And therefore the sacred Scriptures say of such persons, "that their ways are crooked, and their paths perverse." From this malady the divine David fled: and in order that he may also benefit us, he reveals the set purpose of his mind thereupon, saying, "A crooked heart hath not cleaved unto me:" that is, one that cannot walk in an upright course. To such the blessed Baptist, as the forerunner of the Saviour, cried, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."

The man therefore was thoroughly an unbeliever, and perverse, refusing the straight paths, straying from the mark, and wandering from the right ways . And Christ deigns not to be with such as are thus minded, and have fallen into this wickedness: and if one may speak in the manner of men, He is tired and weary of them. And this He teaches us saying, "How long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" For he who says, that those were powerless for the expulsion of evil spirits, who by Christ's will had received power to cast them out, finds fault with the grace itself, rather than with the receivers of it. it was wicked blasphemy therefore: for if grace be powerless, the fault and blame is not theirs who have received it, but rather belongs to the grace itself. For any who will may see that the grace which wrought in them was Christ's. For, for instance, the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple was made whole; but Peter ascribed the miracle to Christ, saying to the Jews, "For Him Whom ye crucified, even by Him this man stands before you whole: and the grace which He bestows hath given him this soundness." Elsewhere the same blessed Peter proclaimed to one of those who were healed by Him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee." It is plain therefore in every way that the man wickedly found fault with Christ's power in saying of the holy apostles, "they could not cast it out."

And besides, Christ is angry when wrong is done unto the holy preachers who have been entrusted with the word of His Gospel, and appointed to teach it to all under heaven, inasmuch as witness is borne them by His grace, that they are His disciples, and they shed the light of the true knowledge of God on those who everywhere were convinced by their doctrines, and the wonderful miracles they wrought. For the miracle constantly, so to speak, leads on to faith. It would have been deserved therefore, had the father of the demoniac gone away disappointed, and been refused the bounteous gift. But that no man might imagine that Christ also was unable to work the miracle, He rebuked the unclean spirit, and forthwith delivered the youth from his malady, and gave him to his father. For up to this time he had not been his father's, but the property of the spirit that possessed him: but being now delivered from his violence, he became once again his father's property, as Christ's gift: Who also gave the holy apostles authority to work divine miracles, and rebuke with irresistible might impure spirits, and crush Satan.

And the multitudes, the blessed Evangelist says, wondered at the majesty of God. When Christ then works miracles, it is God Who is glorified, and God only and solely. For He is by nature God, and His majesty is incomparable, and His supremacy without a rival, resplendent with the sovereignty of God the Father. He is therefore to be extolled with praises, and let us say unto him, ”O Lord God of powers, Who is like unto Thee? Powerful art Thou, O Lord, and Thy truth is round about Thee.” For all things are possible to Him, and easy to accomplish, and nothing whatsoever is too difficult or high: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LIII.

9:43-45. And while every one wondered at all things which He did, He said unto His disciples, Lay ye these words to your ears: For the Son of man is about to be delivered up into the hands of men. But they knew not this saying, and it was hid from them that they should not understand it: and they feared to ask Him of this saying. PROFOUND in very deed is the mystery of godliness, according to the expression of the wise Paul: but God the Father reveals it to such as are worthy of receiving it. For the Saviour Himself also, when speaking to the Jews, said, ”Murmur not among yourselves: no man can come unto Me, unless the Father Who sent Me draw him.” When then the blessed Peter had been counted worthy of a grace thus glorious and wonderful, being in the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi, he made a correct and faultless confession of faith in him, saying, ”Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And what was the reward of which he was thought worthy? It was to hear Christ say, ”Blessed art thou, Simeon, son of Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father in heaven.” And he further received surpassing honours: for he was entrusted by Him with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the confession of his faith was made the firm foundation for the Church. ”For thou,” He says, ”art a stone: and upon this stone I will build My Church: and the gates of hell shall not overpower it.”

That those therefore who were to teach the whole world might know exactly His mystery, He usefully and necessarily explains it clearly to them beforehand, saying, ”Lay ye these words to your hearts ; for the Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands of men. The reason then which led Christ so to speak is, I think, a subject both useful and necessary for our consideration. He had then led up into the mountain Peter, and James, and John, and been transfigured before them, and His countenance shone as the sun: and He shewed them the glory, with which in due time He will arise upon the world. For He will come, not in humiliation such as ours; nor in the meanness of man’s estate, but in the majesty and splendour of the Godhead, and in transcendent glory. And again, when He came down from the mountain. He delivered a man from a wicked and violent spirit. Yet was He certainly about to bear for our sakes His saving passion; and endure the wickedness of the Jews; and, as the minister of His mysteries says, ”by the grace of God to

taste death for every man. But when this came to pass, there is nothing unlikely in supposing that the disciples would be troubled; and in their secret thoughts perhaps even say, How is One so glorious; Who raised the dead by His godlike power; Who rebuked the seas and the winds; Who by a word crushed Satan;

how is He now seized as a prisoner, and caught in the snares of these murderers? Were we then mistaken in thinking that He is God? Have we fallen from the true opinion regarding Him? For that those who knew not the mystery, that our Lord Jesus Christ would endure the cross and death, would find therein an occasion of stumbling, is easy to perceive, even from what the blessed Peter said to Him. For though he had not as yet been witness of His passion, but only had heard beforehand that it would befal Him, he interrupted Him, saying, ”That be far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.”

In order, therefore, that they might know what certainly would happen, He bade them, so to speak, store up the mystery in their mind. ”For lay ye it,” He says, ”to your hearts.” In which words, the ”ye” distinguishes them from all others. For He wished indeed that they should themselves know what would happen, but not that they should communicate it to others. For it was not right for the unlearned to be taught simply His future passion, but far better, to convince them at the same time of His having risen divinely from the grave, and abolished death, and so avoid the danger of their being offended. When therefore the time comes, He says, that I must suffer, ask not, How it is that One so glorious, Who performed all these signs, has fallen like one of us unawares into the hands of His enemies: but, on the contrary, be assured, when reflecting upon the dispensation, that I am not led by human compulsion, but go willingly thereunto. For what is there to hinder one Who knows beforehand and clearly proclaims what is to happen, to refuse to suffer, if He so will? But I submit to suffer, in order that I may redeem all beneath the heavens. For this He plainly teaches us elsewhere, saying, ”No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of My own will. I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it again.”

”But they, it says, knew not this saying; and it was hid from them, that they might not perceive it.” Now naturally any one may justly wonder, when meditating with himself, how it was that the disciples knew not the mystery of Christ. For though they belonged to the companies of the Jews, yet they were neither slothful nor contemptuous, but on the contrary most earnest and diligent. For though reckoned as handicraftsmen, whose trade was fishing in the lake, yet, as I said, they had been soberly educated, and were far from ignorant of the Mosaic Scriptures: for for this very reason Christ had chosen them. How then were they ignorant of the mystery of Christ, when it had been shadowed forth for them in various places by the law, and beautifully foreshewn in its types as in a painting? For, to shew my meaning by an example, they were not able to flee away from the bondage of Egypt, nor escape

from the hand that oppressed them, until they had sacrificed a lamb according to the law of Moses; and when they had eaten its flesh, they anointed the lintels with its blood; and so put the destroyer to shame. But it was not the mere sacrifice of a sheep that made them, superior to death and the destroyer. Types travail with the truth: and this act of theirs was, as I said, a foreshowing, by means of what was done in shadows, of the saving efficacy of the death of Christ, and of the abolition of destruction by His blood: Who also further drives away our cruel tyrant, Satan, and delivers from the mastery of impure spirits those whom they had enslaved, and who, like the Israelites made to serve in bricklaying, had become the victims of earthly cares, and polluted fleshly lusts, and the unprofitable distractions of this world.

The mystery of the passion may be seen also in another instance. For according to the Mosaic law two goats were offered, differing in nothing from one another, but alike in size and appearance. Of these, one was called ”the lord:” and the other, the ”sent-away.” And when the lot had been cast for that which was called ”lord,” it was sacrificed: while the other was sent away from the sacrifice: and therefore had the name of the ”sent-away.” And Who was signified by this? The Word, though He was God, was in our likeness, and took the form of us sinners, as far as the nature of the flesh was concerned. The goat, then, male or female, was sacrificed for sins. But the death was our desert, inasmuch as by sin we had fallen under the divine curse. But when the Saviour of all Himself, so to speak, undertook the charge, He transferred to Himself what was our due, and laid down His life, that we might be sent away from death and destruction.

The mystery, therefore, was revealed to the Jews, by what was shadowed in the law, had they only been acquainted with the sacred Scriptures. But, as the blessed Paul wrote, ”Blindness in part hath happened unto Israel;” and ”even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil is laid upon their heart: nor is it unveiled, because in Christ it is done away.” They then boast indeed of the law, but its purpose is entirely hidden from them; for it leads us to the mystery of Christ. But that they were without understanding our Saviour shews, saying; ”Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they it is that testify of Me. And ye desire not to come unto Me, that ye may have life.” For the divinely-inspired Scriptures conduct him who has understanding to an accurate knowledge of the doctrines of the truth: but they do not at all benefit the unwise, the ignorant, and the careless. Not because they cannot do so, but because the infirmity of their mind renders them incapable of receiving the light which the Scriptures give. For just as the light of the solar radiance is useless to those deprived of sight; not as though it cannot shine, but because their eyes are incapable of admitting and receiving it; so the holy Scriptures, though inspired by God, profit nothing the unlearned and foolish.

Our duty, therefore, is to draw near unto God, and say; ”Open mine eyes: and I shall perceive the wondrous things of Thy law.” So He will reveal Christ to us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LIV.

9:46-48. And there entered a thought among them, which of them is the greatest. And Jesus, knowing the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by Him, and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever receiveth Me, receiveth Him Who sent Me. For he that is least among you all, shall be the chief. YE who are zealous after spiritual skilfulness, and thirst for the communication of the sacred doctrines, receive once again the things ye love. And it is no earthly teacher Who leads you to the gainful booty, nor one like unto us Whom ye obtain as your guide, but the Word of God, Who came down from above, even from heaven, and is the true light of heaven and earth. For the whole rational creation is illuminated by His means, inasmuch as He is the giver of all wisdom and understanding. From Him we receive all knowledge of virtue, and the perfect ability to perform good works such as become saints. For, as Scripture saith, ”we are taught of God.” And the passage just laid before us bears witness also to what I have said. ”For there entered,” it says, ”a thought among them:”----that is, among the holy Apostles,----”which of them is chief.”

And now let him who thinks that Jesus was a mere man learn that he is in error, and far gone from the truth. For let him know, that though God the Word became flesh, yet that it was not possible for Him to cease to be that which He was, and that He continued to be God. For to be able to search the hearts and reins, and know their secrets, is the attribute of the supreme God alone, and besides Him of no other being whatsoever. But behold, Christ searcheth the thoughts of the holy Apostles, and fixeth the eye of Godhead upon their hidden feelings. Therefore He too is God, as being adorned with honours thus glorious and divine.

But let us just now investigate this question, whether all the blessed disciples in common were seized with this malady? whether this thought entered all at once? But it is, in my opinion, altogether incredible to suppose that all of them at the same moment became the common prey of one malady: but when, as I imagine, it happened to one, the wise Evangelist, that he might not be found framing an accusation against an individual among his fellow disciples, expresses himself indefinitely, saying, ”There entered a thought among them, who of them is chief.”

By this, however, we are permitted to see how very wily Satan is in doing evil. For most versatile and full of contrivance is this snake for mischief, plotting in a diversity of ways against those whose love is fixed upon an honourable life, and who earnestly seek after more excellent virtues: and if by fleshly pleasures he can prevail over any one's mind, he savagely makes the assault, and sharpens the goad of voluptuousness, and by the very audacity of his attacks, humbles to base lusts even a well-confirmed mind. But if any one be manly, and escape from these snares, he then uses other artifices, contriving baits to tempt him unto mental maladies. For he sows some seed or other displeasing to God: and in those in whom there is something noble, and the praise of an excellent life, he excites the passion of vainglory, exciting them by little and little to an abominable haughtiness. For just as those who in warlike guise are equipped to do battle with invaders, use many contrivances against them; either drawing bows, which discharge arrows, or hurling stones from slings, or manfully charging them with drawn swords: so also Satan uses every artifice in carrying on war against the saints by means of manifold sins.

The passion, therefore, and lust of vainglory attacked some one of the holy Apostles; for the mere disputing who of them is the chief, is the mark of an ambitious person, eager to stand at the head of the rest. But He slept not Who knoweth how to deliver, even Christ; He saw in the disciple's mind this thought, springing up, in the words of Scripture, like some bitter plant: He saw the tare, the work of the wicked sower: and before it grow up high; before it struck its root down deep; before it grew strong, and took possession of the heart; He, so to speak, tears up the evil by the very root. He saw the barbarian's arrow that had found entrance: and before it prevailed, and pierced through the mind, He contrives a medicine. For when passions are but beginning in us, and, so to speak, as yet in their infancy, and not full grown, nor firmly rooted, they are easily overcome. But when they have increased, and grown strong, they are hard to put off, and bear themselves with no little audacity. For this reason one of the wise said: "If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place: for yielding heals many sins."

In what way, then, does the Physician of souls amputate the passion of vainglory? How does He deliver the beloved disciple from being the prey of the enemy, and from a thing hateful to God and man? "He took a child, it says, and set it by Him;" and made the event a means of benefiting both the holy Apostles themselves, and us their successors: for this malady as a general rule preys upon all those who are in any respect superior to other men.

But of what did He make the child He had taken a type and representation? Of an innocent and unambitious life. For the mind of a child is void of fraud, and his heart sincere; his thoughts are simple; he covets not rank, and knows not what is meant by one man being higher in station than another: he has even no unwillingness to be regarded as the least, nor sets himself above any other person whatsoever: and

though he be of good family by birth, he does not quarrel about dignity even with a slave: nor though he have rich parents, is he aware of any difference between himself and poor children. On the contrary, he likes being with them, and talks and laughs with them without distinction. In his mind and heart there is great frankness arising from simplicity and innocence. For even the Saviour once said to the holy Apostles, or rather to all those who love Him: ”Verily I say unto you, that unless ye be converted, and become like these children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God.” And at another time again, when the women were bringing to Him their infants, and the disciples prevented them, He said, ”Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such as they is the kingdom of heaven.” And again the most wise Paul desires that those who believe in Christ should be ”grown men in understanding, but in malice babes.” And another of the holy Apostles said: ”As babes just born, love the rational and pure milk, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is kind.”

As I said then, Christ brought forward the child as a pattern of simplicity and innocence, ”and set him also by Him;”” shewing by him, as in a figure, that He accepts and loves those who are such, and deems them worthy, so to speak, of standing at His side, as being like-minded with Him, and anxious to tread in His steps. For He said, ”Learn of Me: for I am meek, and lowly in heart.” And if He Who transcends all, and is crowned with such surpassing glories, is lowly in heart, how must it not bring upon such as we are, yea, even upon our very selves, the blame of utter madness, if we do not bear ourselves humbly towards the poor, and learn what our nature is, but love to vaunt ourselves ambitiously above our measure! And He further says: ”He that receiveth this child in My name receiveth Me: and he that recciveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me.” Since, therefore, the reward of those that honour the saints is one and the same, whether he who is honoured be, if it so chance, of modest rank, or of exalted station and dignity;----for he receiveth Christ, and by Him and in Him the Father;----how was it not utterly foolish for them to quarrel among themselves, and aim at pre-eminence, and be unwilling to be thought inferior to others, when they were to be accepted on equal terms!

But He makes the purport of this declaration even still more plain by saying: ”For he that is least among you all, the same is chief. And how is he the chief, who is regarded as the least? Is the comparison in point of virtue? But how can this he? The foremost place is not assigned to him who is chief in virtue above him who is otherwise. In what way, then, is he chief who is least? Probably, then, He calls him least whom lowly things please, and who, from modesty, does not think highly of himself. Such a one pleases Christ: for it is written, ”that every one that exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. And Christ Himself somewhere says, ”Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven. The ornament, therefore, of a soul that is sanctified is a poor and humble mind: but the wish to think highly of oneself, and to be at strife

with the brethren for the sake off honour and dignity, and foolishly to quarrel with them, is in like manner a disgrace. Such conduct separates friends, and makes even those perhaps great enemies whoso dispositions are similar. It overpowers the law of nature, and subverts that innate affection which we owe our brethren. It divides lovers, and sometimes makes even those enemies of one another, who are united by being born from one womb. It fights against and resists the blessings of peace.

Miserable is it, and a malady invented by the wickedness of the devil. For what is there more delusive than vainglory? Like smoke it is dispersed; like a cloud it passeth away, and like the vision of a dream changeth into nothingness. It scarcely equalleth the herbage in endurance, and withereth like grass. For it is written, that ”all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. It is a weakness, therefore, despised even among us, and numbered among the greatest evils. For who does not reckon a vainglorious man, inflated with empty airs, an annoyance? Who does not regard with contempt, and give the name of ”boaster,” to one who refuses to be on an. equality with others, and thrusts himself forward as if claiming to be accounted their superior? Let, then, the malady of vaingloriousness be far from those who love Christ: and lot us rather consider our companions as better than we are, and be anxious to adorn ourselves with that humility of mind, which is well-pleasing to God. For being thus simple-minded, as becometh saints, we shall be with Christ, Who honoureth simplicity: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father, be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LV.

9:49-50. And John answered and said: Teacher, we saw one casting out devils in Thy Name, and we forbade him because he followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto him: Forbid him not: for he is not against you. For whosoever is not against you, is on your part. PAUL requires us to ”prove every thing,” and says, ”Be wise money-changers.” But an exact and scrupulous knowledge of each particular matter we can obtain from no other source than from divinely-inspired Scripture. For David in the Psalms, addressing as it were Christ, the Saviour of all, declares; ”Thy law is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my paths.” And Solomon also writes, that ”the commandment of the law is a lamp and a light.” For just as this sensible light that is in the world, by falling on our bodily eyes, dispels the darkness; so also the law of God, when admitted into the mind and heart of man, illuminates it thoroughly, and does not suffer it to fall against the stumblingblocks of ignorance, nor be caught in the wickednesses of sin.

And this I say from admiration of the skilfulness here also displayed in the lessons from the Gospel just set before us, and the purport of which ye doubtless wish to be taught, seeing ye have assembled here from love of the sacred doctrines, and with eagerness have formed the present meeting. What therefore do the wise disciples say, or what do they wish to learn from Him Who endoweth them with all wisdom, and revealeth to them the understanding of every good work? ”Teacher, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him.” Has the sting of envy troubled the holy disciples? Do they grudge those highly favoured? Have even they admitted within them a passion so abominable and hateful to God? ”We saw one, they say, casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him.” Tell me, dost thou forbid one who in Christ’s name troubles Satan, and crushes evil demons? How was it not thy duty rather to reflect, that he was not the doer of these wonders, but that the grace which was in him wrought the miracle by the power of Christ? How therefore dost thou forbid him who in Christ wins the victory? ”Yes,” he saith; for he followeth not with us.” Oh blind speech! For what if he be not numbered among the holy Apostles, who is crowned with Christ’s grace, yet is he equally with you adorned with apostolic powers. There are many diversities of Christ’s gifts, as the blessed Paul tcacheth, saying; ”that to one is given the word of wisdom, but

to another the word of knowledge: and to another faith; and to another gifts of healings."

What therefore is the meaning of his "not walking with us," or what is the force of the expression? Look then; for I will tell you as well as I can. The Saviour gave the holy Apostles authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all disease and all sickness among the people. And so they did; nor was the grace given them ineffectual. For they returned with joy, saying; "Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name." They imagined, therefore, that leave was given not to any one else but to themselves alone to be invested with the authority which He had granted them. For this reason they draw near, and want to learn, whether others also might exercise it, even though they had not been appointed to the apostleship, nor even to the office of teacher.

We find something like this also in the ancient sacred Scriptures. For God once said to the hierophant Moses: "Choose thee seventy men of the elders of Israel, and I will take of the Spirit that is upon thee, and give it," He says, "to them." And when those who were chosen had assembled at the former tabernacle, two men only excepted, who had remained in the camp, and the spirit of prophecy descended upon them, not only those who were assembled in the holy tabernacle prophesied, but those also who had remained in the camp. But "Jeshua, it says, who stood before Moses, said, Eldad and Midad, lo! they prophesy in the camp. My lord Moses forbid them. And Moses said unto Jeshua, Enviest thou me? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, the Lord putting His Spirit upon them." But it was Christ Who at that time made the hierophant Moses thus speak by the Holy Ghost: and here also in person He saith to the holy Apostles; "Forbid not him who is crushing Satan," that is, in His name, "for he is not against you, He says; for he who is not against you is on your part." For on the part of us who love Christ, are all who wish to act to His glory, and are crowned by His grace. And this is a law to the churches continuing even to this day. For we honour only those who lift up holy hands, and purely and without fault or blame, in Christ's name, rebuke unclean spirits, and deliver multitudes from various diseases: for we know that it is Christ Who worketh in them.

We must, however, examine such things carefully. For there are verily men, who have not been counted worthy of Christ's grace, but make the reputation of being saints and honourable an opportunity of gain. Of such one may say, that they are bold and shameless hypocrites, who seize honours for themselves, even though God has not called them thereto; they praise themselves, and imitate the bold doings of the false prophets of old, of whom God said; "I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied." And so too may He say of these, I have not sanctified them, but they falsely assume the gift for themselves: they have not been counted worthy of My grace, but wickedly seize those things

which I bestow on such alone as are worthy to receive them. These, making a show of fasting, walk sadly with downcast looks, while full of fraud and baseness. And often they pride themselves on letting their nails grow long: and are especially fond of their complexion being sallow: and though no one compel them, they delight in enduring such misery as men have to bear in prison, hanging collars on their necks, and putting fetters sometimes on their hands and feet. Such persons the Saviour has commanded us to avoid, saying; ”Beware of those who come to you in sheep’s clothing: but within are ravening wolves.”

To this, however, some one may object, ’But who, O Lord, knows the heart of man? Who sees what is concealed within us, but Thou alone, Who by Thyself didst form our hearts, and tryest hearts and reins? Yes, He says: ”By their fruits ye shall know them:” not by appearances, not by outward show, but by fruits. For what is the object of their hypocrisy? Plainly it looks to the love of gain. For they gape at the hands of those who visit them: and if they see them empty, they are greatly distressed, and stung with annoyance. For piety is with them merchandize. If, however, thou lovest wealth, and lusteth after base gains, and hast given a place in thy mind to that most base passion,----the love of money,----put off the sheep’s skin; why labourest thou in vain, by making a pretence of an austere and unworldly conduct? Abandon this excessive rigour of life, and aim instead at being one who is contented with little. Ask this of God: seek His righteousness: ”Cast thy care upon the Lord: and He shall nourish thee.”

But there are even some who use from time to time incantations and certain abominable mutterings, and wickedly make certain fumigations , and command the use of amulets. ’But yet,’ says one, ’who has without thought taken part in these practices, in their incantations they use the Name of the Lord of Sabaoth.’ Are we, then, to acquit them of blame because they bestow on a wicked and impure devil an expression suitable to God only, and call the wicked Satan the Lord of Sabaoth; asking of him as the reward of blasphemy, aid in the things they request of him? Not that he really aids them, for he is powerless; but rather brings down to the pit of destruction those that call upon him. For the Lord speaketh not untruly where He says that Satan casteth not out Satan . It is necessary, therefore, for our salvation and well-pleasing to God, to flee far from every thing like this. But when thou seest one who has been brought up in the church, innocent, simple, without hypocrisy, whose mode of life is worthy of emulation, who is known of many as the companion of holy monks, who flees from the arts of the city, who is fond of desert places, who loves not gain, nor schisms, and, besides all this, has a correct faith, and is made honourable by the grace of Christ, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, so as to be even able to work those things that are by Christ; unto such a one draw near with confidence: he shall pray for thee purely, and his grace shall minister unto thee. For the Saviour and Lord of all grants the requests of those

who ask Him: by Whom and with whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LVI.

9:51-56. And it came to pass that when the days were fulfilled for His being taken up, that He set His face to go to Jerusalem: and sent messengers before His face, and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for Him. And they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw it, they said, Wilt Thou that we bid fire come down from heaven to consume them? But He turned and rebuked them, and went to another village. Those who are abundantly endowed with vast wealth, and pride themselves on their ample riches, assemble fit persons to their banquets, and set before them a sumptuously furnished table, producing by a diversity of dishes and sauces of various kinds a pleasure superior to the mere satisfying of hunger. But from this no benefit arises, but rather great injury to the banqueters. For more than a sufficiency after the calls of hunger have been satisfied is always hurtful. But those who possess heavenly riches, and know the sacred doctrines, and have been illuminated with divine light, nourish their souls by feasting them on instructive discourses, in order that they may become both fruitful towards God, and skilled in the pathway unto all virtue, and earnest in accomplishing those things by means of which a man attains to a happy issue. To this intellectual and holy table, therefore, the sacred Word invites us; for it says, "Eat and drink, and be drunken, my friends." But friends of whom? evidently of God. And it is worthy of note that we are to be drunken with these things, and that we can never be satiated with that which is to our edification. Let us see, therefore, what kind of profit the lesson from the Gospel sets before us upon the present occasion.

"For when," it says, "the days were fulfilled for His being taken up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem." By which is meant, that as the time had now come when at length having borne for us His saving passion, He should ascend to heaven, and dwell with God the Father, He determined to proceed to Jerusalem. For this is, I think, the meaning of His having set His face. He sends, therefore, messengers to prepare a lodging for Him and His companions. And when they came to a village of the Samaritans, they were not received. At this the blessed disciples were indignant, not so much on their own account as because they did not honour Him

Who is Saviour and Lord of all. And what followed? They murmured greatly: and as His majesty and power was not unknown to them, they said, ”Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire come down from heaven, and consume them?” But Christ rebuked them for so speaking. And in these last words lies the purport of the lesson: and therefore let us accurately examine the whole passage. For it is written, ”Churn milk, and it becomes butter.”

It would be untrue, then, to affirm that our Saviour did not know what was about to happen: for as He knows all things, He knew, of course, that His messengers would not be received by the Samaritans. Of this there can be no doubt. Why, then, did He command them to precede Him? The reason of it was His custom assiduously to benefit the holy Apostles in every possible way: and for this end His practice sometimes was to put them to the proof. As for instance, He was sailing once upon the lake of Tiberias with those named above; and while so doing he fell asleep purposely: and a violent wind having risen upon the lake, a rough and unusual storm began to rage, and the boat was in danger, and the crew in alarm. For He intentionally permitted the storm and the fury of the tempest to rage against the ship, to try the faith of the disciples, and to make manifest the greatness of His power. And this, also, was the result. For they, in the littleness of their faith, said, ”Master, save us, we perish.” And He at once arose and shewed that He is Lord of the elements; for He rebuked the sea and the tempest, and there was an exceeding great calm. And so also on this occasion: He knew, indeed, that those who went forward to announce that he would lodge with them would not be received by the Samaritans; but He permitted them to go, that this again might be a means of benefiting the holy Apostles.

What, then, was the purpose of this occurrence? He was going up to Jerusalem, as the time of His passion was already drawing near. He was about to endure the contumelies of the Jews; He was about to be set at nought by the scribes and Pharisees; and to suffer those things which they inflicted upon Him when they proceeded to the accomplishment of all violence and wicked audacity. In order, therefore, that they might not be offended when they saw Him suffering, as understanding that He would have them also to be patient, and not to murmur greatly, even though men treat them with contumely, He, so to speak, made the contempt they met with from the Samaritans a preparatory exercise in the matter. They had not received the messengers. It was the duty of the disciples, treading in the footsteps of their Lord, to bear it patiently as becometh saints, and not to say anything of them wrathfully. But they were not yet so disposed; but being seized with too hot indignation, they would have called down fire upon them from heaven, as far as their will went. But Christ rebuked them for so speaking.

See here, I pray, how great is the difference between us and God: for the distance is immeasurable. For He is slow to anger, and long-suffering, and of incomparable

gentleness and love to mankind: but we children of earth are quick unto anger, hasty unto impatience, and refuse with indignation to be judged by others when we are found out in committing any wrong act; while we are most ready to find fault with others. And therefore God the Lord of all affirms, saying; ”For My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor your ways as My ways; but as the heaven is far from the earth, so are My ways from your ways, and My thoughts from your thoughts.” Such, then, is He Who is Lord of all: but we, as I said, being readily vexed, and easily led into anger, take sometimes severe and intolerable vengeance upon those who have occasioned us some trifling annoyance: and though commanded to live according to the Gospel, we fall short of the practice commanded by the law. For the law indeed said, ”Eye for eye; tooth for tooth; hand for hand:” and commanded that an equal retribution should suffice: but we, as I said, though perhaps we have suffered but a trifling wrong, would retaliate very harshly, not remembering Christ, who said: ”The disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor the slave than his master;” Who also, ”when He was reviled, reviled not again; when suffering, threatened not; but committed His cause to Him Who judgeth righteously.” As treading this path much-enduring Job also is justly admired: for it is written of him, ”What man is like Job, who drinketh wrongs like a draught?” For their benefit, therefore, He rebuked the disciples, gently restraining the sharpness of their wrath, and not permitting them to murmur violently against those who sinned, but persuading them rather to be longsuffering, and to cherish a mind immovable by ought of this.

It benefited them also in another way: they were to be the instructors of the whole world, and to travel through the cities and villages, proclaiming everywhere the good tidings of salvation. Of necessity, therefore, while seeking to fulfil their mission, they must fall in with wicked men, who would reject the divine tidings, and, so to speak, not receive Jesus to lodge with them . Had Christ, therefore, praised them for wishing that fire should come down upon the Samaritans, and that so painful a torment should be inflicted upon them, they would have been similarly disposed in many other instances, and when men disregarded the sacred message, would have pronounced their condemnation, and called down fire upon them from above. And what would have been the result of such conduct? The sufferers would have been innumerable, and no longer would the disciples have been so much physicians of the sick, as torturers rather, and intolerable to men everywhere. For their own good, therefore, they were rebuked, when thus enraged beyond measure at the contumely of the Samaritans: in order that they might learn that as ministers of the divine tidings, they must rather be full of longsuffering and gentleness; not revengeful; not given to wrath, nor savagely attacking those who offend them.

And that the ministers of God’s message were longsuffering, Paul teaches us, saying, ”For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were, condemned to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. Being reviled, we bless; being defamed, we persuade: we have become the offs-

couring of the world; the refuse of all men up to this day." He wrote also to others, or rather to all who had not yet received Christ in them, but, so to speak, were still afflicted with the pride of the Samaritans: "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Great, therefore, is the benefit of the gospel lessons to those who are truly perfect in mind; and may we also, taking them unto ourselves, benefit our souls, ever praising Christ the Saviour of all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and. ever, Amen.

[Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

SERMON LVII.

9:57-58. And as they were going in the way, a certain man said unto Him, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. And Jesus said unto Him: The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place, to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head. TO covet the gifts that come from above from God is in very deed a state of mind worthy of being attained to, and that wins for us all good. But though the Lord of all be a bountiful Giver, yet giveth He not simply to all men without distinction, but to such rather as are worthy of His bounty. For just as those invested with the glory of royalty bestow their honours, and the various offices of state, not upon rough and ignorant men, who have nothing in them worthy of admiration, but crown those rather, who have hereditary nobility, and have been proved by trial worthy of receiving them, and likely to be successful in the discharge of their duties; so also God, Who knoweth all things, bestoweth not a share in His bounties upon souls careless and pleasure seeking, but upon such as are in a fit state rightly to receive them. If then any one would be accounted worthy of these great honours, and of being accepted by God, let him first free himself from the pollutions of evil, and the guilt of indifference; for so he will become capable of receiving them: but if he be not so disposed in mind, let him depart far away.

And this the purport of the passage from the Gospels just placed before us teaches us: for a certain man drew near to Christ the Saviour of us all saying, ”Teacher, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. But He rejected the man, saying, ”The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place to lodge in: but that He had not where to lay His head. And yet perchance some one may say, that ’he who promised to follow Him had attained to the desire of what was honourable, and good, and profitable. For what is comparable to being with Christ, and following Him? Or how must it not aid in his salvation? Why therefore did He reject one who was eagerly promising to follow Him constantly? For one may learn from His own words, that to follow Him leads on to every blessing: for He said, ”He that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but possesseth the light of life. What therefore was there improper in promising to follow Him, in order to gain the light of life? What then is our answer to this? That this was not his object. How could it be? For it is easy for any who will examine such matters accurately, to perceive that in the first

place there was great ignorance in his manner of drawing near; and secondly, that it was full of excessive presumptuousness.

For his wish was not simply to follow Christ, as so many others of the Jewish multitude did, but rather to thrust himself into apostolic honours. This then was the following which he was seeking for, being self-called thereto: whereas the blessed Paul writes, "that no man taketh the honour unto himself unless he be called of God, as Aaron also was. For Aaron did not enter upon the priesthood of himself, but on the contrary was called of God. And of every one of the holy apostles we find, that he did not promote himself to the apostleship, but rather received the honour from Christ. For He said, "Come after Me; and I will make you to become fishers of men. But this man, as I said, boldly took upon himself gifts thus altogether honourable, and, though no one called him, thrust himself into that which was above his rank. Now were any one to draw near to an earthly king, and say, "I shall promote myself, even though thou grantest it not, to this or that honour, whatever it may be; it would be a dangerous act, and one that would bring upon him the loss often even of his life. Who can doubt that certainly this would be the result? For in every matter we must await the decision of him who possesses sovereign authority. How then could it be fitting for this man to appoint himself among the disciples, and crown himself with apostolic powers, without being called thereunto at all by Christ?

And there is another reason for which He justly rejected him, and deemed him unworthy of so illustrious an honour. For earnestly to follow Christ is confessedly profitable to salvation: but he who wishes to be counted worthy of so great glory must, I say, bear his cross. And what is it to bear the cross? It is to die unto the world, by denying its empty distractions, and manfully abandoning a carnal and pleasure-loving life. For it is written: "Love not the world: neither the things that are in the world: for every thing that is in the world is the lust of the body, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."... And again, "Know ye not that the love of the world is enmity unto God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world is found God's enemy." The man therefore, whose choice it is to be with Christ, loves that which is admirable and profitable unto salvation; but let him hearken to our words: withdraw thyself far from fleshly lusts; wash away the pollution of wickedness; cleanse off the stains caused by the base love of pleasure; for these keep thee away, and permit thee not to be with Christ. Remove that which separates thee; break down the enmity; burst open the hedge that is between; for then thou wilt be with Christ. But if the hedge which keeps thee from communion with Him be not yet destroyed, in what manner canst thou follow Him?

That such then was the case with the man before us, He shews by the indirect rebuke which He gave him, not in order to reproach him, but rather for his correction, that he might of his own accord grow better, and become earnest in following the ways of virtue. Therefore He says, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of

heaven a place to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head. And the simple meaning of the passage, and that ready to hand, is as follows: that the beasts and birds have dens and dwellings; but I have nothing to offer of those things which are the objects of general pursuit: for 1 have no place where to dwell, and rest Myself, and lay My head. But the inner and secret signification of the passage is attained to by more profound thoughts. For He seems to mean by the foxes and birds of heaven, those wicked, and cunning, and impure powers, the herds of demons. For they are so called in many places in the inspired Scripture. For the blessed Psalmist says of certain men, ”They shall be the portions of foxes. And in the Song of Songs it is written again: ”Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that destroy the vines. And Christ Himself somewhere says of Herod, who was a bad man, and crafty in his wickedness; ”Tell that fox.

And elsewhere He said of the seeds that fell upon the pathways, ”the birds of heaven came and devoured them. And this we affirm that He said, not of the material and visible birds, but rather of those impure and wicked spirits, who oft-times, when the heavenly seed has fallen upon the hearts of men, remove and, so to speak, carry it away, that they may not bring forth any fruit. As long therefore as the foxes and birds have holes and dens in us, how can Christ enter? Where can He rest? What communion is there between Christ and Belial? For He lodgeth in the saints, and dwelleth in them that love Him: but withdraws from the impure and the unclean. Expel the beasts: hunt out the foxes: drive away the birds: free thy heart from their impurity, in order that the Son of man may find a place in thee to lay His head: even the Word of God Who was incarnate and became man. For light has no concord with darkness, nor the impure with the holy. It is a thing altogether incredible for there to be stored up in one vessel perfume and filthiness. It is impossible for a man to be invested with apostolic honour, and conspicuous for his virtues, and every good and manly quality, if he have not admitted Christ into him. And so most wise Paul has taught us saying: ”Or seek ye a proof of Christ, Who speaketh in us?

But he in whom Christ dwells is a temple, not of one of those gods falsely so named, but of Him Who by nature, and in truth is God. For we have been taught to say, that ”we are the temples of the living God. But to a divine temple incense is suitable, such as is of a most sweet scent: and every virtue is a rational incense, altogether acceptable to the God of all.

”Let us therefore cleanse ourselves from every stain of the flesh, and of the spirit.” ”Let us put to death those members which are upon the earth.” Let us close the entrance to impure spirits. Let not reprobate and wicked birds lodge within us. Let our heart be holy and unpolluted, as far as is possible and may be. For so shall we follow Christ, according as He giveth us the grace, and He will dwell joyfully in us. For then He will have where to lay His head, and rest in us as in saints. For it

is written; ”Become ye holy, because I am holy.” And devoting ourselves to these earnest pursuits, we shall also attain to the city that is above, by the aid of the same Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LVIII.

9:59-60. And He said unto another, Follow Me: but he said, Lord, suffer me to go first and bury my father. And Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. IN Christ we have the head and teacher of every virtue. For ”we are taught of God,” as the prophet declares, and moreover the wise Paul bears witness saying: ”God, Who in manifold parts and manifold manners spake in old time to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by the Son.” And what spake He by the Son? Plainly the gospel message of salvation, by means of which we are successfully guided into every kind of virtue, and advance in the praiseworthy and admirable pathway of the better life, so that by following His footsteps we gain the treasure of His gifts. The manner, then, in which we follow Him, and are counted worthy of those perfect and surpassing honours which were first bestowed upon the apostles, the lesson just laid before us clearly teaches us. ”For He said, it tells us, unto another, Follow Me.”

Now the first point to consider is this: that in the preceding passage we learnt, that one drew near to Him, and said, ”Teacher, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest:” but was rejected with scorn by Christ; first as being self called, and thrusting himself into honours which God bestows upon those only who are fit to receive them, and who as being announced by every excellent quality, and skilful in practising every good work and deed, are crowned by Christ, and inscribed in the companies of the holy teachers. But inasmuch as this man was not so disposed, he met with rebuke; for his mind was the dwelling of evil spirits, and full of all impurity. For the Saviour, indirectly touching his case, said; ”The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven a place to lodge in: but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.”

Now at our last meeting; we sufficiently discussed the manner in which this is to be understood by us. But here it was no self-called disciple who came, nor one presumptuously forward in promises of deeds thus praiseworthy: but, on the contrary, it was one called by Christ to the apostleship, as not unfitted for it. For he was honoured by the divine decree, and was doubtless holy, and venerable; and

able to conform himself to the intention of the evangelic message. But he did not as yet know clearly in what way he ought to conduct himself in so great a matter; for he had perchance a father bowed down with old age: and thought himself acting in a manner highly pleasing to God in anxiously shewing him tenderness and titting love. He knew, of course, as meeting with it in the books of the law, that the God of all has provided also for this, saying; ”Honour thy father, and thy mother: that it may be well with thee: and that thou mayest live long upon the earth.” On being, therefore, summoned to the sacred ministry, and to the office of proclaiming the Gospel message:----for this is what was signified by Christ’s command to follow Him:----he is troubled in his human understanding, and asks for a delay of time enough to tend the old age of his parent. For ”Suffer me,” he said, ”first to go and bury my father.” And what we say is, not that he asked permission to bury his father, being already dead and laid out:----for Christ would not have forbidden this:----but he used the word ”bury” instead of ”that I may take care of his old age till his burial.”

What, then, was the Saviour’s answer? ”Leave the dead burying their dead: but go thou, preach the kingdom of God.” For there were, no doubt, other guardians and relatives of his father: but as I consider dead, because they had not yet believed in Christ, nor been able to receive the new birth by holy baptism unto the life incorruptible. Let them, He says, bury their dead, because they also have within them a dead mind, nor as yet have been numbered among those who possess the life that is in Christ. From this, then, we learn, that the fear of God is to be set even above the reverence and love due to parents. For the law of Moses also, while it commanded, in the first place, that ”thou shalt love the Lord God with all thy soul, and all thy might, and all thy heart:” put as second to it the honour due to parents, saying, ”Honour thy father and thy mother.”

For come, and let us examine the matter in dispute, and inquire what is the reason why we consider the honour and love due to parents, not a thing to be neglected, but, on the contrary, carefully to be attended to. One may say, then, that is because we have our being by their means. But the God of all brought us into being, when we absolutely did not exist. He is the Creator and Maker of all: and, so to speak, the principle and radical essence of everything. For to everything existence is His gift. The father, then, and mother, were the means by which their offspring came into existence. Ought not, therefore, the primary Author justly to be loved more than the secondary and subsequent? And will not He Who gave the more precious gifts require of us the more marked honour? Our endeavours, therefore, to please our parents must give way to our love to God, and human duties must yield precedence to those which are divine. And this the Saviour has Himself taught us, saying, ”He who loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he who loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me.” He does not say that they are condemned for simply loving, but for loving them more than Me. He permits

sons and daughters, therefore, to love their parents, but not more than they do Him. When therefore any thing which concerns God's glory has to be done, let no impediment stand in the way; let thy earnestness be without pretext: thy zealous exertions ardent and irrepressible. Forthwith let father and mother and children be disregarded, and the power of natural affection towards them cease, and yield the victory to the love of Christ.

So was that thrice-blessed Abraham tried: so was he justified, and called the friend of God: and counted worthy of surpassing honours. For what can equal in the balance the being a friend of God? What can this world offer comparable with a grace so glorious and admirable? He had one only-begotten and beloved son, who, after long delay, and scarcely, and in his old age had been given him. Upon him too rested all his hope of offspring: for it was said to him: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called. But as the sacred Scripture saith, "God tried Abraham, saying: Take thy beloved son, even him whom thou lovest, Isaac, and go to the high land, and offer him to Me for a whole burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee. Was God trying Abraham, as not foreknowing what would happen, and waiting to learn the result? But how can this be true? For He knows all things before they happen. Why therefore did He try him? That we by the fact might learn the old man's love of God, and ready obedience, and unchanging earnestness in the dutiful performance of God's will. And observe how God made him, so to speak, unready for the act, that the patriarch might obtain the more worthy admiration, as preferring nothing to his Lord's will. "Take," He says, not simply Isaac, but "thy son: the beloved one;----him whom thou hast loved. This strengthened in his case the sting of natural affection. Oh!

how mighty a turmoil of bitter thoughts rose up in the old man! For the force of innate affection naturally called him to compassion for the child. He had wished to be a father: for he had even lamented his childlessness unto God, when He promised to give him all that land which had been told him, and said, "Lord, what givest Thou me? and I dwell childless. The law, therefore, of natural affection urged him to spare the lad; while the power of love towards God called him to ready obedience: and he was like some tree, driven to and fro by the violence of the winds; or like a ship at sea, reeling, so to speak, and staggering by the beating of the waves. But there was one true and powerful thought to which he held fast. For he considered, that though the lad were slain, and became the work and victim of the fire, as being a whole burnt-offering, well-pleasing to God: yet that He "was not unable to raise him up again, oven from the dead."

Much, therefore, at once was taught him by this event. For, in the first place, he learnt that ready obedience leads on to every blessing, and is the pathway to justification, and the pledge of friendship with God: and secondly, that God is able to raise again, even from the dead. And, moreover, he learnt what is more important,

and more worthy of account, I mean the mystery of Christ: that for the salvation and life of the world God the Father was about to yield His own Son to the sacrifice: even Him, Who by nature was beloved, that is, Christ. And the blessed Paul confirms this, saying of Him: ”He That spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” The patriarch Abraham therefore learnt what kind of and how great a thing it is, not to spare his own son, the only-begotten and beloved. He then was found approved, because he set nothing above those things that are well-pleasing to God. Such Christ requires us to be, so as to love and prize what concerns His glory far above the ties of fleshly relationship.

And once more to look at it in another light. It was right that the power of love towards Him should outweigh with us even that of those who begat us in the flesh. He has given us God as a Father; for He said: ”Call not any one father upon earth: for One is your Father Who is in heaven: and ye are all brethren.” And the wise John said of Him, ”He came to His own, and His own received Him not: but to all who received Him He gave power to become the sons of God.” Ought they therefore who have Him as Father Who is Lord of heaven and earth: Who transcends all created things: Who is guarded by mighty cherubim: Who excels thrones and dominions, principalities and powers;----ought such, I say, to fall into so great folly, as not to set Him above all natural relationship? Can it be that we shall be guilty if we disregard the honour due to parents and children and brethren: but free from guilt, if we pay not the honour due to the Father of all? Hear what He plainly saith; ”The son honoureth his father, and the servant his master: if I am a Father, where is My honour? and if I am. a Master, where is My fear? saith the Lord Almighty.”

Fitly therefore did Christ make him who was called to the apostleship acquainted with apostolic conduct, and the spiritual manliness required for its discharge, by saying, ”Leave the dead burying their dead: but go thou, preach the kingdom of God.” For such must the ministers of the divine message be. To whose wise teaching let us also in everything adhere, advancing onwards unto Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever, and ever, Amen.

SERMON LIX. FIT TO BE READ WHEN ANY ONE RECEIVES THE TONSURE .

9:61-62. And another also said, I will follow Thee, Lord; but first let me bid farewell to the members of my house. But Jesus said to him, No man who putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is fit for the kingdom of God. OF zeal in virtuous pursuits we say, that it is worthy of all praise. But those who have attained to this state of mind must be strong in purpose, and not feebly disposed towards the mark that is set before them. Rather they must plainly possess an unwavering and inflexible mind: for so, starting impetuously as from the barriers of the race-course, they will reach the goal, and gain the victory, and twine around their hair the conqueror's crown. And to this heartiness of purpose the Saviour of all encouraged us, as being a quality worth the gaining, where He says, "Who of you wishing to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth whether he have sufficient to finish it; lest, saith He, having laid the foundation, and not being able to finish it, the passers by say, This man began to build, and was not able to finish." One who so acts becomes an object merely of ridicule: for upon every honourable and virtuous undertaking a fitting conclusion ought to follow. And to teach this truth the law of Moses commanded those who were building a house to erect upon it also a battlement. For he who is not perfect in good, is not free from blame. Just then as discredit was of course attached to a house that had no battlements, so the passage just read to us from the Gospel teaches us a similar lesson.

"For one drew near saying, I will follow thee, Lord; but first let me go and bid farewell to those in my house." The promise then that he makes is worthy of emulation, and full of all praise: but the fact of his wishing to bid farewell to those at home shews him, so to speak, divided, and that he had not as yet entered upon the course with unshackled mind. For look how, like some colt eager for the race, there holds him back as with a bridle, the stream of worldly things, and his wish in part still to take interest in this world's occupations. For no one hinders him from

hastening, if he will, to the wished for mark, according to the free inclinations of his mind. But the very wish to consult first with his relatives, and to make those his counsellors who were not likely to entertain sentiments similar to his own, nor to share at all in his resolution, sufficiently proves him infirm and halting, and not as yet fully inclined to act upon his desire of following Christ.

But He, as it were by gentle reproofs, corrected him, and taught him to practise a more determined zeal, saying, "No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." For just as the husbandman, who has begun to break up his land by the plough, if he grow weary, and leave his labour half done, sees not his field thick set with ears, nor his threshing-floor full of sheaves, and suffers of course the loss which is the natural result of idleness; the absence, I mean, of produce, and the consequent penury, and incurs also the ridicule of those that see him: so he who wishes to cleave unto Christ, but does not bid farewell to the things of the world, and abandon all love of the flesh, and even deny his earthly relatives; for by so doing he attains to a resolute courage in all praiseworthy pursuits; is not fit for the kingdom of God. One who cannot attain to this resolution, because his mind is fettered with indolence, is not acceptable unto Christ, nor fit for His company, and necessarily is refused permission to be with Him.

Such were those of whom Christ spake, when forming that similitude in the Gospels. For He said, "A rich man made a banquet for his son; and sent therefore his servants to call them that were bidden, saying, My oxen and my failings are killed, and every thing is ready: come to the banquet. But they, it says, would not come: but one said, I have bought a field, and I cannot come. And another, I have bought a yoke of oxen: and another, I have taken a wife, hold me excused." Thou seest that they were called, and while it was in their power to partake of the feast, they excused themselves, and gave themselves up without restraint to those temporal and earthly matters, which rapidly fade, and the possession of which must quickly be abandoned. And yet surely it was their duty rather to have understood, that a wife and lands, and those other possessions, are but finite pleasures, short in duration, and fleeting like the shadows, and, as it were, a bitterness mingled with honey. But to be members of the church of God, from which they, I know not how, foolishly fled, would have procured for them an eternal and unchanging joy. Whoever would follow Christ, let him be thoroughly constant, and intent solely upon this end; let him not be divided; let him not be possessed by timidity and slothfulness; let him be free from all carnal lust, and prefer nothing to his love unto Him. But if he be not so disposed, nor so affected in his will, even if he do draw near, he will not be accepted.

Something of this sort the law of Moses also has taught us indirectly in figure. For whenever, as emergencies arose, the children of Israel went out to battle against their enemies, before they engaged in the combat, the herald of the host made

proclamation, ”Whosoever hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her, let him return to his house, that he die not in battle, and another man take her. Whosoever hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it, let him return to his house, that he die not in battle, and another dedicate it. Whosoever is frightened in his heart, let him return to his house, that he make not the heart of his brother frightened as his own.” Thou seest that the man who loves the world, or wealth, and whosoever is full of excuses, is not every where in his place: but we shall find the holy apostles very different from such as these. For when they heard Christ saying, ”Follow Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men: they, it says, at once left the ship and their father, and followed Him.” And the wise Paul also writes, ”But when God willed to reveal unto me His Son, immediately I counselled not with flesh and blood.” Thou seest the valiant mind, and the brave and hearty purpose, not subject to the bonds of indolence, but superior to all cowardice and fleshly lust. Such must they be who would follow Christ: not looking behind them, not walking, that is, so to speak, backwards, and turning their faces from that manly virtue which becometh saints, and excusing themselves from the duty of labouring: not loving things temporal, not of a double mind, but hastening onwards with perfect zeal to that which is well pleasing to Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LX.

10:1-3. After these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before His face, unto every city and place, whither He was about to enter. And He said unto them, The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into the harvest. THE Holy Ghost by the mouth of the holy prophets commanded the ministers of the saving word of the gospel, saying, ”Sound the trumpet on the new moon: on the solemn day of your feast.” And to the new moon we may compare the time of our Saviour’s coming. For a new world arose for us, in which all things have become new, as the very wise Paul assures us in his writings. For he says, ”The former things have passed away: behold, all things have become new.” By the new moon therefore, and solemn feast, we understand the time of the incarnation of the Only-begotten, when a trumpet sounded loudly and clearly, even that which proclaimed the saving message of the gospel. For is not that a time which invites us to keep festival, when we were justified by faith, and washed from the pollutions of sin, and death abolished, which had tyrannized over us, and Satan ejected from his mastery over us all; and in which by sanctification and justification we have been united to our common Saviour Christ, and enriched with the hope of unending life and glory. These are the loud trumpet’s sounds, and they run not only through Judaea, like that law which was of old, but throughout the whole earth.

And this is pictured for thee in the writings of Moses. For the God of all came down in the likeness of fire on Mount Sinai, and there was a cloud, and darkness, and gloom, and the voice of the trumpet with a loud ringing sound, according to the Scripture. But the notes of the trumpet were, it says, few at first, but afterwards they waxed longer, and became louder and louder continually. What then was it which the shadow of the law signified to us by these things? Was it not this: that at first there were but few to publish the Gospel tidings; but afterwards they became many? And Christ began the work: and having first chosen the twelve apostles, He afterwards appointed, it says, seventy others. And that, not as though those who had been already called to the honour of the apostleship had been guilty of any neglect, or been led into anything unbecoming, but because a great multitude was about to believe in Him. For not Israel only was caught in the net, but also the

crowds of the Gentiles. For that the message of salvation would take possession of the whole world, the God of all declared by one of the holy prophets, saying of it, "Judgment springeth up like couch-grass in the furrows of the field." For like as the couch-grass springs up in the furrows that are left without cultivation, and takes possession of them, and spreads everywhere, constantly advancing onwards, so in an exactly similar manner has judgment, that is to say, the grace that justifieth the world as declared in the saving tidings of the Gospel, taken possession of every city and place.

Besides these twelve therefore, there were also seventy others appointed by Christ. And again a type of this was prefigured in the words of Moses. For at God's command he also chose seventy, and God sent the Spirit upon those who had been chosen. And yet again, we find the twelve disciples, and these seventy also, indicated to us by the shadow of the law. For it is thus written in the Exodus concerning the children of Israel; "And they came to Marah : and the people could not drink the waters of Marah; for they were bitter. And Moses cried unto the Lord, and the Lord shewed him a tree; and he cast it into the waters, and the waters were made sweet." Now Marah, when translated, means bitterness; and. is taken by us as a type of the law. For the law was bitter, in that it punished with death. And of this Paul is witness, saying, "He that hath despised Moses' law is put to death without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses." It was bitter therefore, and unendurable to those of old time, and was unacceptable on this account, just as were also those bitter waters. But it also was sweetened by the precious cross, of which that tree there shewn by God to the blessed Moses was a type. For now that the shadow has changed to the spiritual contemplation, we behold with the eyes of the mind the mystery of Christ, that lay hid in the types of the law. Although therefore the law was bitter, it has now ceased to be so any longer.

"And after Marah, they came, it says, to Elim." And Elim again when translated means an ascent or increase. And what again was there at Elim? "Twelve wells of water, it says, and seventy palm trees." For as we ascend to more perfect knowledge, and hasten onward to spiritual increase, we find twelve wells, that is, the holy Apostles: and seventy palm trees, those, namely, who were appointed by Christ. And very excellently the disciples are compared to wells, and the seventy, who were subsequently chosen, to palm trees. For as from holy wells we draw from the disciples of our Saviour the knowledge of all good: while we praise the seventy also, and, so to speak, call them palms; for this tree is strong-hearted, and firm of root, and very fruitful, and constantly grows besides the waters. And such we affirm the saints to be: for their mind is pure, and steadfast, and fruitful, and habitually delights itself in the waters of knowledge.

Therefore, to return again to what we were at first saying, the Lord "appointed other seventy." But some may perchance imagine that the former had been dis-

missed, and deprived of the honours of the apostleship; and that these were promoted in their stead, as being better able to teach than they were. To remove therefore such thoughts from our minds, He Who knoweth hearts, and is acquainted with things to come, even as it were apologized, saying, ”The harvest indeed is great; but the labourers are few: pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest.” For just as lands covered thick with produce, and broad and long, require numerous and able labourers; so the whole earth, or rather the company of those about to believe in Christ, being great and innumerable, required not a few teachers, but as many as would suffice for the work. And for this reason Christ appointed those who were to be the allies, so to speak, and assistants of the twelve disciples. They went therefore on their mission, being sent two and two to every city and village, crying, as it were, in the words of John, ”Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”

But observe this: that while He said, ”Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest,” He did it Himself. And yet Who besides is Lord of the harvest, that is, of the dwellers on earth, but He Who by nature and truly is God. ”For to Him belongs the whole earth and its fulness,” as Scripture says: and He is the Creator of all, and its Fashioner. But inasmuch as it belongs to the supreme God alone to send forth labourers, how was it that Christ appointed them? Is He not therefore the Lord of the harvest, and God the Father, by Him and with Him, the Lord of all? All things therefore are His, and there is nothing of all things which are named that belongs to the Father, which is not also the Son’s. For He also said to the Father, ”Those whom Thou gavest Me out of the world, Thine they were, and Thou gavest them unto Me.” For, as I said, all those things that belong to the Father are declared to be, and are, the property of the Son, and He is radiant with His Father’s dignities. And the glory of the Godhead belongs to Him, not as a thing conferred and given Him by another; but rather He subsists in honours which are His by nature, as He also doth Who begat Him. And the wise John also affirms that we all are His, thus saying of Him: ”I indeed baptize you in water: but after me cometh He Who is mightier than I: He [Who] shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost, and in fire. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will cleanse His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

May it be our lot then as rational wheat, to be carried into God’s treasure house, oven into the mansions that are above: that there, in company with the rest of the saints, we may enjoy the blessings which God bestows in Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen .

SERMON LXI. FIT TO BE READ AT THE COMMEMORATIONS OF THE APOSTLES.

10:3. Go: behold, I send you as sheep among wolves. ALL those who praise the divine and sacred Word correctly, and without error, are, we affirm, the allies of the doctrines of truth, and its host teachers; well knowing how to guide whosoever wish to advance in Christ, rightly unto every good work, and to the life incorruptible, and to participation in the blessings bestowed upon us. Of these most wise Paul also declares, that they are ”the lights of the world, holding the word of life.”

Now of these illustrious and famous men the divine disciples were the commencement, and stand foremost in order: for they had as a schoolmaster Him Who is the Giver of all understanding; and Who richly bestoweth His light upon those who love Him. For He is the true light Who illumineth the heavens, even the powers who are above; and delivereth from ignorance and darkness those also upon earth. And observe how He made the appointed teachers of all beneath the sun to be ready workmen, conspicuous for their earnest zeal, and able to win the glory of apostolic victories; preferring none of this world’s affairs to the duty of proclaiming their sacred message, and so bravely disposed in their manly mind as to be superior to all fear, and no whit terrified at hardships, nor alarmed at death itself, when brought upon them for Christ’s sake. For ”go,” He says: and in this word ”go,” He encourages them to be courageous; makes them eagerly desirous of saintly victories; establishes them in the steadfast resistance of all temptation; and permits them not to shrink from the violence of persecutions. For just as valiant generals, when the battle begins, and the enemy discharge their shafts, encourage those under their command bravely to resist the attacking foe, and to bear themselves manfully against the enemy; using such words as these; ’Fellow soldiers, let none of these things that ye see trouble your mind; we are not weak and inexperienced in warfare, but know well the ways of battle: we have coats of mail strongly made; armour and swords; bows too and darts: by exertion we shall purchase the victory;

stoutheartedness will win for us a right glorious renown:' so does the Saviour of all, if we may so speak, send forth the disciples against the hosts of unbelievers, saying, "Go; behold, I send you as sheep among wolves."

What sayest Thou O Lord? How can sheep converse with wolves? When was a wild beast ever at peace with the sheep? Scarcely can the shepherds protect their flocks by gathering them into folds, and shutting them up in enclosures, and frightening the beasts of prey by the barking of dogs, yea, and even themselves fighting in their defence, and running risks to protect the more weakly members of their flock. How then does He command the holy Apostles, who are guileless men, and if we may so speak, sheep, to seek the company of wolves, and go to them of their own accord? Is not the danger manifest? Are they not set as a ready prey for their attacks? How can a sheep prevail over a wolf? How can one so peaceful vanquish the savageness of beasts of prey? Yes, He says, for they all have Me as their Shepherd: small and great; people and princes; teachers and taught. I will be with you and aid you, and deliver you from all evil. I will tame the savage beasts; I will change wolves into sheep; I will make the persecutors become the helpers of the persecuted: and those who wrong My ministers I will make to be sharers in their pious designs. For I make and unmake all things, and there is nothing that can resist My will.

And that this was the actual result, we may see in instances which really occurred. For the divine Paul was a blasphemer, and persecutor, more injurious and cruel than any wolf against those who believed in Christ. Did he then persist in this conduct? Did he continue to be a wolf even unto the end? Far from it: for he was called by Christ, and experienced an unlooked for change. He who in old time was a wolf became more gentle than a lamb; and preached the faith which once he persecuted. And a change so unexpected in its manner was the wonder of all men, and Christ was glorified, Who had changed him from a beast of prey into a lamb. And this the divine Jacob had in his blessings before announced concerning him: "Benjamin is a ravening wolf: in the morning he shall eat flesh: and in the evening divide victual." For the wise Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and, at first, he resisted those who believed in Christ like a ravening wolf; but when a short time had elapsed, a space, so to speak, as from morning to evening, he divided victual. For he taught and preached Jesus: and to those that as yet were babes in intellect he offered milk; but set before the full grown strong meat. In the morning therefore he eats flesh, and in the evening divides victual.

And thus much then briefly respecting the blessed Paul: but let us next discuss from a similar point of view the calling of nations. Let us see whether they too also were not at one time beasts of prey, and fiercer than wolves against the ministers of the gospel message of salvation, but were transformed unto the gentleness and guilelessness which are by Christ's help. They too persecuted the holy apostles, not so much like men struggling with wolves, as like beasts of prey, raging sav-

agely against sheep. And though they wronged them not, but rather called them to salvation, they stoned them, they imprisoned them, they persecuted them from city to city. And yet those, who thus acted at first, afterwards became gentle and guileless, and like the sheep which once they persecuted.

And who else accomplisheth all these things but Jesus Christ our Lord? For He also it is "Who hath broken down the fence wall that was in the middle, abolishing the law of commandments contained in doctrines; Who hath made the two nations into one new man; Who hath made peace, and reconciled both in one body unto the Father. For that there have been joined unto the faith in concord and unity of mind and will, the savage in company with the gentle; the impure and sin-stained with the saints; those, that is, of the herds of the Gentiles with those of Israel who believed; the prophet Isaiah shews, thus speaking in the Spirit: "And the wolf shall graze with the lamb; and the leopard rest with the kid; and the bear and the cow shall graze together; and the ox and the lion eat provender together, and their young ones shall be with one another. Consider, my beloved, and understand that those who were sanctified by faith did not conform to the habits of the heathen, but on the contrary those who were called of the heathen conformed to them. For such beasts as the wolf and lion, the bear and leopard, are eaters of flesh; but those animals which are of a gentle nature, kids and lambs, and steers, feed upon grass. But those beasts of prey, he says, shall graze with these gentle ones, and eat their food. It is not therefore the gentle ones who have conformed to the habits of the savage:

but, on the contrary, as I said, the savage who have imitated them. For they have abandoned their cruel disposition for the gentleness that becometh saints, and been changed by Christ, so that the wolves have become lambs; for He it is Who hath made them gentle, and united, as I said, the two nations unto a mind full of the love of God. And this of old the hierophant Moses cried out, saying, "Rejoice, ye nations, with His people; ascribe majesty unto God. Let us therefore exalt Him and honour Him with praises because of the Saviour and Lord of all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXII. Fit to be read at the Commemorations of the Apostles.

10:4-7. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and ask not the peace of any one by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace to this house. And if there be there one worthy of peace, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. And in that house remain, eating and drinking of their things: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Change not from house to house. THE prudent and skilful bee visits the flowers in every field and meadow, and gathering the dew that has settled upon them, so makes sweet honey. And Solomon leads us to imitate her conduct, saying, ”Draw near to the bee, and learn how industrious she is, and how excellent is her workmanship. She is beloved, therefore, and praised by every man, and her labours kings and private persons employ for their health.” Come, therefore, and let us also, wandering, as it were, around some intellectual meadow, gather the dew let fall by the Holy Ghost upon the divine message of the Gospel, that so being enriched in mind we may bring forth the spiritual honey, even the word profitable and useful to all who thirst after the communication of the divine doctrines, whether they be noble and illustrious, or obscure and private persons in a humble rank of life. For it is written, ”Good words are as honeycomb; and their sweetness is healing to the soul.”

Now these fair and good words, what else are they than those certainly which Christ spake unto us, making those who love Him skilful by repeated teaching in virtuous pursuits? For take here also as a proof of what I have said the sense of the passage just read to us. ”Carry,” it says, ”neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes. Consider, I pray you, here again the nature of the pathway of apostolic virtue set before them. For it was right that they who were to be the lights and teachers of all beneath the heaven, should learn it from no other than from Him Who is the Word that came down from above----from heaven: the fountain of wisdom and intellectual light; from whom cometh all understanding, and the knowledge of every

thing that is good. What, then, He requires of them is, that in preaching to men everywhere the Word that He spake, and in calling the inhabitants of the whole earth to salvation, they should travel about without purse, or scrip, or shoes; and journey rapidly from city to city, and from place to place. And let no man on any account say that the object of His teaching was to make the holy Apostles refuse the use of the ordinary articles of equipment. For what good would it do them, or what harm, to have shoes on their feet, or go without them?

But what He does wish them to learn by this command, and to endeavour to practice is certainly this, that they must lay all thought of their sustenance upon Him, and call to remembrance the saint who said, ”Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall feed thee. For He giveth the saints what is needful for life, nor speaketh He falsely where He saith, ”Be ye not anxious for yourselves as to what ye shall eat, and what drink: nor for your body, what clothing ye shall wear: for your Father knoweth that ye have need of all those things. But seek first His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

For verily it was fitting and necessary that those who were adorned with apostolic honours, should have a mind free from covetousness, and altogether averse from the receiving of gifts, and content, on the contrary, with what God provides. ”For the love of money is the root of all evils” as Scripture declares. They, therefore, in every way must be free and exempt from that which is the root and nourisher of all evils, and must expend, so to say, all their zeal upon their necessary duties, not being exposed to Satan’s attack, us taking with them no worldly wealth, but despising the things of the flesh, and desiring only what God wills.

For just as brave soldiers when they go out to battle carry nothing with them but such equipments only as are suitable for war, so also it was right that those who were sent out by Christ to carry aid to the world, and wage war in behalf of all who were in danger against the ”world-rulers of this darkness,” yea, and against Satan himself, should be free from the distractions of this world, and from all worldly anxiety; that being tightly girt, and clad in spiritual armour, they might contend mightily with those who resisted the glory of Christ, and had made all beneath the heaven their prey. For they had caused its inhabitants to worship the creature instead of the Creator, and to offer religious service to the elements of the world. Armed, therefore, with the shield of faith, and the breastplate of righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, they must prove themselves invincible antagonists to their enemies; and not drag after them a heavy load of things worthy of blame and condemnation: such as are the love of wealth and hoards of base gains, and eagerness after them: for these things turn aside the mind of man from that behaviour which pleaseth God, and permit it not to mount upward to Him, but humble it rather to feelings set upon dust, and earthly things.

In enjoining them, therefore, to take neither scrip nor purse, nor, moreover, to trouble themselves about shoes, He clearly teaches them that his commandment requires them to abandon all carnal wealth, and that His wish is that they should be free from every impediment in entering upon the duty to which they were especially called, of preaching, namely, His mystery to men everywhere, and of winning unto salvation those who were entangled in the nets of destruction.

And to this He adds that "they were not to ask of the peace of any one by the way." But what harm would this have done the holy apostles? Come, therefore, come, and let us see the reason why it was not right for them to offer greeting to those that met them. Thou doubtless wilt say that it was because it might sometimes happen that those who met them were not believers: and that therefore it would not have been right for those who were ignorant of Him Who by nature and verily is God to be blessed by them. What, therefore, do we say to this? Does it not then seem an incredible supposition that this was the reason why they were commanded not to ask of the peace of any one by the way? For they were sent forth "not so much to call the righteous as sinners to repentance." And how, therefore, was it not fitting that they who were about to enlighten all who were in darkness, and to bring them unto the acknowledgment of the truth, should rather use gentleness and great kindliness instead of roughly withdrawing themselves from associating with them, and even refusing to ask of their health? For certainly with other good qualities, gentleness of address becometh the saints, and greetings, provided they are made in a fitting manner. And, moreover, those who met them would, of course, sometimes not be unbelievers, but men of their own persuasion, or who had already been enlightened, and to whom it would even be their duty to offer an acknowledgment of love by a kindly greeting.

What, therefore, does Christ teach by this? He does not enjoin them to be rude, nor command them to lay stress upon the not making salutation: such conduct He rather teaches them to avoid. But it is not a thing unbefitting to suppose that when the disciples were travelling about among the cities and villages, to instruct men everywhere in the sacred doctrines, they might wish to do this, perhaps, not with haste, but, so to speak, in a loitering manner, making deviations from the road, and permitting themselves to pay visits, because they wished to see some one or other as being an acquaintance or friend, and so would waste prodigally in unnecessary matters the fitting time for preaching. With great industry, therefore, says He, be zealous in delivering your sacred message; grant not to friendship an unprofitable delay, but let that which is well pleasing to God be preferred by you to all other things: and so practising an irresistible and unhampered diligence, hold fast to your apostolic cares.

Besides this He further commanded them "not to give holiness to dogs, nor again to cast the pearls before swine," by bestowing upon unbelievers their society in

lodging with them: they were rather to grant it to such as were worthy of having it deigned them, by being sons of peace, and yielding obedience to their message. For it would have been a most disgraceful act for them to wish to be intimate with any who were still resisting Christ's glory, and guilty of the charge of ungodliness. "For what part hath the believer with the unbeliever?" For how could those who had not as yet even listened to their words, but made their instruction, however worthy it was of being embraced, an occasion sometimes even of ridicule, receive them as meriting their admiration? So too at Athens some once ridiculed the divine Paul. For he indeed taught them "that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands," being incorporeal and infinite, and That Which filleth all, but is contained by none: and declared that he preached unto them "Him Whom though they knew Him not, they imagined they rightly worshipped." But they being given up to superciliousness, and greatly priding themselves on their fluent tongue, said in their folly, "What would this seed-picker say? For he seemeth to be a setter forth of foreign gods." Seed-picker was the name they gave to a worthless bird, whose habit it was to pick up the seeds scattered on the roads: and in comparing to it the divine Paul, these foolish men were ridiculing the word of salvation then offered them.

Christ therefore commanded them to lodge with the sons of peace, and to eat at their cost, affirming that this was by a just decree; "for a labourer, He says, is worthy of his hire." And therefore, let not any of those who acknowledge the truth, disregard or be careless of the duty of honouring the saints: for they bless us, when "sowing to us things spiritual, they reap of us things carnal:" and "the Lord also commanded that those who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel:" since also according to the law of Moses, "those who offered sacrifices shared with the altar." And let those who are careless of honouring the saints, and illiberally close the hand, be assured that they are deprived of their blessing. But may it be our lot to be partakers of the blessing prepared for them with God, by offering to them as fruit whatever we possess; and by feeling pleasure in so doing; "for Christ loveth a cheerful giver:" by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen .

SERMON LXIII.

10:16 He that heareth you, heareth Me: and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth Me: and whosoever rejecteth Me, rejecteth Him That sent Me . THOSE who adorn thrones of earthly royalty, and possess supreme authority, when they wish to render fitting men illustrious with this world's dignities, send them in the missives on which the decree commanding their appointment is inscribed, a declaration of their praiseworthiness. And this we find that Christ did. For consider how great was the authority He gave the holy apostles, and in what manner He declared them to be praiseworthy, and adorned with the highest honours. For let us search the sacred Scripture, even the treasure of the written words of the Gospel: let us there see the greatness of the authority given unto them. "He that heareth you," He says, "heareth Me: and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth Me: and he that rejecteth Me, rejecteth Him That sent Me." O what great honour! What incomparable dignities! O what a gift worthy of God! Though but men, the children of earth, He clothes them with a godlike glory; He entrusts to them His words, that they may be condemned who in ought resist, or venture to reject them: for when they are rejected He assures them that He it is Who suffers this; and then again He shews that the guilt of this wickedness, as being committed against Him, mounts up to God the Father. See, therefore, see with the eyes of the mind, to how vast a height He raises the sin committed by men in rejecting the saints! What a wall He builds around them! How great security He contrives for them! He makes them such as must be feared, and in every way plainly provides for their being uninjured.

And there is yet another way in which thou mayest attain to the meaning of what is said by Christ. "For he," He says, who heareth you, heareth Me."He gives those who love instruction the assurance, that whatsoever is said respecting Him by the holy apostles or evangelists, is to be received necessarily without any doubt, and to be crowned with the words of truth. For he who heareth them, heareth Christ. For the blessed Paul also said; "Or seek ye proof of Christ That speaketh in Me? And moreover Christ Himself somewhere said to the holy disciples; "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." For Christ speaketh in them by the consubstantial Spirit. And if it be true, and plainly it is true, that they speak by Christ, how can that man err from what is fitting who affirms, that

he who doth not hear them, doth not hear Christ, and that he who rejecteth them rejecteth Christ, and with Him the Father.

Inevitable therefore is the guilt decreed against the wicked heretics, who reject the words of the holy apostles and evangelists, and pervert them to that meaning only which without due examination seems to them to be right. These fall from the straight way, and wander from the doctrines of piety, ”deceiving, and being deceived. For while, so to speak, they have bidden farewell to the sacred Scriptures, ”they speak of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord,” asScripture saith. For though the blessed evangelist John wrote to us, that ”in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; they drag to the exact opposite both the tenet concerning Him, and the quotation which proves it: saying that the only begotten Word of God was not in the beginning, nor very God, and that He was not even with God; that is, in union with Him by nature, inasmuch as He Who is incorporeal cannot be imagined to be in any place. These most audacious men even say that He was made, and measure out for Him such glory as they forsooth please: for they elevate Him above created things, as far as the language goes of praise. And in inventing for Him this mere and naked majesty, they imagine that they are doing something wise, or even pious: not understanding that if in any respect He be regarded as a created being, it avails Him nothing for the proof of His being really God:

and that if in any respect He be made, and His nature similar to that (of things which are made), that then it follows, as they (virtually) affirm, that He was not in the beginning. For one who is made is not without beginning. How therefore does the wise Paul say, ”By Him the Father made the worlds? For if He were created, He had, as I said, a beginning of existence, and there must have been a time previous to His existence: and there must have been a time also, in which even the Father apparently was not that which the name signifies, but on the contrary, not a Father at all by nature. The word therefore that has come to us concerning Him is untrue, as also is that respecting the Son; and both forsooth are falsely so called.

And how then, I pray, can we believe the Son in saying, ”I am the Truth;” for how is He the truth, Who is not what His name implies? Or how must not Paul be false in his words, when he thus writes, ”For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached unto you by me, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay? For how was He not yea and nay, if He is said to be God, and is not God by nature? if He is called a Son, and was not begotten of the Father? if the divinely inspired Scripture saith, that the worlds were made by Him, and there was a time before He existed? if all things were brought into being by His means, and He is Himself one of them, in that He is regarded as a thing made? if He is called the only begotten, and is not so in truth? For the things that have been made, those, I mean, which

have been brought into existence from non-existence by having been created, are, so to speak, akin to one another.

But we follow not the vain words of these men, in disregard of the declarations of the holy apostles and evangelists. We reject not them, that we may not reject Christ, and with Him and by Him the Father. We believe that the Only-begotten Word of God is God, and was begotten of God by nature: that He is not created; not made; but the Creator of all: and not so much in all things, as rather supreme above all substantially with the Father. And when again we hear John saying, ”And the Word became flesh,” we do not falsify the expression: we do not use violence to the freeness of the the declarations: we do not pervert the mystery of Christ to that which is not right. We believe that the Word, though He was God, became flesh, that is, man; and not that He joined some man unto Him in equal honour: for this some venture to say and think, so that the Word from God the Father is to be regarded by us as one Son by Himself; and He Who sprang from the holy virgin as another beside Him, separately and by Himself: for such are the impure inventions of these men. We however agree with the divine Paul, who says: ”There is one Lord; one faith; one baptism:” for we divide not Him Who is indivisible, but confess one Christ, the Word, Who is from God the Father, Who was made man, and incarnate, Whom the heavens worship, and the angels honour: and we too with them praise Him, crowning Him with divine honour, not so much as. a man Who was made God, but as God Who became man. And holding this opinion respecting Him, we shall also by His means enter the kingdom of heaven: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXIV.

10:17-20. And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. But in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. IT is somewhere said by one of the holy prophets, ”Will the Lord God do anything without revealing the teaching thereof to His servants the prophets?” For the God of all made known to the holy prophets those things which were hereafter to take place, in order that they might previously declare them, that so they might not be disbelieved, when in due time what had been foretold arrived at its fulfilment. And those who will may see that what we have now affirmed is true, even from the present lessons. ”For the seventy” it says, ”returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy Name.” For first of all the twelve disciples had been appointed, holy and elect men, and worthy of all admiration. But inasmuch as, according to Christ’s declaration, ”the harvest indeed was great, but the labourers few,” He further, in addition to those first chosen, ”appointed seventy others, and sent them to every village and city of Judea before His face,” to be, that is to say, His forerunners, and to preach the things that belonged to Him.

And in sending them, He ennobled them with the grace of the Holy Ghost, and crowned them with the power of working miracles, that they might not be disbelieved by men, nor be supposed to be self-called to the apostleship: just as of old there were some who prophesied, ”though they spake not out of the mouth of the Lord,” as Scripture saith, but rather vomited forth lies from their own heart. For God by the voice of Jeremiah somewhere also said, at one time, ”I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied:” and again at another; ”The prophets prophesied lies in My name: I sent them not, neither spake I unto them; neither had I commanded them.” In order, therefore, that men might not subject to such a suspicion those who were commissioned by Christ, He gave them power over unclean spirits, and the ability to perform signs. For when the divine miracle followed close upon their word, no form, either of

calumny or of Jewish false-speaking, could find a place against them. For they were convicted of accusing them without reason, or rather of choosing to fight against God. For to be able to work miracles is possible for no man, unless God give him the power and authority thereunto. The grace of the Spirit therefore witnessed of those who had been sent, that they were not persons who ran of themselves, nor self-called to the duty of speaking concerning Christ; but that, on the contrary, they had been appointed to be the ministers of His message.

The authority, however, which they bore to reprove evil spirits, and the power of crushing Satan, was not given them that they might themselves so much be regarded with admiration, as that Christ might be glorified by their means, and be believed on by those whom they taught, as by nature God, and the Son of God; and invested with so great glory and supremacy and might, as to be even able to bestow upon others the power of trampling Satan under their feet. But they, it says, in that they were counted worthy of so great grace, ”returned rejoicing, and saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name.” For they confess the authority of Him Who honoured them, and wonder at the supremacy and greatness of His power. But they seem to have rejoiced, not so much because they were ministers of His message, and had been counted worthy of apostolic honours, as because they had wrought miracles: but it would have been better for them to have reflected, that He gave them the power to work miracles, not that they might be regarded by men with admiration on this account, but rather that what they preached might be believed, the Holy Ghost bearing them witness by divine signs. It would have been better, therefore, had they manifestly rejoiced on account of those rather who had been won by their means, and had made this a cause of exultation. Just as also the very wise Paul gloried in those who had been called by his means, saying, ”My joy and my crown.” But they said nothing at all of this kind, but rejoiced only in that they had been able to crush Satan.

And what is Christ’s reply? ”I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” That is, ’I am not unaware of this: for inasmuch as ye set out upon this journey, so to speak, by My will, ye have vanquished Satan. ”I saw him fall like lightning from heaven.”’ And this means that he was cast down from on high to earth: from overweening pride to humiliation: from glory to contempt: from great power to utter weakness. And the saying is true: for before the coming of the Saviour, he possessed the world: all was subject to him, and there was no man able to escape the meshes of his overwhelming might: he was worshipped by every one: everywhere he had temples and altars for sacrifice, and an innumerable multitude of worshippers. But because the Only-begotten Word of God has come down from heaven, he has fallen like lightning: for he who of old was bold and supercilious, and who vied with the glory of Deity; he who had as his worshippers all that were in error, is put under the feet of those that worshipped him. Is it not then true, that he has fallen from heaven to earth, by having suffered so great and terrible an overthrow?

Who then is He That hath destroyed his might, and humbled him to this misery? Plainly it was Christ. And this He announced to us in the words, ”Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you.” ’But, O Lord, some one may reply, behold already we rejoice in the glory and grace bestowed upon us by Thee: for we have acknowledged that even the devils are subject to us in Thy name. And how then dost Thou proclaim to those who know it, and have openly acknowledged it, ”Behold I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions?”’ Yes, He saith, I have carefully on purpose called you to the remembrance of those things which lo! already ye know, that ye may not be carried away with the ignorance of the Jews, who, not understanding the mystery of My incarnation, approach Me as a mere man, and persecute Me, saying, ”Why dost Thou, being a man, make Thyself God? And yet it was rather their duty, He says, to have known, that not ”as being a man,” to use their words, I affirm of Myself that I am God; but rather that being by nature God, I have put on the form of a slave, and appear on earth as a man like unto you. And what is the proof of these things? ”Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions.” But it was not the act of a mere man, nor of one such as we are, to bestow on others an authority so glorious and admirable, as for them to be able to tread upon all the power of the enemy: rather it was a deed suitable to God alone, Who is supreme over all, and crowned with surpassing honours.

it is capable also of being explained in another way. For thus He leaves them no excuse for giving way to cowardice, but rather requires of them to be very hearty and courageous. For such ought those to be who are ministers of the divine word: not subject to timidity, nor overpowered by sloth, but preaching ”with great power,” as Scripture saith, and bold in pursuing after those who are drawn up in array against them, and bravely struggling against the enemy; as having Christ to help them, Who will also humble the impure powers of evil under their feet, and with them even Satan himself. What man is there more powerful than ”the world-rulers of darkness,” or than that wicked serpent and prince of evil? He therefore who ”brake the heads of the dragons,” how can He be too weak to save them from the attacks of any of this world’s inhabitants ”Not without benefit, therefore, did Christ proclaim to His disciples: ”Behold I have granted you to tread on serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy.”

But He also further benefits them by immediately adding; ”But in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”: ’Dost Thou not, O Lord, permit those who have been honoured by Thee to rejoice in their honours? And yet it is written of those who were appointed to the apostleship: ”They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance, and in Thy name shall they exult all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou art the glory of their strength, and in Thy good pleasure shall our horn

be exalted." How then didst Thou command them not to rejoice in the honour and glory which Thou didst Thyself bestow?' What can we say to this? I answer, that Christ raises them to something greater, and commands them to account it their glory that their names were written in heaven. For it is of the saints that God is thus addressed, "And in Thy book they are all written."

But besides, to rejoice solely in the fact that they were able to work miracles, and crush the herds of demons, was likely to produce in them possibly the desire also of vainglory:----and the neighbour, so to speak, and kinsfellow of this passion constantly is pride. Most usefully, therefore, does the Saviour of all rebuke the first boasting, and quickly cuts away the root, so to speak, that had sprung up in them of the base love of glory, imitating good husbandmen, who, immediately that they see a thorn springing up in their pleasure grounds or gardens, tear it up with the teeth of the mattock, before it strike its root deep. Even though, therefore, we receive some gift from Christ not unworthy of admiration, we must not think too highly of it, but rather make the hope prepared for us our cause of rejoicing, and that our names are written in the companies of the saints, by Christ's gift, the Saviour of us all, Who, from His love to man bestows, with all besides that we have, this also upon us: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXV.

10:21. In that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of the heaven and the earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it was good in Thy sight. ONE of the holy prophets has said; ”Whoever thirst, come ye to the waters.” For he sends us to the writings of the holy Evangelists as to fountains of water. For just as ”waters are pleasant to the thirsty soul,” as Scripture saith, so to the mind that loveth instruction is the life-giving knowledge of the mysteries of our Saviour. Let us, therefore, draw from the sacred springs the living and life-giving waters, even those that are rational and spiritual. Let us take our fill: and weary not in thy drinking: for in these things more than enough is still for edification: and greediness is great praise. What then it was the Saviour said:----That fountain which came down from heaven, That river of delight,----we learn from what has here been read to us. ”In that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said,”----Whosoever then loveth instruction, must approach the words of God not carelessly, and without earnestness; but, on the contrary, with eagerness: for it is written, ”That for every one that taketh care, there is something over.” Let us, therefore, examine them, and especially what is meant by the expression, that He ”rejoiced in the Holy Ghost.”

The Holy Ghost then proceedeth from God the Father as from the fountain; but is not foreign from the Son: for every property of the Father belongeth to the Word, Who by nature and verily was begotten of Him. Christ saw therefore that many had been won by the operation of the Spirit, Whom He bestowed on them that were worthy, and whom He had also commanded to be ministers of the divine message: He saw that wonderful signs were wrought by their hands, and that the salvation of the world by Him,----I mean by faith,----had now begun: and therefore He rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, that is, in the works and miracles wrought by means of the Holy Ghost. For He had appointed the twelve disciples, whom He also called apostles, and after them again seventy others, whom He sent as His forerunners to go before Him unto every village and city of Judaea, preaching Him, and the things concerning Him. And He sent them, nobly adorned with apostolic dignities, and distinguished by the operation of the grace of the Holy Ghost. ”For He gave

them power over unclean spirits to cast them out." They then, having wrought many miracles, returned saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name."And therefore as I have already said, well knowing that those who had been sent by Him had benefited many, and that above all others, they had themselves learned by experience His glory, He was full of joy, or rather of exultation. For being good and loving unto men, and wishing that all should be saved, He found His cause of rejoicing in the conversion of those that were in error, in the enlightenment of those that were, in darkness, and in the answer of the understanding to the acknowledgment of His glory, of those who had been without knowledge and without instruction.

What then does He say? "Father, I confess Thee, Lord of the heaven and the earth." And these words, "I confess Thee," He says after the manner of men, instead of, "I accept Thy kindness," that is, "I praise Thee ." For it is the custom of the divinely inspired Scripture to use the word confession in some such way as this. For it is written, that "they shall confess, O Lord, Thy great name; for it is terrible and holy." And again, "I will confess Thee, O Lord, with all my heart, and I will tell all Thy wonders." But I perceive again, that the mind of these perverted men departs not from its depravity; and some of them perhaps will object to us the following argument: 'Lo! the Son makes confession of gratitude to the Father: and how must He not be inferior to Him?' But whosoever is skilful in defending the doctrines of truth may well reply to this: 'And what hinders, O worthy sir, the Son, though equal in substance, from thanking and praising His Father, for saving by His means all beneath the heaven? But if thou thinkest that because of this thanksgiving He is inferior to the Father, observe that also which follows; for He calls the Father "Lord of the heaven and the earth." But of a certainty the Son of Almighty God is equally with Him Lord of all, and above all: not as being inferior, or different in substance, but as God of God, crowned with equal honours, and possessing by right of His substance equality with Him in all things.' And thus much then in answer to them.

But let us consider the words which He addresses to His Father respecting us and in our behalf. "Thou hast hid, He says, all these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes: Yea, O Father, that so it seemed good in thy sight." For God the Father has revealed unto us the mystery, which before the foundations of the world was hidden and reserved in silence with Him: even the Incarnation of the Only-begotten, which was foreknown indeed before the foundations of the world, but revealed to its inhabitants in the last ages of the world. For the blessed Paul writes, that "to me who am the least of all saints, has this grace been given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and clearly teach them all, what is the dispensation of the mystery that for ages has been hid in God Who created all." The great and adorable mystery of our Saviour was hidden therefore even before the foundations of the world, in the knowledge of the Father. And in like manner we also were foreknown and foreordained to

the adoption of sons. And this again the blessed Paul teaches us, thus writing, ”Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven in Christ, according as He has chosen us in Him before the foundations of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him, having foreordained us in love to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ unto Himself.” To us therefore, as unto babes, the Father has revealed the mystery that for ages had been hidden and reserved in silence.

And yet multitudes of men have preceded us in the world past numbering, who, as far as words went, were wise, who had a practised and skilful tongue, and beauty of stylo, and grandeur of expression, and no mean reputation for wisdom: but as Paul said, ”They had become empty in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened: while professing to be wise, they had made themselves fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and into that of birds, and four-footed beasts and reptiles. For this cause they were given up to a reprobate mind; ”and God made the wisdom of this world to be folly: neither did He shew unto them the mystery. And to us too it is written, ”Whosoever seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become foolish, in order that he may become wise: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. It may truly therefore be affirmed, that he who possesses merely and by itself the wisdom of the world, is foolish and without understanding before God: but that he who seems to be a fool to the wise men of the world, but possesses in his mind and heart the light of the true vision of God, is wise before God. And Paul again confirms this, saying, ”For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach: not with wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ be made ineffectual.

For the speech of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and take away the understanding of the prudent. And to others also he sent, saying, ”For see your calling, brethren: that there are not among you many wise men after the flesh: nor many mighty, nor many of high birth; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that He may confound the wise. To those therefore who seemed to be foolish, by which is meant, men of an innocent and guileless mind, and simple as a child in wickedness, the Father hath revealed His Son, as being themselves also foreknown and foreordained to the adoption of sons.

Nor is it in my opinion unreasonable to add also the following. The Scribes and Pharisees, who held high rank among the Jews, as having the reputation of legal learning, were regarded as wise men. But they were convicted by the very result of not being so in reality. For even the prophet Jeremiah thus somewhere addressed them: ”How say ye, that we are wise, and the word of the Lord is with us? The lying cord of the scribe is for emptiness. The wise men are ashamed; they fear and are taken: what wisdom is in. them, because they have rejected the word of

the Lord?" Because then they rejected the word of the Saviour, that is, the saving message of the Gospel, or in other language, the Word of God the Father, Who for our sakes became man, they have themselves been rejected. For again the prophet Jeremiah said of them, "Call ye them reprobate silver, because the Lord hath rejected them." And the mystery of Christ was also hid from them: for He somewhere even said to his disciples concerning them, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them it is not given." "To you," that is, to whom? Plainly to those who believed: to those who have recognised His appearing, who understand the law spiritually, who can perceive the meaning of the previous revelation of the prophets, who acknowledge that He is God and the Son of God, to them the Father is pleased to reveal His Son: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

[Selected footnotes moved to the end and renumbered. Almost all marginalia, any purely textual footnotes, most Greek or Syriac material has been omitted without notice]

SERMON LXVI.

10:22. Every thing has been delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows Who the Son is but the Father; and Who the Father is but the Son; and to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. OUR Lord Jesus Christ again reveals to us His glory, and the dignity of His godlike majesty, and the skilful method of the dispensation in the flesh; and plainly shows how great is the benefit which the dwellers upon earth derive from it. Let us ask of Him wisdom: let us seek understanding, that we may be able to perceive the exact meaning of His words. For it is He ”Who reveals deep things out of darkness, and brings to light those things that are hidden; and gives wisdom to the blind, and makes the brightness of the truth shine forth upon those that love Him. And among these are we: for lo! you have again come, as being, so to speak, thirsty, and the church is full of men loving to hear; and all are true worshippers, and searchers into the doctrines of piety. Come therefore, and let us approach the Saviour’s words, opening wide the eye of the mind. And His words are, ”Every thing has been delivered to Me by My Father.”

For He was and still is Lord of heaven and earth, and sits with the Father on His throne, and equally shares His government over all. But inasmuch as, by humbling Himself to our estate, He became man, He further speaks in a manner not unbefitting the dispensation in the flesh, nor refuses to use such expressions as suit the measure of His state, when He had emptied Himself, that He might be believed upon as having become like to us, and put on our poverty. He therefore Who was Lord of heaven and earth, and, in a word, of all things, says, that ”everything was delivered to Him by the Father.”For He has been made ruler of all under heaven; since of old only the Israel after the flesh bowed the neck to His laws: but God the Father willed to make all things now in Him, and by His means reconcile the world to Himself. For ”He became Mediator between God and men,” and ”was made our peace,” in that He united us by Himself to God the Father: for He is the door and the way whereby this is done; for He has even plainly said, ”No man comes to the ”Father but by Me.” He then Who of old delivered Israel by the hand of Moses from the tyranny of the Egyptians, and appointed the law to be their schoolmaster, has now called the whole world, and Himself has spread for it the net of the Gospel

message, according to the good-will of God the Father. And this then is the reason why He says, ”Every thing has been delivered to Me of My Father.”

But though we may affirm that these things are thus rightly understood and explained by us, the heretic will not submit to the conditions of the dispensation, but betakes himself, it may be, to his usual audacity, and makes what is said food, so to speak, for the wickedness of his mind; and, forsooth, proceeds to say, ’Lo! the Father gives every thing to the Son; but the Son would not have needed to receive any thing, had it been lawful for Him to obtain it of Himself. How, then, is He equal to the Father, as you say, when He receives from Him authority over what He did not previously possess?’ Let us see, therefore, whether in any thing at all He is inferior to the glory and supremacy of the Father, as you in your folly say.

Now there are many arguments one might use when wishing to defend the doctrines of truth, but on the present occasion let us enquire what is true from the lessons now set before us, even from His own words. For after having said, ”Everything has been delivered to Me of My Father,” honouring thereby the mystery of His Incarnation, and using expressions suitable to the manhood, He mounts at once, as I said, to His own glory and supremacy, and shows that He is in no way whatsoever inferior to His Father. For what were the words which He next spoke? ----”No one knows Who the Son is but the Father, and Who the Father is but the Son, and to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” Let us ask, then, those who have resisted His glory, and still resist it, Does Christ speak falsely, or is He true? For if He speaks falsely, and you affirm that this is truly the case, you are void of all understanding, you have fallen from your senses, having drunk of the wine of ”the vine of Sodom,” and stumbled like drunkards upon unrighteous courses. But if you believe that He speaks truth, for ”He is the Truth,” how do you, while He says that ”no one knows the Son but the Father only,” venture both to think and say that He is inferior to the Father, as though you exactly know who He is? And yet how must not He, Who is known of His Father only, far transcend all understanding and all powers of speech: just as also the Father Himself does, as being known of His Son only? For the holy and consubstantial Trinity alone knows Itself, being far above all speech and understanding. How do you say then that He is inferior to the Father, seeing that no one knows Who He is but the Father alone Who fathered Him?

And I will add this too; Do you say that He is inferior to the Father as being ”true God,” but yet inferior to Him Who is ”true God and Father;” or as being something made and created? If, indeed, as something made, you canst not compare them at all: for the interval between the Maker and the thing made is infinite; between the Lord and the slave; between Him Who is by nature God, and him who has been brought into existence. For whosoever is made is not merely inferior to God, but altogether different, both in nature, and in glory, and in every attribute that appertains to the divine substance. But if He is made, as you affirm, how can ”no

one know Who He is?" For He would not be above all understanding, even though it may surpass the mind of man to be able to know the nature of a created thing. If, on the other hand, you affirm that He is true God, and being such by nature, yet say that He is inferior to the Father, I cannot understand how this can be. Tell me, I pray, in what this inferiority consists. I mean, for instance, thus: those who are of the same nature and substance are, of course, equal to one another in all those qualities which belong to them as pertaining to their substance: as, for instance, one man is in no respect inferior to another man with regard to the manhood which is common to them both: and so neither is one angel to another angel. How, then, can true God be inferior to true God?

For come, if you will, and let us raise ourselves to the investigation of the Father's prerogatives and attributes: those, namely, which specially belong to Him as God. God the Father is by nature Life, Light, and Wisdom. But the Son also is in like manner the same, as the divinely inspired Scripture everywhere testifies. For He is Light, and Wisdom, and Life. But if He be inferior to the Father, then of course He is indebted to Him for it, and that not in one particular only, but in every attribute that appertains to His substance. Nor is He perfectly Life; nor Light perfectly; nor Wisdom perfectly. And if this is true, then there exists in Him something of corruption; something also of darkness; and something also of ignorance. But who will assent to you in so arguing? For if He be a creature, then, as I said, you must not compare Him with the Creator and Lord of all. Bring down His place to the level of creation, while you extol to incomparable supremacy that Nature Which created all, and transcends all. But if He is true God, as sprung from Him Who is true God and. Father, perhaps, forsooth, the Father has fathered one not equal to Himself in nature, and His nature alone has suffered this, while certainly of all created beings there is not one that has endured so strange a mischance. For man is born of man, the definitions of his father's substance existing fully in him; and all the other animals in like manner are regulated by the law of their own nature. And how then can the all-transcending nature of God suffer that which even we do not suffer, nor any other being which has the power of generation?

Let those, therefore, hear who think scorn of the greatness of the glory of the Son; let those that are drunken awake from their wine; worship with us Him Who is equal in substance with the Father, and crowned with equal praises, and indistinguishable preeminence. "For to Him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Amen.

SERMON LXVII.

10:23-34. And He turned to the disciples when they were alone, and said, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. For I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which you hear, and have not heard them. THE shows which the world offers (in its games and theatres) lead men often to the sight of things unprofitable, or rather, to what constantly does them great injury. For the frequenters of such places either give themselves up to the admiration of dancers, and yielding to the soft langour they produce, are dissolved in effeminate emotions; or they extol the declaimers of cold sentiments; or delight themselves in the sounds and vibrations of pipes and harps. But vain and altogether unprofitable are such things, and able to lead the mind of man astray from all good. But us, who practise a virtuous course of life, and are earnest in upright deeds, Christ gathers in His holy courts, that delighting ourselves in singing His praise, we may again be made happy by His sacred words and doctrines, which invite us to eternal life.

Let us, therefore, see here too what gifts He has deigned to bestow upon us, who have been called by faith in Him to the knowledge of His glory. ”And He turned,” it says, ”to the disciples when they were alone, and said, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. Now, perchance, some one may object, ’Why did He not address to all who were assembled there His words describing these blessings? and what made Him turn to the disciples, so as to say to them when they were alone, ”Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see?”’ What then shall be our reply? That it is right to communicate matters of a more secret nature, not to any chance person, but to the most intimate friends. But His friends are whosoever have been deemed by Him worthy of discipleship: and the eye of whose mind is enlightened, and their ear ready for obedience. For He also said on one occasion to the holy apostles, ”No longer do I call you servants; you are My friends: for the servant doesn’t know what his lord does: but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all things which I have heard from My Father. There were, no doubt, many assembled there and standing in His presence besides His chosen followers, but they were not all believers;

and how then could He with truth say to them all, without distinction, ”Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see, and who hear the things that you hear? It was, therefore, with good reason that, having turned Himself to the disciples. having, that is, averted His face from those who would neither see nor hear, but were disobedient, and their mind darkened, He gave Himself entirely to those who loved Him, and, looking upon them, said, Blessed are the eyes which see, or rather, gaze upon, those things which they were the first, before all others, to behold.

Now the expression which is here used is taken from the common custom of men, and we must bear in mind that in such passages ”seeing” does not refer to the action of our bodily eyes, but rather to the enjoyment of those things which are bestowed by Christ on such as fear God. Just, for instance, as if any one say, ”So and so saw happy times,” instead of ”enjoyed happy times.” Or you may understand it in the same way as that which is written in the book of Psalms, addressed to those who constantly fixed their thoughts on things above; ”And you shall see the good of Jerusalem,” instead of, ”you shall take part in the happiness of Jerusalem,” even of that which is above, in heaven, which the wise Paul calls ”the mother of all saints.” For what doubt can there be that those who were spectators of the godlike miracles wrought by Christ, and of the admirable works He performed, were not necessarily in all cases blessed? For all the Jews saw Christ working with divine majesty, yet it would not be right to account them all as blessed; for they by no means believed, nor did they see His glory with the eyes of the mind. Truly, therefore, they were only the more guilty, and cannot properly be regarded as blessed, for though they saw Jesus possessed of divine glory by the ineffable deeds which he wrought, yet they did not accept faith in Him.

But come, in what way has blessedness befallen our eyes? and what have they seen? and for what reason did they attain to this blessing? They saw that God the Word, Who was in the form of God the Father, had become flesh for our sakes: they saw Him Who shares the Father’s throne, dwelling with us, in our form, that by justification and sanctification He might fashion us after His own likeness, imprinting upon us the beauty of His Godhead in an intellectual and spiritual manner. And of this Paul is witness, who thus writes: ”For as we have been clothed with the image of the earthy, we shall also be clothed with the image of the heavenly:”----meaning by the earthy man, Adam, the first created: but by the heavenly, the Word Who is from above, and Who shone forth from the substance of God the Father, but was made, as I said, in our likeness. He Who by nature is a Son took the form of a slave, not that by taking upon Him our state, He might continue in the measure of slavery, but that He might set us free, who were chained to the yoke of slavery,----for every thing that is made is by nature a slave,----enriching us with what is His. For through Him and with Him we have received the name of sons, being ennobled, so to speak, by His bounty and grace. He Who was rich shared our poverty, that He might raise man’s nature to His riches:

He tasted death upon the tree and the cross, that He might take away from the midst the offence incurred by reason of the tree (of knowledge), and abolish the guilt that was thereby, and strip death of his tyranny over us. We have seen Satan fall: that cruel one broken: that haughty one laid low:----him who had made the world submit to the yoke of His empire, stripped of his dominion over us: him in contempt and scorn, who once was worshipped: him who seemed a God, put under the feet of the saints: him who rebelled against Christ's glory, trampled upon by those who love Him. "For they received power to rebuke the unclean spirits, and to cast them out. And this power is a very great honour, and too high for human nature, and fit only for the supreme God.

And of this too the Word manifested in human form was the first to set us the example: for He also rebuked the impure spirits. But the wretched Jews again vomited forth against Him their envious calumnies; for they said, "This man casts not out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." But these wicked words of theirs the Lord refuted, saying; "If I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then has the kingdom of God come upon you." For if I, He says, being a man like to you, can thus exercise a divine power, this great and excellent blessing has come upon you: for human nature, He says, is ennobled in Me, by trampling down Satan. Upon us, therefore, the kingdom of God has come, by the Word having been made like to us, and working in the flesh deeds worthy of God.

He also gave the holy Apostles power and might even to raise the dead, and cleanse lepers; and heal the sick, and to call down upon whomsoever they would the Holy Ghost from heaven by the laying on of hands. He gave them power to bind and to lose men's sins; for His words are, "I say to you, Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever you shall lose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Such are the things of which we see ourselves possessed: and blessed are our eyes, and those of all who love Him. We have heard His ineffable teaching: He has given us the knowledge of God the Father: He has shown Him to us in His own nature. The things that were by Moses were but types and symbols: Christ has revealed the truth to us. He has taught us that not by blood and smoke, but rather by spiritual sacrifices, we must honour Him Who is incorporeal and immaterial, and above all understanding. Many holy prophets desired to see these things; yes, and many kings: for we find them at one time saying, "Show me Your mercy, O Lord: and, O Lord, grant us Your salvation." For they call the Son Mercy and Salvation. At another time again; "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour of Your people: and visit me with Your Salvation: that we may see the happiness of Your chosen, and rejoice in gladness with Your people."And who the people are, that are chosen in Christ by God the Father, the wise Peter tells us, when saying to those who have been ennobled by faith: "But you are a chosen generation: a

royal priesthood: a holy people, a redeemed multitude: that you may tell forth His virtues, Who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

And to this we have been called by Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with tho Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXVIII.

10:25-37. And see, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting Him, and saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And He said to Him, What is written in the law? how do you read? And he answered and said, That you shall love the Lord your God from all your heart, and from all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind: and your neighbour as yourself. And He said to him, You have answered rightly: this do, and you shall live. But he, wanting to justify himself said to Jesus; And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answered, and said; A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who, when they had stripped and beaten him, went away, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed him by. And in like manner also a Levite, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed him by. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to him; and when he saw him, he felt pity: and he went to him, and bound up his wounds, and poured upon them oil and wine. And having mounted him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the day after he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said to him, Take care of him: and if you spend any thing more, when I come again I will repay you. Which therefore of these three do you think was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves? And he said; He that was merciful to him. And Jesus said to him, Go, and do likewise.

A MOST base pest, my beloved, is double-dealing and hypocrisy in our actions and conduct; and for a man to make pretence of pleasant-spoken words, and of a tongue anointed, so to speak, with the honey of deception, while the heart is full of utter bitterness. Of such we say, in the words of one of the holy prophets, ”Their tongue is a piercing arrow: the words of their mouth are deceitful: he speaks peacefully to his neighbour, and enmity is in his heart.” And again; ”Their words are smoother than oil, yet are they arrows:” by which is meant that they have the force of darts falling violently and shot forth from bows.

The proof of my assertion is close at hand: for let us examine the lawyer’s words: let us strip off his borrowed countenance: let us lay bare his scheming: let us view his pleasant words sprung from deceit, and the guile which they conceal. ”For

see," it says, "a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" By a lawyer, the blessed evangelist here meant, according to the custom of the Jews, one acquainted with the law, or at least having the reputation of knowing it, though in reality he knew it not. This man imagined that he could entrap Christ; and in what way I will mention. Certain tale-makers, accustomed to talk at random, went about everywhere in Judaea and Jerusalem itself, accusing Christ, and saying, that He taught that the commandment given by Moses was of no use, and refused to pay any attention to the law given of old to the fathers, while He Himself introduced new doctrines, and spoke to all who would fear God things out of His own mind, which were not in accordance with the law that was given of old. There were even then believers, who resisted the words of these men, everywhere accepting the saving tidings of the gospel. The lawyer therefore wishing, or even expecting to be able to entrap Christ, and get Him to say something against Moses, and affirm that His own doctrine was far better than the commandment of which Moses was the minister, drew near tempting Him, and saying, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

But any one who thoroughly understands the mystery of the Incarnation may well say to him, If you had been skilful in the law, and in the meaning of its hidden teaching, it would not have escaped you Who He is you venture to tempt. For you thought that He was a mere man, and that only; and not rather God, Who appeared in human likeness, and Who knows what is secret, and can look into the hearts of those who approach Him. In manifold ways is the Emmanuel depicted to you by the shadowing of Moses. You saw Him there sacrificed as a lamb, yet vanquishing the destroyer, and abolishing death by His blood. You saw Him in the arrangement of the ark, in which was deposited the divine law: for He was in His holy flesh like as in an ark, being the Word of the Father, the Son that was fathered of Him by nature. You saw Him as the mercy-seat in the holy tabernacle, around which stood the Seraphim [Cherubim]: for He is our mercy-seat for pardon of our sins. Yes! and just like man, He is glorified by the Seraphim, who are the intelligent and holy powers above; for they stand around His divine and exalted throne. You saw Him as the candlestick with seven lamps in the Holy of Holies: for abundant is the Saviour's light to those who hurry into the inner tabernacle. You saw Him as the bread placed upon the table:

for He is the living bread, that came down from heaven, and gives life to the world. You saw Him as the brazen serpent that was raised on high as a sign, and being looked upon healed the bites of the serpents: for though He was like us, in the form therefore of that which is evil, as being in our form, nevertheless He is by nature good, and continues to be that which He was. For the serpent is the type of wickedness; but yet, by being lifted up, and enduring the cross for us, He rendered powerless the bites of those rational serpents, who are no other than Satan, and the wicked powers under his command.

But though the lawyer was invested with the reputation of being instructed in the law, nevertheless He Who is marked out by the shadowing of the law was completely unknown to him, even though He was proclaimed of old by the words of the holy prophets. For had he not been sunk in utter ignorance, how could he have drawn near to Him as to a mere man? Or how have ventured to tempt God, Who tries the hearts and reins, and to Whom nothing that is in us is hidden? For he says, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Do you call Him Teacher, when you wilt not submit to learn? Do you make a pretence of honouring Him, Whom you hope to entrap, and do you place as the bait upon your hook the pleasantness of words? But what would you learn? "For what, he says, shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Observe again, I pray, the malice in the lawyer's words. For he might have said, What shall I do to be saved, or to please God, and receive reward of Him? But this he passes by, and uses rather the Saviour's expressions, pouring ridicule upon His head. For as it was the custom of our common Saviour Christ to speak constantly of eternal life to as many as drew near to Him, the haughty lawyer to ridicule Him, as I said, makes use of His own expressions.

Now had you been truly desirous of learning, you would have heard from Him the things that lead on to eternal life: but as you wickedly tempt Him, you will hear nothing more than those commands only which were given to them of old time by Moses". For "What," says He, "is written in the law? How do you read?" And on the lawyer's repeating what is enacted in the law, as if to punish his wickedness, and reprove his malicious purpose, Christ, as knowing all things, says, "You have answered rightly: this do, and you shall live." The lawyer has missed his prey; he has shot wide of the mark, his wickedness is unsuccessful, the sting of envy has ceased, the net of deceit is torn asunder, his sowing bears no fruit, his toil gains no profit: and like some ship that misfortune has overwhelmed, he has suffered a bitter wreck. Let us therefore cry out against him in the words of Jeremiah, "You are found, and caught, because you have stood up against the Lord."

But having, as I said, missed his prey, he falls headlong into vanity; he is hurried from one pitfall to another, from snare to snare, from deceit to pride: vices, so to speak, lend him to one another, and he is tossed about everywhere, one wickedness as soon as it has seized him thrusting him on to another, and carrying him wherever it may chance, and easily making him wander from destruction to destruction. For he does not ask in order that he may learn, but as the Evangelist said, "wishing to justify himself." For observe how from self-love as well as pride he shamelessly called out, "And who is my neighbour?" And is there no one, O lawyer, like you? Do you raise yourself above every one? Be less supercilious: Remember what the author of the book of Proverbs says, "that those who know themselves are wise." He exalts himself therefore, and breathes forth proud things, and boasts himself in vain imaginations: but he learnt of Christ, that as he was destitute of love towards his neighbours, the bare profession only of being learned in the law profited him

in no way whatsoever. For God over all looks at works rather, and gives not praise to bare and merely fictitious professions.

Very skilfully therefore does the Saviour of all weave the parable of him who fell into the hands of thieves, saying, that when he was lying half dead, and in the last extremity of evil, a priest passed by, and in like manner a Levite, without feeling towards him any sentiment of humanity, or dropping upon him the oil of compassionate love; but rather, their mind was unsympathizing and cruel towards him. But one of another race, a Samaritan, fulfilled the law of love. Justly therefore He asked, which of these three he thinks was the sufferer's neighbour. And he said, "He that wrought mercy with him." And to this Christ added, "Go you also, and act in like manner." You have seen, O lawyer, and it has been proved by the parable, that it is of no avail whatsoever to any man, to be set up by empty names, and to pride himself upon unmeaning and ridiculous titles, so long as the excellence of deeds does not accompany them. For the dignity of the priesthood is unavailing to its owners, and equally so is the being called learned in the law, to those who are so reputed, unless they excel also in deeds. For lo! a crown of love is being twined for him who loves his neighbour: and he proves to be a Samaritan. Nor is he rejected on this account: for he who was foremost among the disciples, even the blessed Peter, testified, thus writing, "In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons: but in every nation, whosoever fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted by Him." For Christ, Who loves our virtues, accepts all who are diligent in good pursuits: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXIX.

10:38-42. And it came to pass as they journeyed, that he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at our Lord's feet, and heard His word: but Martha was distracted with much service. And standing before Him, she said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her help me. But our Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and busied about many things: but few things are required, or one: and Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her. You who love the virtues which adorn piety, and carefully practice every art which become the saints, again come and listen to the sacred doctrine, and let not the method of hospitality be unknown to you. For it is a great and valuable quality, as the wise Paul testifies, where he writes, "Forget not hospitality: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Let us learn therefore of Christ, the Saviour of all, this also, as well as all other things. For it would be a disgrace to us, that while those who desire worldly wisdom, and gather written learning, select the best teachers for their instructors; we who are encouraged to pay earnest heed to doctrines of such surpassing value, and may have as our instructor and teacher Christ the Giver of all wisdom, do not imitate this woman in her love of learning, even Mary, who sat at the Saviour's feet, and filled her heart with the doctrines He taught, feeling as if she could never have enough of what so profited her.

For the Saviour lodged with the holy women, but Mary, it says, listened to Him as He taught; while the other, Martha, was distracted with much service. She therefore besought Him that her sister might share her carefulness with her. But Christ consented not, saying, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and busied about many things: only few things are required, or but one." And He further praised Mary, that "she had chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." For the acquisition of spiritual blessings is never lost.

The first thing however which we must examine is the manner in which the Saviour again benefits His disciples, by setting Himself before them as an example, in order that they may know how and in what manner to behave in the houses of such as

receive them. For they must not immediately on entering indulge themselves in relaxation, or suppose that this is the reason why they lodge with men, but rather that they may fill them with every blessing, and the divine and sacred doctrines. So somewhere the blessed Paul also sends a message to certain: ”For I desire to see you, that I may give you some spiritual gift, that you may be confirmed.” Observe therefore, that our Lord Jesus Christ, on entering to lodge with these holy women, did not cease from giving instruction, but still grants them, without stint, the sober doctrines of salvation. And one of these women was steadfast in her love of hearing: but Martha was distracted with much service. Does any one then blame her for being occupied with careful service? By no means. For neither does the Saviour chide her for having proposed to herself the discharge of this duty; but rather He blamed her, as one who was labouring in vain, by wishing to procure more than was necessary. And this He did for our benefit, that He might fix a limit to hospitality. For far better is that other part, of earnestly desiring the divine doctrine.

We do not then say that the wish to entertain strangers, when it does not aim at anything excessive, is to be despised, and is no service. The saints especially are bound to be content with little, and when they eat, and are prevailed upon to draw near to the table, they do so, rather to appease the infirmity of the body, in accordance with the laws of nature, than as caring about pleasure and relaxation. When therefore we lodge with the brethren, in wishing to reap their corporeal things, let us first sow for them things spiritual; and imitating therein careful husbandmen, let us lay bare their hearts, lest some root of bitterness spring up and injure them: lest the worm of human innovation attack them, and work in them secret decay. And if anything like this has happened, then thrusting forthwith into their minds the saving word of instruction, like the teeth of the mattock, let us eradicate the root of ungodliness; let us pluck up the heretical darnel from the very bottom; let us implant the knowledge of the truth: thus we may reap the corporeal things of those who have a superfluity, receiving them as a matter of debt: for the workman, He says, is worthy of his hire. And the law of Moses, hinting at the same truth, says somewhere in like manner, ”You shall not muzzle the trampling ox.” And as Paul said, ”Does God care about oxen? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes?” You therefore will give things more valuable than those you receive from men: for things temporal. You will give things eternal: for earthly things things heavenly: for the things of sense, things intellectual: for the things that perish, things that endure. And thus much of those who receive hospitality.

But let those who open to them their house, meet them cheerfully, and with alacrity, and as their fellows: and not so much as those who give, but as those who receive: as those who gain, and not as those who expend. And the more so as they profit doubly; for in the first place they enjoy the instruction of those whom they hospitably entertain: and secondly, they also win the reward of hospitality. Every way therefore they are profited. When however they receive the brethren into their house,

let them not be distracted with much service. Let them not seek any thing beyond their means, or more than sufficient. For every where and in every thing excess is injurious. For often it produces hesitation in those who otherwise would be glad to receive strangers, and causes but few [houses] to be found fit for the purpose: while it proves a cause of annoyance to those who are entertained. For the rich in this world delight in costly banquets; and in many kinds of viands, prepared curiously often with sauces and flavours; a mere sufficiency is utterly scorned, while that which is extravagant is praised, and a profusion beyond all satiety is admired, and crowned with words of flattery. The drinkings and revellings are excessive; and the draining of cups, and courses of wines, the means of intoxication and gluttony. But when holy men are assembled at the house of one who fears God, let the table be plain and temperate, the viands simple, and free from superfluities:

but little to eat, and that meagre and scant: and a limited sufficiency of drink. In every thing a small supply of such necessaries as will allay the bodily appetite with simple fare. So must men receive strangers. So too Abraham by the oak at Mamre, received those three men, and won as the reward of his carefulness, the promise of his beloved son Isaac. So Lot in Sodom honoured the angels, and for so doing, was not destroyed by fire with the rest; nor became the prey of the inextinguishable flame.

Very great therefore is the virtue of hospitality, and especially worthy of the saints: let us therefore also practise it, for so will the heavenly Teacher lodge and rest in our hearts, even Christ; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXX.

11:1-4. And it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them, When you pray, say, Our Father, hallowed be Your Name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, as in heaven, so in earth; give us every day the bread of our necessity; and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and bring us not into temptation. O warm and fervent in spirit, now also you have come, and we see God's sacred court full of eager listeners. The purpose doubtless of your assembling is a pious one, and you have met together to be taught; and He Who is the Dispenser of the divine gifts, again satisfies you with those things of which you wish to be accounted worthy, and prepares a spiritual table, crying out and saying, "Come, eat of My bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you:" and as the Psalmist says, "Bread strengthens man's heart, and the intellectual wine gladdens it." Let us therefore draw near to the table now spread before us, even to the signification of the gospel lessons: and let us attentively consider what advantage it brings us, and what it begets in us of these qualities which are necessary for the fitting honour of the saints.

"Christ," it says, "was praying alone:" and yet He is true God, and the Son of God over all; and Himself dispenses to the creation all those things by means of which it flourishes and is kept in being; and Himself is absolutely in need of nothing: for He is "full," as He said Himself. 'Of what then,' some one asks, 'is He in need, Who by right of nature possesses all that belongs to the Father? For He said plainly, "All that the Father has is mine." But it is the property of the Father to be full of all good, and of such prerogatives as befit Deity: and this too belongs to the Son. And knowing this the saints say, "Of His fulness have all we received." But if He give as from His own godlike fulness, of what, can one say that He is in need, or what does He want to receive from the Father, as though He had it not already? And for what, forsooth, does He pray, if He be full, and needs nothing that is the Father's!'

To this we reply, that He permits Himself, in accordance with the manner of the dispensation in the flesh, to perform human actions whensoever He wishes, and

as the season requires, without being liable to blame for so doing. For if He ate and drank, and is found partaking of sleep, what is there absurd, if also having humbled Himself to our measure, and fulfilled human righteousness, He not unfitly offered up prayer? And yet certainly He is in need of nothing; for "He is full," as we already said. For what reason therefore, and in the performance of what necessary and profitable duty, did He pray? It was to teach us not to be slack in this matter, but rather to be constant in prayers, and very urgent; not standing in the middle of the streets; for this some of the Jews used to do, the scribes namely and Pharisees; nor making it an occasion of ostentation, but rather praying alone and silently, and by ourselves: and, so to speak, conversing alone with God alone, with pure and undistracted mind. And this He clearly taught us in another place, saying of those who were wont to make a show of their prayers; "For they love to pray standing in the corners of the streets, and in the synagogues. But you, when you pray, enter your chamber, and shut your door, and pray to your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you."

For there are men who make a gain of the reputation of piety, and while earnestly attending to outward appearances, within are full of the love of vainglory. These often, when entering the church, first of all glance about in every direction, to observe the number of those standing there, and see whether they have many spectators. And as soon as the assembly pleases them, then raising their hand to their forehead, not once merely, but again and again they make there the sign of the precious cross. And so spinning out a long prayer according to their own fancy, they babble in a loud tone, as though praying to the bystanders, rather than to God. To such we say in the words of the Saviour, "You have received your reward:" since you pray as hunting after the praises of men, and not as seeking any thing of God. Your wish is fulfilled; you have been praised as being religious; you have gained vainglory: but you have traded in a fruitless labour; you have sown emptiness, and you shall reap nothing. Would you see the end of your artifices? Hear what the blessed David says; that "God has scattered the bones of them that please men." And by bones he here of course means not those of the body; for there are no instances of any men having suffered this: but rather the powers of the mind and heart, by means of which a man is able to effect good. The powers then of the soul are that earnestness which leads on strenuously to perseverance, spiritual manliness, patience and endurance. These qualities God will scatter in such as please men.

In order therefore that we, withdrawing far from these disgraceful ways, and escaping from the snares to which they are exposed who seek to please men, may offer to God prayer, holy and blameless and undefiled, Christ made Himself our example, by going apart from those who were with Him, and praying alone. For it was right that our Head and Teacher in every good and useful deed should be no other than He Who is first among all, and receives the prayers of all, and with God

the Father bestows on those who ask Him whatsoever they require. If therefore you se Him praying as a man, that you may learn how to pray, withdraw not from the belief and conviction, that being by nature God Who fills all, He became like to us and with us on earth as a man, and fulfilled human duties as the dispensation required: but that even so He was seated in heaven with the Father, dispensing of His own fulness all things to all, accepting the prayers of the dwellers upon earth, and of the spirits that are above, and crowned by them with praises. For He ceased not to be God by becoming like to us, but continued even so to be whatsoever He had been. For it became Him to be that which He had been, since He is unchangeable, and, as Scripture declares, not subject even to a ”shadow of turning.”

But inasmuch as a long discourse is required for what remains, holding it in for the present, as it were, with a bridle, lest it should become tedious to the hearers, we will hereafter with God’s help explain it to you, when next Christ the Saviour of us all assembles us here: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXI.

11:2. Upon, ”Our Father, Who art in heaven” OUR Lord Jesus Christ counted the insatiate desire of learning as worthy of all praise, thus saying: ”Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” For it is right constantly to hunger and thirst after those things, by means of which a man becomes a warm lover of saintly glories, and earnest in every good work. And to all who are thus minded, Christ reveals the way by which they can accomplish their desire. But serviceable is it above all things besides for the religious to salvation, that they know how to pray, and offer not supplications displeasing to Almighty God. For as the wise Paul wrote to us, ”We know not what to pray for as we ought.” Let us therefore draw near to Christ, the Giver of wisdom, and say, ”Teach us to pray.” Let us be like the holy apostles, who above all other things asked of Him this profitable and saving lesson.

Now at our last meeting we heard the gospel read, which says of Christ, the Saviour of us all, that ”it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying by Himself.” And we addressed you, explaining as well as we could the dispensation, by reason of which Christ prayed: and when we had carried our argument to this point, we reserved the rest for some fitting occasion. This has now arrived, and is present. Let us then proceed to what follows; for the Saviour said, ”When you pray, say, Our Father.” And another of the holy evangelists adds, ”who is in heaven.”

O boundless liberality! O incomparable gentleness, and that befits Him alone! He bestows upon us His own glory: He raises slaves to the dignity of freedom: He crowns man’s estate with such honour as surpasses the power of nature: He brings that to pass which was spoken of old by the voice of the Psalmist: ”I said, You are gods: and all of you children of the Most High. For lo! He rescues us from the measure of slavery, bestowing upon us by His grace that which by nature we possessed not: and permits us to call God Father, as being admitted to the rank of sons. Of Him have we received this, together with all our other privileges: and the wise John the Evangelist witnesses thereto, thus writing of Him: ”He came to His own, and His own received Him not: but to all who received Him He gave power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe in His Name: who were born,

not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. For we have been fashioned to the sonship by that birth which is spiritually wrought in us, ”not by corruptible seed, but rather by the living and abiding Word of God,’ as Scripture says. ”By willing it He fathered us by the Word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures; for so one of the holy apostles declares.

And Christ Himself, in a certain place, clearly explained the manner of this birth by declaring; ”Verily I say to you, that unless a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Or rather,----for to you it is right to speak even of those things that are mysterious,----He Himself became both the way and the door, and the cause of a grace being bestowed upon us thus glorious and worthy of our gaining by having taken upon Him our likeness. For although in that He is perceived to be, and is God, He is free, yet He took the form of a slave, that He might bestow upon us those things which are His, and enrich the slave with His own excellencies. For He alone is by nature free, because He alone is Son of the Father, even of Him Who is supreme above all, and rules over all, and Who is by nature and truly free. For whatsoever has been brought into existence bows the neck of slavery to Him Who created it. For the Psalmist sings to Him, saying, that ”all things are Your slaves: but inasmuch as in the dispensation He transferred to Himself what was ours, He has given us what was His. And most wise Paul, the minister of His mysteries, is our proof, thus writing: ”That when He was rich, He made Himself poor, that we by His poverty might be rich.

For our things, by which is meant the condition of human nature, is poverty to God the Word: while it is wealth to human nature to receive what things are His. And of these one is the dignity of freedom,----a gift peculiarly befitting those who have been called to sonship. And this, as I mentioned, is also His gift: for He said to us, ”And call no man your Father on earth: for One is your Father, Who is in heaven: and you all are brethren. And again, He Himself too, from His infinite love to mankind, is not ashamed to call us brethren, thus saying; ”I will preach Your name to My brethren. For because He became like to us, we thereby have gained brotherhood with Him.

He commands us therefore to take boldness, and say in our prayers, ”Our Father.” We children of earth and slaves, and subject by the law of nature to Him Who created us, call Him Who is in heaven Father. And most fittingly He makes those who pray understand this also: that if we call God Father, and have been counted worthy of so distinguished an honour, must we not necessarily lead holy and thoroughly blameless lives, and so behave as is pleasing to our Father, and neither think nor say anything unworthy or unfit for the freedom that has been bestowed upon us? And so one of the holy apostles spoke: ”If you call Him Father, Who without respect of persons judges according to every man’s work, let your conversation during the time of your sojourning be in fear.” For it is a most serious thing to grieve and pro-

voke a father, by turning aside to those things which are not right. How do earthly fathers act, or what is their feeling towards their sons? When they see them willing to conform themselves to their wishes, and choosing that course of conduct which is pleasing to them, they love and honour them; they open to them their house; they multiply their presents of whatsoever they wish, and acknowledge them as their heirs. But if they are disobedient, and intractable, having no respect for the laws of nature, and indifferent to that affection which is implanted in us, they drive them from their house, and deem them unworthy of any honour, or indulgence, or love: they even refuse to acknowledge them as sons, and do not write them as their heirs.

Mount now, I pray, from things as they are with us to those that transcend us. You call God Father: honour Him with ready obedience: yield submission as that which is His due: live so as He pleases: show not yourself harsh or proud, but, on the contrary, tractable and submissive, and ready without delay to follow His directions, so that He may honour you in return, and appoint you fellow-heir with Him Who is the Son by nature, For if ”He gave Him for us, how will He not with Him also give us all things,” according to the expression of the blessed Paul. But if you have no regard for yourself, and therefore heed not the bounteous gift that is bestowed, you are proved to be bold, and, so to speak, without salt, loving pleasure more than you love the Father. Fear, therefore, lest of you also God say that which was spoken of the Israelites by the word of Isaiah; ”Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken: I have begotten and brought up children, but they have rejected Me.” Heavy in every way, my beloved, is the guilt of those who rebel; and most wicked the crime of rejecting (God). Very wisely therefore, as I said, does the Saviour of all grant us to call God Father, that we, well knowing that we are sons of God, may behave in a manner worthy of Him Who has thus honoured us; for so He will receive the supplications which we offer in Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXII.

11:2 Upon ”Hallowed be Your Name.” ALL who desire the sacred words of God, the prophet Isaiah commands, saying; ”You who thirst come to the waters:” for whosoever will may draw from the life-giving fountain. And who is this fountain? Plainly it is Christ, and His doctrines. For He has somewhere said to us, ”Whosoever thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.” Let us then once again come as to a fountain: let us fill our souls: let us satiate ourselves of the torrent of pleasure. For the blessed David somewhere in a psalm thus speaks of Him to God the Father: ”They shall be satisfied with the fatness of Your house: and You shall make them drink of the torrent of Your pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life.” For the river of pleasure is richly poured forth for us, and the fountain of life, even that which is in Christ: Who also by one of the prophets has thus spoken concerning us; ”Behold, I bend down to them as a river of peace, and as a torrent flooding them with the glory of the Gentiles.”

For observe how Christ waters us with rich streams of spiritual blessings. For what will He next teach us? When you pray, He says, say, ”Our Father, Hallowed be Your Name.” Now see! already we have discoursed to you not without profit, when explaining in what manner it is right for us to say, ”Our Father.” And you, I think, remember my words, in that you are, as I said, eager after learning. In order, therefore, that we may not say the same things; for that were tedious to attentive listeners, who store up in the treasure-house of their heart whatever they have already understood, and wish constantly to advance to something further, let us proceed to that which follows, namely, ” Hallowed be Your Name:” and let us consider in what way this also must be understood. Do we then pray that additional holiness may accrue to the all-holy God? And how would not this be absolutely absurd? For if indeed there be anything wanting to God over all, in order to his being perfect, and in need of nothing, He may need additional holiness: but if He be full, as He says, and in every respect perfect in and by Himself, and the Giver of holiness to the creation out of His own fulness; what addition can He receive? For all things are His. and He has reached the highest perfection in every good: for this is also an attribute of His by nature. And besides it is a foolish and ridiculous thing

for those who pray to imagine that they offer their supplications not on their own behalf but on His. What therefore is the meaning of ”Hallowed be Your Name?”

We say then, that men do not supplicate for any addition of holiness to accrue to God over all: for who is greater than He, and able to give Him any increase? ”For without all doubt the less is blessed of the greater.” But they supplicate rather that this may be granted to them and all mankind. For when it is our settled conviction and belief, that He Who by nature is God over all, is Holy of the Holies, then we confess His glory and supreme majesty: then we receive His fear into our mind, and lead upright and blameless lives, that by thus becoming ourselves holy, we may be able to be near to the holy God. For it is written; ”Become you holy: for I am holy.” And He once also said to the hierophant Moses, ”I will be hallowed in them that draw nigh to Me.’” The prayer therefore is, May Your Name be kept holy in us, in our minds and wills: for this is the signification of the word ” Hallowed.” For just as one who suffers under a disease in his bodily sight, and is able to see but little, and with difficulty; and prays, saying, ’O Lord of all, grant that the light of the sun’s radiance may illuminate me also,’ does not, we affirm, make his supplications on the sun’s behalf, but, on the contrary, upon his own: so also if a man say, ”Our Father, hallowed be Your Name,” he is not requesting any addition to be made to God’s holiness, but rather asks, that he may himself possess such a mind and faith, as to feel that His Name is honourable and holy. The act therefore is the source of life, and the cause of every blessing: for to be thus affected towards God, how must it not be a thing worthy of the highest estimation, and useful for the salvation of the soul?

But do not imagine, that when those who depend upon His rove are earnest in their supplications towards God, that they ask these things of Him for themselves alone: but know rather, that their purpose is to intercede for all the dwellers upon earth: for those who already have believed; and for those who have not as yet received the faith, nor acknowledged the truth. For for those who already have believed, they ask that their faith may be established, and that they may be able to practise the glories of the more excellent life: while for those who as yet are not believers, they ask that they may be called, and their eyes be opened; even in this following the footsteps of Christ, Who according to the words of John is ”the Advocate with the Father for our sins: and not for our’s only, but for the whole world.” He therefore Who is the Intercessor for the saints, and for the whole world, wills that His disciples be like Himself. When therefore men say to the Father, ”Hallowed be Your Name,” bear in mind, that among those who have not as yet gained the light of truth, nor received the faith, the Name of God is despised. It does not as yet seem to them to be holy, honourable, and adorable. But no sooner has the light of truth risen upon them, and they have with effort awoke as from some night and darkness, then learning Who and how great He is, they acknowledge Him as Holy of the Holies, and have correspondent sentiments and belief.

But that the phrase, that God is hallowed by us, is a confession of our regarding Him as Holy of Holies, and does not bestow on Him any additional holiness, you may understand hence. One of the holy prophets said, ”Hallow the Lord, and He shall be Your fear: and if you trust in Him, He shall be holiness unto you.” Do we then make God holy? Is it the act of human nature to bestow ought on God? Does the thing made benefit the Maker? Does any man imagine that He, Who of his fulness richly distributes to the creature His gifts, will Himself receive ought of us, whose place it is to listen to the words of the blessed Paul; ”What have you that you have not received? When, therefore, the prophet said, ”Hallow the Lord, and He shall be your fear, and holiness to you;” we affirm that what he teaches is, ’Believe that He is holy, for then you will fear Him; and so He will thus be to you the means of holiness.” And it is written again of Christ the Saviour of us all; ”Hallow Him, Who despised Himself.” For He did despise Himself, by deeming His life of no account, and laying it down for our sakes. But let Him be hallowed, it says, by you: that is, let Him be acknowledged as holy. For such He is by nature, as being true God, and the Son of God. For to be essentially holy suits not any one whatsoever of those things, which from nonexistence have been brought into being: but only that supreme nature which transcends all. By believing therefore that He is by nature holy;----for this is the meaning of our hallowing Him; ---- we further acknowledge Him to be true God.

For ourselves therefore and not for God let us pray, saying, ”Hallowed be Your Name.” For if we are thus disposed, and with free mind offer up prayers such as this, God the Father will accept us, and Christ with Him will bless us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXIII.

11:2. Upon ”Your kingdom come.” THOSE who love riches, and whose mind is set on wealth and gain, gather by every means in their power the wished for object, and there is no labour they will not undertake. But their pursuit ends in no happy issue: ”For what,” as the Saviour says, ”is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, but lose himself?” But those who love the Word of salvation, and unrol the divine Scripture as a treasure, and carefully search out the things therein concealed, find the life-giving knowledge which leads them on to every virtuous pursuit, and makes them perfect in the knowledge of the doctrines of truth. Let us search therefore into the sense of the passage set before us. And our object is intelligently to see what the Saviour commanded. For we must, He said, when we pray say, ”Your kingdom come.” Nevertheless He reigns over all with God the Father: nor can any addition be made to His kingly glory, either as accruing to Him from without, or as given Him by another. Nor did it gather by the course of time, but, so to speak, sprang up with Him without a beginning. For He at all time was and is that which He was. Altogether therefore, and in every way it follows upon His being God by nature and truly, that He must be omnipotent, and that this glorious attribute is, so to speak, His without a beginning, and without end. For one also of the holy prophets said to Him, ”The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, and yet.”And the divine Psalmist too says, ”Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.” And again; ”God is our king before the worlds.” Since, therefore, God ever reigns, and is omnipotent, with what view do those who call God Father offer up to Him their supplications, and say, Your kingdom come?

They seem, therefore, to desire to see Christ the Saviour of all rising again upon the world. For He will come, He will come and descend as Judge, no longer in low estate like to us, nor in the meanness of human nature; but in glory such as becomes God, and as He dwells in the unapproachable light, and with the angels as His guards. For so He somewhere Himself said, that ”the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels.” And I think, therefore, that I ought to add this too: that at the consummation of this world He will descend from heaven, but no longer to instruct those on earth, as He did of old, nor again to show them the way of salvation; ----the season for this has passed away;----but to

judge the world. And the wise Paul also bears witness to what I say, declaring that "we all must be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may be requited for those things that were by means of the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad."

Terrible, therefore, is that judgment seat; without respect of persons is the Judge; it is a time of pleading, or rather of trial, and of retribution. The fire is prepared for the wicked, and enduring punishment, and eternal torments:----and how can men pray to see that time? Observe, I pray again, the Saviour's skilfulness, and His admirable management in every particular. For He commanded them to ask in prayer that this dread time may come, to make them know that they must live, not carelessly, nor dissolutely, nor moreover as beguiled into laxity and the love of pleasure; but, on the contrary, as becomes saints, and according to God's will: that so that time may prove the bestower upon them of crowns, and not of fire and condemnation. For for the wicked and impure, in that they lead base and lascivious lives, guilty of every vice, it were in no way fit for them in their prayers to say, Your kingdom come. Rather let them know that in so saying they, as it were, charge God with blame, because the time of their punishment does not quickly arise and manifest itself. Of them one of the holy prophets said, "Woe to those that desire the day of the Lord! What will the day of the Lord be to you? For it is darkness, and not light; and that thick darkness in which is no brightness."

The saints, therefore, ask that the time of the Saviour's perfect reign may come, because they have laboured dutifully, and have a pure conscience, and look for the requital of what they have already wrought. For just as those who are expecting a festival and merriment about forthwith to come, and shortly to appear, thirst for its arrival, so also do they. For they trust that they shall stand glorious in the presence of the Judge, and hear Him say: "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world. They were wise and zealous stewards, when their Lord set them over His household, to give them their meat in its season. Well and wisely did they distribute to their fellow servants those things by the receiving of which they had themselves before been made rich; for they remembered Him Who said: "Freely you have received, freely give. When they received of Him the talent, they did not bury it in the earth. They were not like that slothful, and indolent, and careless servant, who drew near, saying, "Lord, I knew that You are a hard man; reaping where others sowed, and gathering where others scattered: and I was afraid, and hid the talent. Behold! You have Your own. They, on the contrary, traded: and so they brought it greatly multiplied, saying, "Lord, Your pound has made ten pounds," and were admitted to yet further honours. They possessed an active, and right hearty, and courageous disposition;

they had put on the panoply of God; the breastplate of righteousness; the helmet of salvation; had taken the Spirit's sword: It did not escape them that they had a

war, not against blood and flesh, but against magistracies, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the heavenly regions. For many wove for themselves crowns of martyrdom, and by enduring conflicts, even to life and blood, were made ”a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men,” and were accounted worthy of all admiration. There were others who endured labours and persecutions, eagerly contending for His glory. ”Cruel wolves sprang in upon Christ’s flocks, not sparing the flock,” as the divine Paul declares. ”Deceitful workers; false apostles,” vomiting forth the gall of the malice of the devil, and ”speaking perverse things,” such as lead ignorant souls to destruction, and ”wound their weak conscience. These, by flattering the powers of this world, brought persecutions and distresses upon the champions of the truth. But they made no great account of what they suffered, for they looked to the hope which they had in Christ. For it was not unknown to them that ”by suffering for Him they would reign with Him. They know that at the time of the resurrection, ”He will change the body of their humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body.

They fully believed what He said about the consummation of the world, that when He shall appear to them again from heaven, ”they shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Justly, therefore, in their prayers they say, ”Your kingdom come. For they feel confident that they shall receive a recompense for their bravery, and attain to the consummation of the hope set before them.

May it be our lot also to be counted worthy of this great inheritance in Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXIV.

11:2 Upon ” Your will be done; as in heaven, so on earth.” THE prophet David made his supplications to Christ the Saviour of all, saying, ”Lead me to Your truth, and teach me that You are God my Saviour.” For all those are taught of God who are in Christ by faith; and among these are we. Of Him, therefore, let us ask the explanation of His words: for whosoever would understand correctly and without error what He wishes to teach, are in need of divine light: but He is the Giver of all wisdom, and sheds His light upon the mind and heart of those that ask Him. For again the Psalmist said, ”Open mine eyes, and I shall see Your wonders out of Your law.” Let us, therefore, examine this part also of the prayer: for it will profit us in no slight degree to the salvation of the soul. Why then did He command the saints to say to God the Father in heaven, ”Your will be done; as in heaven, so in earth?”

Worthy of the saints, and full of all praise is this petition also. For for them to ask that the good-will of God may prevail on earth, what else is it but to ask that all mankind may lead praiseworthy and elect lives, and practise and know all virtue? By so doing, the holy angels, we affirm, dwell in glory in heaven: for it is written; ”Bless the Lord all you His powers; His ministers who do His will.” For by adhering to the will of their Lord, and fulfilling that righteousness which transcends human things, they preserve their high estate, whereas those who acted otherwise fell therefrom.

But to gather to a head, and, so to speak, collect briefly the meaning of the words, we supplicate, that power may be given to the dwellers upon earth to do the will of God, and imitate the conduct practised above in heaven by the holy angels. Let us see, therefore, as well as we can, in what way the powers above and the ranks of the holy angels successfully perform their duty. How do they honour God? Is it by sacrifices of blood? Is it by perfume and frankincense, as forsooth the Israel after the flesh did? But this I think is altogether incredible both to think and say. For it is rather true to affirm that they fulfil a spiritual and not a material service, ever crowning with lauds and praises the Creator of all, and fulfilling that righteousness which is suitable to holy spirits. Those, therefore, who in their prayers ask that the will of God may be done also on earth, ought necessarily themselves to live blame-

lessly, and to pay no regard to these earthly things, but free themselves from all impurity, and leap out of the pitfalls of iniquity, and ”perfect holiness in the fear of God;” that as Paul also says, even while walking upon earth, ”their conversation may be in heaven.” And above all others let those who belong to the Jewish multitude, but have been enriched with the righteousness that is in Christ by faith, know that it is altogether fitting for them if they would fulfil the word of God, to cease from the shadows of the law, and abandon the service that consists in semblances and types: and choose rather the service which is spiritual, and pure, and immaterial. For as the Saviour somewhere said, ”God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. For such the Father also requires those to be who worship Him.”

For that the legal manner of service is not what He requires, is a thing in no respect difficult to see from the prophetic and apostolic writings. For by the word of Jeremiah He says, ”Why do you bring Me the frankincense from Sheba; and cinnamon from a far country? Your whole burnt-offering is not acceptable, and your sacrifices please Me not.” And by the voice of David, ”I will not take bullocks from your house, nor he goats out of your flocks: should I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?” And the blessed Paul also shows that the service that is by the law is powerless to justification, thus saying; ”For that no man is justified by the law before God is evident.” The will therefore of God, that will which we pray may be done upon earth, is not that we should conform to the law, and live according to the grossness of its letter, but that we should endeavour to live by the gospel. And this is effected by a faith correct and free from error, and by a holy life, possessed of the sweet savour of every virtue, and proved by the testimony of good and noble conduct in every thing that is excellent.

And to explain also in another way the sense of what is laid before us, we say, that those who utter to God the petition ”Your will be done, as in heaven so on earth,” pray that they may see the cessation of sin. For the law of Moses was given to the Israelites to be their schoolmaster; but those who received it paid but slight heed to its commands: they were ”lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;” and turned aside to follow their own will: for they wandered after the doctrines and commandments of men. For God also somewhere said of them; ”This people draws near to Me; with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain fear they Me, while teaching the doctrines and commandments of men.” And He also said of them by the word of Jeremiah; ”Hear, O earth, see I bring upon this people evils; the fruit of their turning aside: because they have not regarded My Word, and have rejected My law.” Such then was the state of the Jews. But that other multitude, spread over the whole earth, was in error in manifold ways. ”For they served the creatures instead of the Creator:” and having humbled their mind to submission to unclean spirits, were led by them readily and

without understanding, into every thing base, and every kind of wickedness was honoured among them, and ”they gloried in their shame,” as Scripture says.

The saints therefore supplicate, that both of these, as well Israel as the Gentiles, may be counted worthy of peace from on high, and be comforted in that they were in misery, and caught, so to speak, in the net of sin, without possibility of escape: that having received the righteousness which is in Christ by faith, they may become pure, and skilful in every good work. For this reason they pray, ”Your will be done, as in heaven, so in earth:” for as I said, the will of God over all is, that the dwellers upon earth should live holily, and piously, and without blame, being washed from all impurity, and diligent in imitating the spiritual beauty of the spirits above in heaven; so that the church on earth, being, as it were, the visible likeness and image of the ”church of the firstborn” that is above, may please Christ; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXV.

11:3 Upon ”Give us every day our needful bread.” THOSE who possess earthly riches invite to their house such of their friends as they wish to honour, and setting before them a costly banquet, make them enjoy themselves, though providing for them nothing further than the satiating of the appetite. But the Saviour and Lord of all, feasts us not with bodily enjoyments; for this is profitless, and injurious even to the body itself: rather He banquets with spiritual feasts the hearts of those who would live virtuously, bestowing on them the saving doctrine of the gospel, by means of which a man becomes full of all good, and an heir of eternal life. And what I have said is clearly taught us in the passage now set before us. For when you pray, He says, you must say, ”Give us every day the bread of our necessity.”

But some, perchance, may think and even say, that it is unsuitable and not fitting for the saints to ask of God these corporeal things; and may therefore divert what is said to a spiritual sense; and affirm that they ask not earthly bread, nor that for the body, but rather That Which came down from above, from heaven, and gave life to the world. And I too without all doubt would say, that it most becomes the saints earnestly to endeavour to be accounted worthy of spiritual gifts. We must, however, also understand, that though they ask simple bread, and this be what the Saviour bids them do, that their address to God is nevertheless free from all blame, and suitable to the piety of their lives. For examine what is the sense concealed in these words, and with what doctrines it is pregnant. For in that He commanded to ask for the bread, that is, for the food of a day, it is evident, that He does not permit them to possess any thing, but requires them rather to practise a saint-like poverty. For to ask is not the part of those who have, but of those rather who are in need of what the body indispensably requires, and cannot do without.

Should then any one who is in want of nothing, say to the omniscient God, ”Give us the bread of a day,” he would of course seem to wish to receive in derision, or perchance even to ridicule the meaning of the command, and to imagine as some do, ”That the Lord does not see, neither the God of Jacob understand. By this very command therefore, inasmuch as they ask what they have not, we may perceive, that He does not wish His disciples to set their desire upon wealth. And this He is

found elsewhere clearly enjoining: ”Be not anxious for yourselves, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; neither for your body what you shall put on: for all these things the Gentiles seek after. But seek you chiefly the kingdom of God and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added to you. For your heavenly Father knows that all these things are needed by you.”

The word ἐπιούσις, applied here to the bread, some explain as meaning that which is coining, and about to be given in the future world, understanding it again spiritually: while others give the word a different sense. But if it be true, that the bread men make mention of when they pray, is that which is to be given them in the world to come, why do they add, ”Give it us every day?” For by this we may see, that what they request is their daily provision, asking not as loving wealth, but as free from all earthly anxiety. We must explain therefore ἐπιούσιος as meaning that which is necessary and sufficient. The blessed Paul has somewhere applied this phrase to Christ the Saviour of us all, with a slight alteration; for he said that ”He has prepared for Himself a people περιούσιος,” using περιούσιος instead of ἐπιούσιος, and meaning a people sufficient, and not falling short of perfection. When therefore they ask food for the day, understand, that they offer the request as men free from the desire of riches, and who count it their boast to be entirely destitute of earthly things.

For it is fitting for those who are appointed to the priesthood, to be free from all worldly distraction and care, whoring after none of those things which overwhelm men with necessary cares, and cast them as in a slough into the filth of worldly lusts. ”For the love of money is the root of all evil.” And it is right that I should say to those who would renounce such faults, that they must strip off for the world what belongs to it, and deny these bodily things, and seek from God those things only which are necessary for existence, protesting as it were against the weakness of the body, which constantly requires food; and ready, were it lawful utterly to escape from it, and life could so be prolonged, even to accept this with great joy. For just as those who know how to contend in bodily strife, and are skilled in the combats of the games, strip off even their garments, and stand up manfully against the vigorous strength of their opponents; so also the saints, withdrawing from all worldly anxiety, and bodily lusts; and careless even of having abundance of food, and stripping as I said to oppose Satan and the enemies of the truth, apply themselves to the contests of the priestly office, and conquer as combatants. And the divine Paul too somewhere said of those that war in the flesh: ”No man that wars entangles himself with worldly merchandise, that he may please him who has chosen him for a soldier.” For he does not go forth to the combat laden with superfluities, but on the contrary only taking with him such equipments as are fit for warriors.

It becomes therefore the saints, as having a combat to wage, not only ”against blood and flesh, but also against magistracies and powers, and against the world-rulers of this darkness, and against the spirits of evil in the heavenly regions,” to be so well prepared in mind, as not to be open to the grasp of those who resist them, and who war against the message which they proclaim. And it is right also for them to be single-minded, that is, to think only of those things which please the Lord, not being partly given up to worldly anxiety, but being all of them entirely holy and without blame, so to make their conduct a sacrifice to God. For it is written that ”every sacrifice of the priest shall be a whole burnt-offering. For the lives of the worldly are ”divided,” according to the expression of the blessed Paul; but of the saints not so: but they are entirely consecrated, completely holy, emitting a sweet savour to God: and this we say is a whole burnt-offering. But when ought that is unsaintly is found in any, it pollutes the sacrifice, alters and divides it: or rather filth is mingled with the ointment; for its sweet savour has utterly perished. But the love of money is an unsavoury thing; and the being anxious for the things of the body; for God has everywhere promised the saints that they shall not want. If then we do not believe that He will grant this, we become partakers of the unbelief of the Jews.

For when God over all wonderfully and ineffably brought out for them water from the rock, they murmured at Him saying; ”Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? And why can He not, and wherefore should He not give what He has promised? For all men of good character abide faithfully by their words: and how shall God Who transcends all, be false in ought that He has promised? Men moreover, after having promised some good, are often too weak to fulfil their engagements: but He who knows no weakness, but rather is the Lord of powers, Who does whatsoever He will without labour and with ease, how shall not He accomplish whatsoever He promises to men?

”Casting therefore upon Him our care,” let us ask of Him what suffices for life; food, that is to say, and clothing, and whatever is sufficient for us, avoiding all wish to be rich, as that which threatens us with destruction. For if such be our will, Christ will accept and bless us; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXVI.

11:4 And forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. THE blessed prophet Isaiah, when revealing the way of salvation by the preaching of the Gospel, thus somewhere speaks: ”There shall be there a level way, and it shall be called the holy way.” For it leads those who walk thereon to holiness by a spiritual service, and a righteousness superior to the law. We remember also Christ, Who says to those who love Him; ”Verily I say to you, that unless your righteousness be more than that of the scribes and pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of God.” And I say that it is the duty of those who have been called by faith to the acknowledgment of the glory of our universal Saviour Christ, and have Him for their head, to delight in imitating His actions, and be in earnest in letting their light shine by holy conduct, such as was unknown to them of old time. ”For all things are become new in Christ,” He requires therefore His disciples to be gentle, and slow to anger, that so they may be able to say blamelessly in their prayers, ”Forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.” Oh! what great and admirable skill! what sagacious thought! or rather, oh! the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! He first commands them to ask forgiveness of the sins they commit, and then to confess that they also entirely forgive others: and if I may so say, they ask God to imitate the long suffering which they practise: and that same gentleness which they show to their fellow servants, they pray that they may receive in equal measure from God, Who gives justly, and knows how to show mercy to every man.

Come, therefore, and let us endeavour to perceive more clearly the meaning of the prayer, by entering upon a more extended and exact consideration of the passage before us. As I said, therefore, He has commanded us when we draw near to say: ”Forgive us our sins. And we will examine, if you please, what the benefit is which we receive from this. Those then who thus speak are not supercilious: they do not think great things of themselves: do not vaunt themselves over the weak: but, as Scripture says, ”they know themselves,” For they are not like that ignorant and haughty Pharisee, who even made the Lord his witness, according to the parable which says: ”Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican: and the Pharisee stood and said thus: God, I thank Thee that I am

not as the rest of mankind, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; or as this publican. I fast twice in the week; and tithe every thing I possess. But the publican stood afar off, smiting upon his breast, and saying; God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, that this one went down to his house justified rather than the other. Observe therefore how ruinous it is to vaunt oneself over those who are weak, imagining that our conduct is in no respect whatsoever worthy of blame.

We ought rather to consider and reflect, that "in many things we all of us are guilty," and, so to speak, are always in sins, sometimes even involuntarily: for it is written; "Who can understand his offences? We find also the blessed Psalmist very anxious in making his supplications to God, and plainly saying: "Both cleanse me from my secret doings: and from the deeds of others spare Your servant, lest they overpower me: then shall I be blameless, and purified from great sin. And further also, the very patient Job offered sacrifices for the unknown, or rather undiscovered sins of his sons, considering and saying; "It may be my sons have spoken evil in their heart against God. We remember also the very wise Paul, who, when he had written, "For I am not conscious of any fault in myself: thoughtfully added, "but I am not hereby justified: but He That judges me is the Lord."

It is therefore greatly to our profit constantly to fall down before God, Who loves what is good, and say, Forgive us our sins. For He said by one of the holy prophets, "Declare you first your unlawfulnesses, that you may be justified." And inasmuch as this was not unknown to the blessed David, he thus sings; "I said that I will confess of myself my iniquity to the Lord; and You forgave the wickedness of my heart." For God readily accepts, and has mercy on those who do not forgot their offences, but fall down before Him, and ask of Him forgiveness: but He is severe, and very justly so, upon the obdurate and the proud, and on him who in his great ignorance acquits himself of blame. For He said to one thus disposed, "Behold, I have a suit against you, because you say, I have not sinned." For who can boast that he has a pure heart? or who can have confidence that he is undefiled by sins? The road then to salvation, and which delivers those who earnestly walk thereon from the wrath of God, is the confession of offences, and to say in our prayers to Him Who purifies the wicked, Forgive us our sins.

There is also another way in which it benefits us. For those truly who own that they have sinned, and wish to obtain pardon from God, necessarily fear Him, as One Who is about to be the Judge: they are not forgetful of God's terrible judgment-seat. For, as the very wise Paul writes; "We shall all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may be requited for the things done by the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad." Those in whose mind the conviction is present, that they must stand before Him, and make their defence; and if they are accused of wicked conduct, will suffer bitter punishment; but will be praised, if they have well and wisely lead the life that is

in the flesh on earth; thirst, on the one hand, for the forgiveness of the sins they have already committed, that they may escape the unending torment and eternal punishment: and, on the other, they hasten to live uprightly and blamelessly, that they may receive the crown that becomes the excellence of their lives. For so will the Judge be gentle towards them, nor remember evil: ”for the iniquity, He says, of the wicked shall not harm him in the day that he shall repent of his iniquity.’”

And let not any one imagine that it is lawful for men without distinction to say, ”Forgive us our iniquities.” For it is not fitting for those who still continue in wickedness, and wish to do so to the last, to say, Forgive us our sins: but for those rather, who have abandoned their former wicked deeds, and now earnestly desire to live as becomes saints. Were it not so, nothing would prevent men who are still wicked, smiters of their fathers, and matricides, and adulterers, and sorcerers, and whoever are guilty of these most abominable crimes, to continue in the practice of them, and cherish their evil propensities unchanged, and be polluted by the pursuit of every thing that is base; and nevertheless to draw near, and presumptuously say, ”Forgive us our sins.” For with good reason the Saviour of all and Lord did not conclude this clause of the prayer at this point, but commanded us to add, ”For we also ourselves have forgiven every one who is indebted to us.” But this is fitting only for those to say, who have chosen a virtuous life, and are practising without remissness that will of God, which, as Scripture says, is ”good and acceptable and perfect.” These honour a long-suffering temper, and acquit of all blame those who have wronged them: and even though any one afflict them, they think nothing of the matter. To be slow then to anger, is a virtue altogether excellent, and the fruit of that love which the wise Paul even declares to be ”the fulfilling of the law.”

And consider, I pray, the exceeding beauty of this virtue, even from the deformity of the vice opposed to it. For irascibility is in truth a serious malady, and whoever is subject to it in mind becomes irritable and morose, harsh and obdurate, the abode and habitation of wrath and vexation; and this long continued, and that cannot be charmed away. Ever does he see with evil eyes whoever has wronged him: he watches him sternly; seeks for time and place in which to injure him: and that generally not in equal measure, but many times greater than the wrong: he is secret and plotting. Is not such a one full of all deformity, hateful to God, and rejected by Him, and therefore in utter misery? ”For the ways of the angry,” as it is written, ”are to death.” But he who is simple, and not irascible, is full of forbearance, and that not so much the forbearance which men practise, as that which comes from above, and from God. His heart is not subject to the fester of vexation: it masters its anger, and repels the bitter feelings which spring therefrom. He is forgiving, kind to his companions, gentle and affable, and humbles himself to the infirmity of his neighbour. Such was the character of the disciples of the Saviour: for the blessed Paul wrote; ”Being reviled, we bless: being persecuted, we bear patiently: being defamed, we entreat.” For they have grown like their Lord,

”Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: and when He suffered, threatened not; but committed His cause to Him that judges righteously.”

We must ask, therefore, of God the forgiveness of the sins we have committed, when we have ourselves first forgiven whoever have offended in ought, provided that their sin is against us, and not against the glory of the supreme God. For over such actions we are not lords, but only over those which have been committed against ourselves. And by thus forgiving the brethren what they do to us, we shall then certainly find Christ, the Saviour of all, gentle and ready to show us mercy: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXVII.

11:4 And lead us not into temptation. O ALL you who love the divine will, and are enamoured of a blameless life, draw near to God over all, and say, ”Show me Your ways, O Lord, and teach me Your paths.” For all wisdom and understanding is from Him; and the knowledge of all good comes to us from above from the supreme throne, as from a fountain; and no man can accomplish any thing praiseworthy, unless he receive the ability from Him. And this He teaches us Himself, saying, ”Without Me you can do nothing.” He therefore Who gives to every man all things whatsoever wherein they can justly glory, now leads us on to another of those things which are necessary to salvation. For He commands us when we are instant in prayer to say, ”Lead us not into temptation.”

With these words Luke concludes the prayer; but Matthew is found to add, ”but deliver us from evil.” And there is a certain close connection in the clauses: for plainly it follows from men not being led into temptation, that they are also delivered from evil; or perchance, were any one to say, that the not being led into it is the same as the being delivered from it, he would not err from the truth. But let us consider this: Does the Saviour and Lord of all wish His friends to be cowardly? Are they to be lazy and abject, and in earnest rather in avoiding the contest than in winning renown? And yet the Spirit said in the book of Psalms, ”Be strong, and let your heart be firm, all you who trust in the Lord.” And the Saviour Himself somewhere says, ”Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” If then He crown with such splendid honours him who is persecuted, and to be persecuted is undeniably a temptation , in what sense does He command them to avoid temptation? For certainly it is not inactivity, and an unprofitable dilatoriness, and a thankless sloth, which render those trained for gymnastic contests successful, and worthy of honours, and the clapping of hands, but, on the contrary, severe toil. Moreover, it is not in time of peace that one sees the man who is well acquainted with the tactics of war, and bold withal, and tried in battle, but he must have shown himself a hardy combatant against the enemy. And why then does Christ, so to speak, even hamstring those who love Him, by making them say, ”Lead us not into temptation.”

To this we reply, gathering after our manner those ideas which are best, that He does not wish His followers to be abject, nor yet indolent in any other way; that He even incites them to courageousness in all things praiseworthy, saying, ”Enter in at the strait door: for narrow is the door, and constricted the way, that leads to life, and few are they who find it.” There must therefore be in us an unchangeable and manly spirit of ardour: and a mind patient in endurance, such as was that of the blessed Paul, who said, ”Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword?” But even though we be thus minded, and attain to these measures of manliness, yet we must think humbly of ourselves, being ”poor in spirit,” according to the Saviour’s word, and not imagine that always and necessarily we shall conquer all temptations. For sometimes an unendurable alarm falling upon the mind of a man terrifies it into abject fear; as also does Satan, who hates whatever is good; and the severity of the temptation unbends sometimes even the most courageous mind. So do the violent and unendurable blows of the waves dash to pieces a firmly built and well-manned ship: and so does a dense mass of darts shot from the hands of the enemy put to flight the most steadfast soldier. No one therefore ought to be over-confident, or rash in encountering temptations, even though he be brave in mind: but rather let us reflect upon the infirmity of our mind, and fear with soberness, lest perchance we prove a cause of ridicule to our tempters, by not being able to bear the brunt of the battle.

Let us therefore pray that we may not be tempted: for it is a thing difficult to escape from, and difficult to most men to endure to the end. But when the conjuncture summons us of necessity thereto, then indeed, exerting all our strength, we must enter the conflict, and struggle for our souls, nothing fearing, but, on the contrary, calling to mind what Christ the Saviour of all said to us; ”Fear you not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” As also that holy apostle who thus wrote, ”Blessed is the man that endures temptation: who, when he is proved, shall receive the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love Him,”

There are however many kinds of temptation; of which two are of universal occurrence, and common and very general. And what these are, we must tell. There are in the world many heresies; false apostles, and false teachers, who gathering the wearisomeness of frigid inventions, and glorying in the arts of worldly wisdom, adulterate the language of the sacred proclamations, and multiply blasphemous words against their own pates: and as the Psalmist says, ”they set up their horn on high, speaking iniquity against God: yes, and against God the Word the Maker of all, Who, they say, is to be reckoned among those things that were made by Him; and is a servant, and not a son; and a creature, and not the Lord. These, resisting the champions of the truth, persecute those whose choice it is to hold sound doctrine, and who defend the divine glory, and endeavour to crown the only-fathered

Word of God with incomparable praises. When therefore any temptation arrive on this account, be not you found one who throws away his shield, nor a soldier who runs from the battle, nor an athlete destitute alike of skill and courage. Wish not an unseasonable peace, the cause of future ruin; but remember that Christ the Saviour of all said, ”Think not that I am come to bring peace upon earth; I am not come to bring peace, but a sword.

And if perchance it happen that the persecutors possess worldly power, fear not the harm they can do you, nor the danger even of blood, and the risk of life; but remember again the exhortation of the holy apostle, who says, ”Therefore let those also who suffer according to the will of God commend their souls to a faithful Creator. And again, For let no one of you suffer as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as one busy with other men’s things; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but glorify God on this account.”

For it follows as a matter of course upon Laving to suffer, that we shall justly be accounted worthy of eternal honours. The struggle is not unrewarded; the labour is not in vain; for as Paul said, ”God is not unrighteous to forget your labour and your love, which you have shown in His Name.” These then are the conflicts ordained for all who fear God, to give the proof of him who knows how to endure patiently. For the blessed martyrs are crowned, as ”having fought a good fight, and finished their running, and kept the faith.”

Furthermore, other kinds of temptations there are besides this, common, so to speak, to every one, but which happen to each one differently. For as one of the holy apostles said, ”Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God does not tempt with evils: neither does He tempt any one. But every one is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed of his own lust. And afterward lust, having conceived, brings forth sin: and sin when it is consummated brings forth death.” A struggle therefore and great danger is laid upon every one, lest he fall into sin, and be led. away from that which is seemly, wandering into wrongful deeds. Violent is the force of passions, and there wars against the mind of every one a motley crowd and furious multitude of base pleasures. For some humble men into fleshly lust and filthy lewdnesses; while others lead them to the desire of gain, making their victims lovers of sordid hoards, and drawing them on to every blameful crime. Well therefore does it become us who are exposed to such serious evils, even though as yet we have not fallen into them, to pray, saying, ”Load us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” For it were good for a man to run his course apart from evil: but if temptation assail, then be brave and unconquerable; rebuke the flesh, put a bridle on the mind, ask aid of God, the safety vouchsafed by power from on high. Be established and confirmed, not feeble, not easy to be ensnared; rather be cautious, and a lover of God more than a lover of pleasure: for then He will aid you and grant you victory Who is Saviour and Lord of all: by Whom

and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXVIII.

11:5-10. And He said to them, Who of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves: for my friend has come to me from the way, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: lo! the door is shut, and the children are with me in bed: I cannot rise and give you. I say to you, that though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend; because of his urgency he will rise and give him as much as he needs. And I also say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds: and whosoever knocks, it shall be opened to him.

THE language of the divinely inspired Scripture is constantly, so to speak, profound; nor will it bend itself for those to be able to understand it who merely wish to do so, but only for those who know how to search it well, and are enriched with the divine light in their mind, by means of which they attain to the meaning of hidden truths. Let us therefore ask for the understanding which comes from above, from God, and the illumination of the Holy Ghost, that we may attain to a correct and unerring method, whereby we may be enabled to see the truth contained in the passage set before us.

We have heard then what the Saviour said in the parable now read to us, which if we understand we shall find to be laden with benefits. And the order of the ideas is very wonderful. For the Saviour of all had taught at the request of the holy apostles, in what way we ought to pray. But it was possible that those who had obtained from Him this precious and saving lesson, might sometimes make indeed their supplications according to the pattern given them, but would do so wearily and lazily. And so, when not heard at their first or second prayer, would desist from their supplications, as being unavailing to their benefit. In order therefore that we may not experience this, nor suffer the injury that would result from such littleness of mind, He teaches us that we must diligently continue the practice, and in the form of a parable plainly shows that weariness in prayer is to our loss, while patience therein is greatly to our profit: for it is our duty to persevere, without giving way to indolence. And this He teaches us by saying, that ”though he will not

rise and give him because he is his friend, because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needs."

And now come, and let us transfer to the truth what was shown in the form of a parable. Be urgent in prayer; draw near to God Who loves to be kind; and that very constantly. And if you see that the gift of grace is delayed, yield not to weariness: despair not of the expected blessing: abandon not the hope set before you; nor further foolishly say within yourself, 'I have drawn near frequently; I have gained absolutely nothing; I have wept, and received not; I have supplicated, but not been accepted: for of all I asked, nothing has been accomplished.' Rather think thus within yourself, that He Who is the universal treasure house better knows our state than we do, in that He weighs to every man what is due and suitable to him. You ask sometimes what is beyond your measure; you wish to receive those things of which you are not yet worthy. The Giver Himself knows the time suitable for His gifts. Earthly fathers do not immediately and without discretion fulfil the desire of their sons: but often delay in spite of their asking, and that not because they have a grudging hand, nor again because they regard (merely) what is pleasant to the petitioners, but as considering what is useful and necessary for their good conduct. And how will that rich and bounteous Giver neglect the duo accomplishment for men of what they pray for, unless of course, and without all doubt, He knows that it would not be for their benefit to receive what they ask? We must therefore offer our prayers to God with knowledge, as well as with assiduity: and even though there be some delay in your requests, continue patiently with the vineyard workers, as being well assured that what is gained without toil, and readily won, is usually despised: whereas that which is gathered with labour is a more pleasant and abiding possession.

But perchance to this you say; 'I draw near frequently, making requests; but the vintage therefrom has wandered far away. I am not slothful in supplications, but persevering and very importunate: who will assure me that I shall receive? who is my security that I shall not labour in vain?' "Therefore I also say to you;" and it is the Bestower of divine gifts Who Himself enters, and speaks;----"I also say to you, Seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asks receives; and he who seeks finds: and whosoever knocks, it shall be opened to him." In those words, "I say to you" has the full force of an oath: not that God is false, even though the promise be not accompanied with an oath; but to show that the littleness of their faith was groundless, He sometimes confirms His hearers by an oath. For the Saviour is also found in many places prefacing His words by saying, "Verily, truly, I say to you." As therefore He makes this very promise on oath, it is not a thing free from guilt to disbelieve it.

In telling us therefore to seek, He bids us labour: for by labour, that which is needed is always, so to say, found; especially when it is something fit for us to

possess. He who knocks, not once merely, but again and again, rattles the door with his hand, it may be, or with a stone, so that the master of the house, unable to endure the annoyance of the knocks, will open it even against his will. Learn therefore, even from what happens among us, the way to gain that which is to your profit. Knock, be urgent, ask. So must all act who ask any thing of God: for wise Paul writes, ”Pray without ceasing.” We are in need of urgent prayer, because many are the turmoils of worldly matters which encircle us around: for that many headed serpent greatly distresses us, involving us sometimes in unexpected difficulties, that he may humble us to baseness and manifold sin: and, besides this, there is also the inbred law of voluptuousness lurking in our fleshly members, and warring, as Scripture says, ”against the law of our mind:” and lastly, the enemies of the doctrines of truth, even the impure and polluted gangs of heretics, oppose those who wish to hold correct opinions. Constant and earnest prayer therefore is necessary. For arms and the implements of warfare are needed for soldiers, that they may be able to overcome those who are drawn up against them: and for us prayer, ”for our weapons,” as Scripture says ”are not carnal, but mighty to God.”

And this too we ought to add, as being in my opinion amply sufficient to quicken us to prayer. The Saviour and Lord of all is seen again and again passing the night in prayer. And when too He was about to undergo His saving passion upon the precious cross, He knelt down and prayed, saying; ”Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.” Was this because Life was afraid of death? Was it because there was no escape for Him from the net, no deliverance from the snare, in that the hand of the Jews was mightier than His power? And how is it not altogether abominable to think or speak thus? He was by nature God, and the Lord of powers, even though He was in form like to us. Of His own will He took upon Him the suffering upon the cross, because He was the helper of us all. What need was there then of prayer? It was that we might learn that supplication is becoming and full of benefits, and that we must be constant in it whenever temptation befal, and the cruelty of enemies press upon us like a wave.

And to put it in one more light; for man to converse with God is a very great honour to human nature. And this we do in prayer, being commanded to address the Lord as Father; for we say, Our Father. But if He be a Father, necessarily He both loves and generously cherishes His sons, and honours them of course, and counts them worthy of indulgence. Draw near therefore in faith with perseverance, as being well assured that to those who ask urgently Christ bows His ear: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXIX.

11:11-13. And which of you that shall ask his father bread, will he offer him a stone? or if he ask of him a fish, will he for a fish offer him a serpent? If he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you therefore, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall the heavenly Father give a good spirit to them that ask Him? TO love instruction and be fond of hearing becomes saints: but those who are thus minded must, I say, keep in remembrance, and store up in the treasure-house of their heart, whatsoever has been spoken by those who are skilful in teaching right doctrine, and whose study it is ably to initiate men in the truth. For this is both profitable to themselves for their spiritual improvement; and besides, it rejoices the teacher, just, for instance, as the seed also gladdens the husbandman when it springs up, as having been well covered in the furrow, and escaped being the food of birds. You therefore remember that at our last meeting we addressed you on the duty of praying without ceasing, and making supplication continually in offering our requests to God: and that we must not give way to any littleness of soul, nor at all grow weary, even though He somewhat delay His gift, considering that He knows whatsoever is to our benefit, and that the fitting season for His bounties is not forgotten by Him.

And in to-day's lesson from the gospel, the Saviour again teaches another point most useful for our edification. And what this is, come, that we may declare it as to sons. We sometimes draw near to our bounteous God, offering Him petitions for various objects, according to each one's pleasure: but occasionally without discernment, or any careful examination what truly is to our advantage, and if granted by God would prove a blessing; and what would be to our injury if we received it. Rather, by the inconsiderate impulse of our fancy, we fall into desires replete with ruin, and which thrust the souls of those that entertain them into the snare of death and the meshes of hell. When therefore we ask of God ought of this kind, we shall by no means receive it: on the contrary, we offer a petition fit only for ridicule. And why shall we not receive it? Is the God of all weary of bestowing gifts upon us? By no means. Why then, some one forsooth may say, will He not give, since He is bounteous in giving? Let us learn of Him; or rather, you have already heard Him here saying, What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will

he give him a stone? Understand, he says, by an image or plain example taken from what happens among you, the meaning of what I say; You are the father of children; you have in you the sharp spur of natural affection towards them;

in every way you wish to benefit them: when therefore, He says, one asks of you bread, without delay and with pleasure you give it, as knowing well that he seeks of you wholesome food. But when, from want of understanding, a little child that knows not yet how to distinguish what it sees, nor moreover what is the service and use of the various objects that fall in our way, asks for stones to eat, do you, He says, give them, or rather do you not make him desist from any such desire as would be to his injury?

And the same reasoning holds good of the serpent and fish, and the egg and scorpion. If he ask a fish, you will grant it: but if he see a serpent, and wish to seize it, you will hold back the child's hand. If he want an egg, you will offer it at once, and encourage his desire after things of this sort, that the infant may advance to riper age: but if he see a scorpion creeping about, and run after it, imagining it to be something pretty, and as being ignorant of the harm it can do, you will, I suppose, of course stop him, and not let him be injured by the noxious animal. When therefore He says, "You who are evil;" by which He means, you whose mind is capable of being influenced by evil, and not uniformly inclined to good like the God of all; "you know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give a good spirit to them that ask Him? And by "a good spirit'He means spiritual grace: for this in every way is good, and if a man receive it, he will become most blessed, and worthy of admiration.

Most ready therefore is our heavenly Father to bestow gifts upon us: so that whosoever is denied what he asks, is himself the cause of it: for he asks, as I said, what God will not give. For God wishes us to be holy and blameless, and to advance uprightly and boldly in every good work; walking apart from every thing that defiles, and from the love of fleshly pleasure, and rejecting the anxieties of worldly pursuits; not involving ourselves in worldly business; not living profligately and carelessly; not delighting in unruly pleasures; nor moreover practising a dissolute mode of life; but desiring to live well and wisely, and in accordance with God's commands, making tho law which He gave us the regulator of our conduct, and earnest in tho pursuit of whatever tends chiefly to our edification. If therefore you wish to receive ought of this kind, draw near with joy: for our Father Who is in heaven, because He loves virtue, will readily incline His car.

Examine therefore your prayer: for if you ask ought by receiving which you will become a lover of God, God, as I said, will grant it: but if it be any thing unreasonable, or that is able to do you an injury, He will withhold His hand: He will not bestow the wished-for object; in order that neither He may give nothing of an injurious nature,----for this is completely alien from Him,----nor let you harm yourself by receiving it.

And let me explain how: for which purpose I shall bring forward examples. When you ask for wealth, you will not receive it of God: and why? Because it separates the heart of man from Him. Wealth begets pride, voluptuousness, and the love of pleasure, and brings men down to the pitfalls of worldly lusts. And so one of the disciples of our Lord has taught us, saying; ”Whence are there wars, and whence quarrels among you? Is it not hence; from your lusts, that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you seek, and find not: you ask, and receive not, because you ask wickedly, that you may spend it on your pleasures. When you ask worldly power, God will turn away His face: for He knows that it is a most injurious thing to those who possess it. For constantly, so to speak, charges of oppression attach themselves to those who possess worldly power: and those are for the most part proud, and unbridled, and boastful, who are set in temporal dignities.

When you ask for any to perish, or be exposed to inevitable tortures, because they have annoyed or molested you in any way, God will not grant it. For He wills us to be long-suffering in mind: and not to requite any one with evil for evil, but to pray for those who spoil us: to do good to those who injure us, and be imitators of His kindness. For this reason Solomon was praised; for when offering up prayers to God, he said: ”And you shall give Your servant a heart to hear, and to judge Your people righteously. And it pleased the Lord that Solomon asked this thing. And what did God, Who loves virtue, say to him? ”Because you have not asked for you many days: nor have asked the lives of your enemies; but have asked for you understanding, and to hear judgment: see! I have done what you said: see! I have given you a heart prudent and wise.”

You, therefore, should ask the bestowal without stint of spiritual gifts. Ask strength, that you may be able manfully to resist every fleshly lust. Ask of God an uncovetous disposition; long suffering; gentleness; and the mother and nurse of all good, I mean, patience. Ask calmness of temper; continence; a pure heart; and further, ask also the wisdom that comes from Him. These things He will give readily: these save the soul: these work in it that better beauty, and imprint in it God’s image. This is the spiritual wealth; the riches that has never to be abandoned: these prepare for us the lot of the saints, and make us members of the company of the holy angels; these perfect us in piety, and rapidly load us onward to the hope of eternal life, and make us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by the aid of Christ, the Saviour of us all; by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXX.

11:14-18. And He was casting out a dumb devil: and it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spoke. And the multitudes wondered: but some of them said, He casts out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils: and others tempting, sought of Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them; Every kingdom divided against itself is laid desolate: and a house against a house falls. And if Satan also be divided against himself how shall his kingdom stand? Because you say that 1 cast out devils through Beelzebub. "I HAVE been very jealous for the Lord," as Scripture says; and I too would say, fixing an accurate attention upon the lessons from the Gospel set before us, that the frantic tongue of Israel was bold and unbridled in insult, tyrannized over by harsh and unrestrainable wrath, and vanquished by unappeasable envy. For consider how, so to speak, they were even gnashing their teeth at Christ, the Saviour of all, because He made the multitudes wonder by His many divine and astonishing miracles; and because the very devils cried out at His ineffable and godlike power and authority. And this, I suppose, was what was celebrated by David when thus addressing Him: "Through the greatness of your power shall Your enemies be found liars to You."

But the reason for which those who warred against His glory thus acted, this lesson plainly teaches us. "There was brought to Him one who was possessed with a dumb devil." Now dumb devils are, so to speak, difficult for any one whatsoever of the saints to rebuke; and are more obstinate than any other kind, and excessively audacious. But there was nothing difficult to the all-powerful will of Christ, the Saviour of us all. For He immediately set the man who was brought to Him tree from the wicked and impure devil; and he whose tongue had before been closed by door and lock, once again poured forth his customary speech. For we say that he is called dumb in this passage as being without tongue, that is, without speech. And upon the accomplishment of this wonderful act, the multitude extolled Him with praises, and hastened to crown the worker of the miracle with godlike honour. But certain of them, it says, being Scribes and Pharisees, with hearts intoxicated with pride and envy, found in the miracle fuel for their malady; and not only did they not praise Him, but betook themselves to the very opposite. For having stripped Him of the godlike deeds He had wrought, they assigned to the Devil almighty power,

and made Beelzebub the source of Christ's might. "For by him, they said, He casts out devils," And others being afflicted, so to speak, with a kindred wickedness, and running without discernment into a disgraceful forwardness of speech, and being stung by the like goadings of envy, required, it says, to see of Him a sign from heaven; calling out, as it were, and saying, 'Even if You have expelled from a man a bitter and malicious demon, that as yet

is no such great matter, nor worthy of admiration. What as yet is done is no proof of divine ability. We see nothing as yet equal to the miracles of old. Show us some deed of which there is no doubt of its being wrought by power from above. Moses made the people pass over, having caused the sea that was between to become capable of being walked upon: the waters were piled up like a wall. He smote the rock with his rod, and made it the mother of rivers, so that fountains burst forth from the flinty stone. Likewise also Jeshua, his successor, made the sun stand still in Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Arnon. He laid bonds on the streams of Jordan. But You show no such deed as these. You cast out a devil: this authority the prince of the devils, even Beelzebub, grants to men. Of him You borrow the power of doing those things, which in unlearned and ignorant people beget wonder.' Such were their froward fault-findings. For the fact of their wishing to ask a sign from heaven proves nothing else than that they entertained such thoughts as these respecting Him.

And what said Christ to these things? First, indeed, He proves Himself to be God, by knowing even that which was secretly whispered among them: for He knew their thoughts. And it is an act that altogether belongs to God, to be able to know what is in the mind and heart, and even what is spoken anywhere by men secretly. To draw them away then from so obdurate a crime, He says, that "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid desolate: and a house against a house falls. And if Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? For He well might have said to those who babbled thus foolishly about Him, You depart from the right way: truly you err, and without doubt are ignorant of My nature. The greatness of My might, and the splendour of My glory, is unperceived by you. Moses was a servant: I am Lord. He was the minister of the law: but I the legislator; for I am by nature God. He was the minister of the signs; but I the doer of them, and the worker of the miracles. I divided the sea: it was the work of My power, that the waters were divided, and the people passed over: I displayed the flint stone as the mother of rivers. I made the sun stand still in Gibeon, and the might of My commands stayed the moon in the valley of Arnon. It was I Who laid bonds on the streams of Jordan.

Had He, however, used words such as these, it is perhaps not improbable to imagine that they would have conceived in them a yet more violent flame of envy: for they would at once have said, 'He exalts Himself above the glory of the saints: He

boasts Himself over the illustrious patriarchs, who, He says, were nothing: He appropriates to Himself their glory.' And they would have added to these other words, which in unlearned persons would have given occasion for wickedness towards Him.

Very wisely therefore, omitting these things, He proceeds to arguments, drawn indeed from common things, but which have the force of truth in them; "For every kingdom," He says, "divided against itself, becomes desolate; and every house against a house, falls: and if Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?" For that which establishes kingdoms is the fidelity of subjects, and the obedience of those under the royal sceptre: and houses are established when those who belong to them in no way whatsoever thwart one another, but, on the contrary, accord both in will and deed. And so I suppose it would establish the kingdom too of Beelzebub, had he determined to abstain from every thing contrary to himself. How then does Satan cast out Satan? It follows then that devils do not depart from men of their own accord, but retire unwillingly. Satan, He says, does not fight with himself. He does not rebuke his own satellites. He does not permit himself to injure his own armour-bearers. On the contrary, he aids his kingdom. It remains, therefore for you to understand, that I crush Satan by divine power.

So must we be persuaded who believe in Him, and have departed far away from the wickedness of the Jews. For what is at all impossible to that Almighty right hand? Or what is great and difficult to Him, Who can accomplish every thing by His will alone? He Who established the heavens, and founded the earth, Who is the Creator of all, Who is perfect power, how can He be in need of Beelzebub? Oh, thoughts never to be spoken! Oh, wickedness never to be endured! A people foolish and without understanding! Very justly may one say of the Israelites, "They have eyes, and see not: they have ears, and hear not." For though they were spectators of the wonderful deeds wrought by Christ, and by the holy prophets, and heard of them, and knew them long before, nevertheless they continued obdurate and intractable. Therefore "they eat the fruit of their way," as Scripture says. But let us be earnest in extolling Christ with endless praises; for thus shall we be heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by the gift of the same Christ: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Here ends the first portion of the Explanation of the Evangelist Luke, by the holy Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria; containing eighty Sermons. Blessed be God for ever; and praised be His Name for generations. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever, Amen and Amen.

SERMON LXXXI.

11:19-26. But if I by Beelzebub cast out the devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out the devils, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When the strong man armed guards his house, his goods are in peace: but when He Who is stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, He takes from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divides his spoils. He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathers not with Me, scatters for Me. When the unclean spirit has gone forth from the man, it wanders about in places where there is no water, seeking rest: and not having found it, then it says, I will return to my house, whence I came out. And when it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and garnished. Then it goes, and brings seven other spirits worse than itself, and they enter in and dwell there. And the last state of that man is made worse than the first.

THE God of all, blaming the haughtiness of the Jews, and their constant tendency to run into disobedience, thus spoke by the voice of Isaiah; ”Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken. I have begotten, and brought up sons; and they have rejected Me.” For they rejected God the Father, by setting in manifold ways the Son at nothing, Who, though sprung from Him by nature, yet afterwards was made like unto us for our sakes: and yet He called them unto the grace that is by faith, and would have fulfilled the promise given unto their fathers. For of this the sacred Paul bears witness, where he writes, ”For I say that Christ was a minister of the circumcision, to fulfil the promises of the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for mercy.” The Only-begotten Word of God therefore was made man, that He might fulfil the promise of the blessing granted unto them. And that they might know that it was He Whom the law had prefigured by shadows, and Whom the company also of the holy prophets had foretold, He wrought these godlike deeds, and rebuked the unclean spirits. But they, though it was their duty to have praised Him, as doing wonders, as One Who possessed a power and authority beyond that of nature, and incomparable in degree, on the contrary disparaged His glory, saying, ”This man only casts out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.” And what doth Christ reply to this? ”If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?”

Now this subject was explained by me to you at length at our last meeting. But inasmuch as it is right that the wickedness of the Jews, in thus idly prating against Him, should still further be rebuked by many and convincing arguments, He adds on this account to what had been already said, an unanswerable consideration. And what this is, I will now mention to you as to my children.

The blessed disciples were Jews, and the children of Jews, according to the flesh; but they had obtained authority from Christ over unclean spirits, and set free those that were possessed by them, by calling over them these words, ”In the Name of Jesus Christ. For Paul also once with apostolic authority commanded an unclean spirit, saying, ”I command you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. When therefore He says, your own children in My Name trample upon Beelzebub, by rebuking his satellites, and expelling them forthwith from those in whom they are, what else is it but manifest blasphemy, joined with great ignorance, to say that I borrow this power from Beelzebub? You are convicted therefore, He says, by the faith of your own children, if, as is the case, they having received of Me authority and power, overthrow Satan, and against his will drive him from those in whom he dwells; while you affirm, that I make use of his agency in working divine miracles. But inasmuch as what you say is not true, but, on the contrary, empty and false, and liable to the charge of calumny, it is plain that I cast out devils by the finger of God. And by the finger of God He means the Holy Ghost. For the Son is called the hand and arm of God the Father; for He does all things by the Son, and the Son in like manner works by the Spirit.

For just as the finger is appended to the hand, as something not foreign from it, but belonging to it by nature, so also the Holy Spirit, by reason of His being equal in substance, is joined in oneness to the Son, even though He proceed from God the Father. For, as I said, the Son does every thing by the consubstantial Spirit. Here, however, purposely He says, that by the finger of God He casts out devils, speaking as a man: because the Jews in the infirmity and folly of their mind, would not have endured it, if He had said, ”by My own Spirit I cast out devils. Appeasing therefore their excessive readiness to anger, and the proneness of their mind unto insolence and phrensy, He spake as a man, although He is by nature God, and Himself the Giver of the Spirit from God the Father to those who are worthy, and employs as His own that power which is from Him. For He is consubstantial with Him, and whatsoever is said to be done by God the Father, this necessarily is by the Son in the Spirit. If therefore, He says, I, being a man, and having become like unto you, cast out devils in the Spirit of God, human nature has in Me first attained to a godlike kingdom. For it has become glorious by breaking the power of Satan, and rebuking the impure and abominable spirits: for such is the meaning of the words, that ”the kingdom of God has come upon you.

But the Jews did not understand the mystery of the dispensation of the Only-begotten in the flesh: and yet how ought they not rather to have reflected, that by the Only-begotten Word of God having become man, without ceasing to be that which He was, He glorified the nature of man, in that He did not disdain to take upon Him its meanness, in order that He might bestow upon it His own riches.

And inasmuch as it was necessary, as I showed, that the argument upon this subject should travel through many considerations, He makes use of a most plain and evident comparison, by means of which those who will may see, that He has conquered the ruler of this world, and having, so to speak, hamstrung him, and stripped him of the power which he possessed, has given him over for a prey unto His followers. ”For when, He says, the strong man being armed guards his house, all his goods are in peace: but when One That is stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, He takes away all his armour wherein he trusted, and divides his spoil,” This is, as I said, a plain demonstration, and type of the matter depicted after the manner of human affairs. For as long as a strong man retains the superiority, and guards his own property, he is in no danger of being plundered. But when one who is stronger than he, and more powerful, comes upon him, and prevails against him, then forthwith he is spoiled. And such has been the fate of our common enemy, the wicked Satan, that many headed serpent, the inventor of sin. For before the coining of the Saviour, he was in great power, driving and shutting up, so to speak, in his own stall flocks not his own, but belonging to God over all, like some rapacious and most insolent robber. But inasmuch as the Word of God Who is above all, the Giver of all might, and Lord of powers assailed Him, having become man, all his goods have been plundered, and his spoil divided. For those who of old had been ensnared by him into ungodliness and error have been called by the holy apostles to the acknowledgment of the truth, and been brought near unto God the Father by faith in His Son.

Would you like to hear and learn another convincing argument besides these? ”He that is not with Me,” He says, ”is against Me: and he that gathers not with Me, scatters for Me.” For I, He says, have come to save every man from the hands of the devil; to deliver from his guile those whom he had ensnared; to set the prisoners free; to give light to those in darkness; to raise up them that had fallen; to heal the broken-spirited: and to gather together the children of God who were scattered abroad. Such was the object of My coming. But Satan is not with Me; on the contrary he is against Me. For he ventures to scatter those whom I have gathered and saved. How then can he, who wars against Me, and sets his wickedness in array against My purposes, give Me power against himself? How is it not foolish even barely to imagine the possibility of such a thing as this?

The cause however which made the Jewish multitudes fall into such thoughts concerning Christ He Himself makes plain, by saying; ”When the wicked spirit has

gone forth from the man, it returns with seven other spirits more bitter than itself; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. For as long as they were in bondage in Egypt, and lived according to the customs and laws of the Egyptians, which were full of all impurity, they led polluted lives; an evil spirit dwelt in them: for it dwells in the hearts of the wicked. But when in the mercy of God they had been delivered by Moses, and received the law as a schoolmaster, calling them to the light of the true knowledge of God, the impure and polluted spirit was driven out. But because they did not believe in Christ, but rejected the Saviour, the impure spirit again attacked them: for he found their heart empty, and devoid of all fear of God, and, swept as it were, and took up his abode in them. For just as the Holy Spirit, when He sees any one's heart free from all impurity, and clean, dwells and abides there, and rests therein; so also the impure spirit is wont to dwell in the souls of the wicked. For they are devoid, as I said, of all virtue: and thero is in them no fear of God. The last state therefore of the Israelites has become worse than the first. For as the disciple of the Saviour said;

"It had been better for them not to have known the way of truth, than that when they have known it, they should turn back again from the holy commandment that was delivered unto them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb; The dog that returned to its vomit; and the washed sow to wallow in the mire. Let us flee therefore from being like the Jews; let Christ Who works miracles, be extolled by us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXII.

11:29-36. And when the multitudes were gathered together, He began to say; This generation is an evil generation. It seeks a sign: and a sign shall not be given it, except the sign of Jonah. THE request originated in malice, and therefore was not granted them, according to the text, ”The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me.” * * * * * * * * and which He spoke to the divine Moses; the rod was changed into a serpent. And what thing is this? some one, forsooth, may say; or what is the truth it hints at? And this certainly we must examine: for I say that of all that is contained in the sacred Scriptures, there is nothing which is not useful for edification. When Israel then had dwelt for a lengthened period in Egypt, and been brought up in the customs of its inhabitants, he wandered far from God, and became like one that had fallen from His hand, and been made a serpent, by which is meant one naturally of a thoroughly wicked disposition. But inasmuch as God again took hold of him, he was restored to his former state, and became a rod, that is to say, a plant of Paradise. For he was called to the true knowledge of God, and enriched with the law as the means of a virtuous life.

Moreover God wrought also something further of an equally miraculous character. For He said unto Moses, ”Put your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and he drew forth his hand from his bosom, and his hand had become leprous, like snow. And he said again, Put your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and he drew it forth from his bosom, and it had gained again the colour of his flesh.” For as long as Israel adhered to the customs of his fathers, and represented in his own manners the type of virtuous living which he had in Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, he was, as it were, in the bosom of God, that is, under His guardianship and protection: but by abandoning the virtue of his ancestors, he became, so to speak, leprous; and fell into impurity: for the leper by the law of Moses was impure. But when He was again accepted by God, and placed under His protection, he was delivered from his leprosy; and put away the impurity of the Egyptian mode of life. And when these signs were wrought in their presence, they believed Moses, saying, ”The Lord God of your fathers has sent me unto you.”

Observe therefore that they did not make the display of miracles a reason for fault finding. They did not revile the divine Moses; they did not give free license to an unbridled tongue, and say that he wrought the miracles which he displayed before them by means of Beelzebub: they did not ask a sign from heaven, in contempt of his mighty deeds. But you assigned to Beelzebub works thus honourable and miraculous, and was not ashamed in bringing to perdition others as well as your own self, by means of those very things which ought to have made you possess a steadfast faith in Christ. But He will not grant you another sign, that He may not give holy things unto dogs, nor cast pearls before swine. For how can they who are hot calumniators of the miracles already wrought, deserve yet more? On the contrary we see that very skilful husbandmen, when they observe land sluggish in bearing fruit, withhold their hand, and refuse to plough it any more, that they may not suffer the loss at once both of their labour and of the seed.

He said, however, the sign only of Jonah shall be given them, by which is meant the passion upon the cross, and the resurrection from the dead. ”For as Jonah,” He says, ”was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, so shall also the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.” But had it been possible for Jesus not to have willed to suffer death in the flesh upon the cross, neither would this sign have been given to the Jews: but inasmuch as the passion, wrought for the salvation of the world, was indispensable, it was given these unbelievers for their condemnation. For also in speaking to the Jews, He said, ”Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” But that the abolishing of death, and restoration of corruption by the resurrection from the dead, is a very great sign of the power and godlike authority of the Incarnate Word, will be sufficiently proved, as I imagine, in the judgment of serious men, by the soldiers of Pilate, who were appointed to guard the tomb, having been bribed with a large sum of money to say, that ”the disciples came by night, and stole Him.” It was therefore no unavailing sign, but rather one sufficient to convince all the inhabitants of the whole earth, that Christ is God, that of His own choice He suffered death in the flesh, but rose again, having commanded the bonds of death to depart, and overthrown corruption. But the Jews did not believe even this: for which reason it was very justly said of them, that ”the queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment against this generation.”

[From Mai] This woman, though a barbarian, earnestly sought to hear Solomon, and for this purpose travelled so vast a distance, to listen to his wisdom upon the nature of things visible, and animals, and plants. But you, though already present, and listening to Wisdom Itself, Who came to you, discoursing upon things invisible and heavenly, and confirming what He said by deeds and miracles, turn away from the word, and pass by with indifference the wonderful nature of His oracles. How then is there not more than Solomon here, that is in Me? And again observe, I pray, the skilfulness of His language; for why does He say ”here,” and not rather

”in Me?” It is to persuade us to be humble, even though we be largely endowed with spiritual gifts. And besides, it is not at all unlikely, that had the Jews heard Him say, ”that there is more than Solomon in Me,” they would have ventured to speak of Him in their usual way: ’See! He says, that He is superior even to the kings who have gloriously reigned over us.’ The Saviour, therefore, for the economy’s sake, uses moderate language, saying, ”here,” instead of ”in Me.”

He says, moreover, that the Ninevites will appear for the condemnation of the Jews at the season of judgment: for they were rude and barbarous people, ignorant of Him Who by nature and in truth is God, who had never even heard of the predictions of Moses, and were without knowledge of the glorious tidings of prophecy: but even though this was their mental state, they repented, He says, at the preaching of Jonah. Far better therefore were they than the Israelites, and will condemn them. But listen to the very words: ”The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold! a greater than Jonah is here. ”No man, having lighted a lamp, puts it into a cellar, nor under the bushel, but upon the lampstand, that they who enter in may see the light. And what was the object of such words as these? He combats the Jews by an objection drawn from their own folly and ignorance: for they said that He wrought miracles, not that He might be more fully believed in, but that He might have numbers of followers, and catch the applause of those who saw his wondrous acts. And this calumny He refutes by taking as an example the use of a lamp. For a lamp, He says, is always elevated, and put upon a stand, to be of use to those who see. And let us consider the inference which follows from this.

Before then the coining of our Saviour, the father of darkness, even Satan, had made the world dark, and blackened all things with an intellectual gloom; but in this state the Father gave us the Son, to be as it were a lamp to the world, to irradiate us with divine light, and rescue us from Satanic darkness. But, O Jew, if you blame the lamp, because it is not hidden, but on the contrary, being set on high on a stand, gives its light to those who see, then blame Christ for not wishing to be concealed, but on the contrary to be seen of all, illuminating those in darkness, and shedding on them the light of the true knowledge of God. He did not therefore fulfil His miracles so much in order to be wondered at, nor seek by them to become famous, as that we might rather believe, that whereas He is God by nature, yet He became man for our sakes, but without ceasing to be what He was. And upon the holy church as a lamp-stand, shining by the doctrine He proclaims, He gives light to the minds of all by filling them with divine knowledge.

SERMON LXXXIII.

11:37-41. And as He was speaking, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him: and He went in and lay down to meat. But the Pharisee, when he saw it, wondered that He had not first washed before dinner. But the Lord said unto him, Now do you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the dish„ but that which is within you is full of rapine and wickedness. O you little-minded, did not He Who made that which is without, make that which is within also? But whatever there is give as alms, and behold! every thing is clean unto you.

THE very wise Paul truly tells us, that ”Christ came into the world to save sinners. For this was His aim, and for this purpose He humbled Himself to the emptying of His glory, and appeared upon earth in the flesh, and conversed with men. For it was right, that as being the Creator and Lord of all, He should give a saving hand to those who had fallen into sin, and show unto them that were wandering in error, a pathway that would lead them straight unto every good work, and the excellence of virtuous deeds. And it is said somewhere also by one of the holy prophets, concerning those who have been called by faith to the knowledge of His glory ”And they shall be all taught of God. How, therefore, does He lead us into every thing that is useful? By humbling Himself to be with sinners, and condescending sometimes even to those things that He would not, that so He might save many. That this was the case we may see by the lessons from the gospel now set before us; for one of the Pharisees, it says, besought Him to dine at His house: ”and He went in, and lay down to meat. And yet how is it not plain to every one, that the gang of the Pharisees were always wicked and impure, hateful to God, and envious, ready for anger, of innate pride, and ever bold of speech against Christ the Saviour of us all?

For they found fault with His divine miracles, and gathering wicked troops of counsellors, plotted His death. How then did He become their guest? Was He not aware of their maliciousness? But how can this be safely affirmed? For as God He knowcth all things. What therefore is the explanation? It is this, that He was especially anxious to admonish them, therein resembling the most excellent physicians. For they apply the remedies of their are to those who are most dangerously

ill, struggling against the disease under which they suffer, and assuaging its cruel attacks. As they therefore without restraint gave way to an infatuated mind, it was necessary for Christ to speak unto them what was requisite and useful for their salvation. For as He Himself somewhere says, ”He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And again He also said, that ”they who are whole need not a physician, but they who are sick.”

The Pharisee therefore for some purpose of his own invites Him to an entertainment: and the Saviour of all submits, as I said, to this, for the economy’s sake. But He made the matter an opportunity of giving instruction, not consuming the time of their meeting in the enjoyment of food and delicacies, but in the task of making those more virtuous who were assembled there. And the dull Pharisee himself supplied an occasion for His discourse, for ”he wondered,” it says, ”that He had not washed before dinner.” Did he then wonder at Him, as having done something of which he approved, as being especially worthy of the saints? This was not his view: how could it be? On the contrary he was offended, because having the reputation among them of a righteous man and a prophet, He did not conform Himself to their unreasonable customs. For they washed before meat, as though they so freed themselves from all pollution. But this was very absurd. For the washing with water is highly useful for those who are unclean in body; but how can it free men from the defilement of the mind and heart?

Our argument however is this: O foolish Pharisee, you boast much of your knowledge of the sacred Scriptures: you are ever quoting the law of Moses. Tell us therefore where Moses gave you this precept? What commandment can you mention, ordained by God, requiring men to wash before meat? The waters of sprinkling were indeed given by the command of Moses for the cleansing of corporeal uncleanness, as being a type of the baptism which really is holy and cleansing, even that in Christ. Those also who were called to the priesthood were bathed in water: for so did the divine Moses bathe Aaron, and the Levites with him, the law thereby declaring by means of the baptism enacted in type and shadow, that even its priesthood had not that which suffices for sanctification, but, on the contrary, needs divine and holy baptism for the true cleansing: and further, beautifully showing us that the Saviour of all is sufficient to sanctify and cleanse from all defilement, by means of holy and precious baptism, ourselves, who are the generation consecrated to and elect of God. Plainly however, he nowhere commands it as a duty to wash before eating. Why therefore do you wonder, or for what reason are you offended, O Pharisee? He Who Himself spoke it in old time has not violated the precept of Moses: and, as I said, the law, which you makea profession of honouring, has nowhere given you any such commandment.

But what said the Saviour? He most opportunely rebuked them, saying, ”Now you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup, and the dish; but that which is within

you is full of rapine and wickedness." For it would have been easy for the Lord to have used other words with the view of instructing the foolish Pharisee, but He found an opportunity, and, so to speak, connects His teaching with what was before their eyes. For as it was the time of eating, and of sitting at table, He takes as a plain comparison the cup and the dish, and shows that those who sincerely serve God must be pure and clean, not only from bodily impurity, but also from that hidden within in the mind; just, for instance, as those utensils also that serve the table must be cleansed both from those impurities that are on the outside, and also as well from those that are within. "For He who made," He says, "that which is without, made also that which is within:" by which is meant, that He Who created the body made also the soul. As therefore they are both the works of one virtue-loving God, their purification must be uniform.

But this was not the practice of the Scribes and Pharisees; for so far as the mere reputation went of being clean, they were anxious to do every thing. They went about with sad looks, as though pale from fasting; and as the Saviour says, "made broad the hems of their robes, and widened their phylacteries, and stood in the streets and prayed, that they might be seen of many," wishing rather to have praise of men than God, and to carry off the applause of the spectators. And, to speak briefly, while they exhibited themselves to the lookers on as the very pattern of the life of virtue that is by the law, they in every possible way withdrew from being lovers of God. "Whitened sepulchres were they," as the Saviour said, "which on the outside are beautiful, but inside are full of bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness." But Christ wills not that we be such as these, but rather spiritual worshippers, holy and without blame both in soul and body. For one also of our communion said, "Cleanse your hands you sinners, and sanctify your hearts, you double-minded." And the prophet David somewhere sings, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And again the prophet Isaiah speaks as in the person of God, "Wash you, make you clean; put away iniquities from your souls from before My eyes. Cease from your iniquities." Observe the exactness of the expression: for His words are, "From before My eyes put away iniquities from your souls." For the wicked do sometimes escape the eyes of men, but never can they escape those of God. It is our duty therefore, inasmuch as God sees what is secret, to put away wickedness from before His eyes.

But the Pharisees had no knowledge of any such method of virtuous living: what medicine therefore did the Saviour offer them after His rebukes? How did He Who struck them make them whole? "Whatever you have," He says, " give as alms: and lo! every thing is pure unto you." And yet we affirm that there are many ways of virtuous conduct, such for instance as meekness, humility, and other kindred virtues: why therefore did He omit these, and command them to be compassionate? What answer do we make to this? The Pharisees then were exceedingly avaricious, and the slaves of base gains, and accumulated with greedy hand stores of wealth. For

the God of all even somewhere said concerning them, ”How has the faithful city Zion, that was full of judgment, become a harlot! Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers! Your silver is adulterate; your merchants mingle the wine with water; your princes are disobedient, the partners of thieves, loving bribes, running after recompense; they judge not the fatherless, and regard not the suit of the widow.” He purposely therefore had regard to that malady which had possession of them, and tears their avarice up by the root, that being delivered from its wickedness, and attaining to purity in mind and heart, they might become true worshippers.

The Saviour therefore in all these things acted in accordance with the plan of salvation; and being invited to a banquet, bestowed spiritual food, not only upon His entertainer, but upon all those who were feasting with Him. And let us too pray Him for this spiritual food; for ”He is that living Bread, which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world:” by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXIV.

11:42-44. But woe unto you, Pharisees! who tithe mint and rue and all herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God. But these things ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you, Pharisees! for you love the uppermost seat in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you! for you are as those graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not. THOSE who are exact observers of the sacred commandments do not venture in any way whatsoever to offend the God of all. For they feel the truth of what is written, "That whosoever shall keep the whole law, but shall offend in one particular, becomes guilty of all. For He Who said, You shall not commit adultery, said also, You shall not kill. If then you do not commit adultery, but yet kill, you are become a transgressor of the law." The transgression therefore of one commandment transgresses the law, that is, proves the man to be without the law. But when any one disregards those commandments, which especially are important above the rest, what words will he find able to save him from deserved punishment? That the Pharisees then merited these severe censures, the Lord proved against them, saying, "Woe unto you, Pharisees! who tithe mint and rue and all herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God. These things ought you to have done, and not to pass by the other, that is, to leave them undone." For while they omitted, as of no importance, those duties which they were especially bound to practice, as, for instance, judgment and the love of God, they carefully and scrupulously observed, or rather commanded the people subject to their authority to observe, those commandments only which were a way and means of great revenues for themselves.

Put more fully to explain these things to you, my beloved, I must speak as follows. The law of Moses commanded tithes to be offered to the priests by the Israelites. For it spoke thus; "The sons of Levi shall have no inheritance among the children of Israel. The offerings of the Lord are their inheritance." For whatsoever was offered by any one for the glory of God, on the score I mean of tithe, this God set apart for those whose office it was to minister; and this was their inheritance. But inasmuch as the Pharisees above all others were covetous, and fond of disgraceful gains, they commanded that this law of tithing should be observed carefully

and scrupulously, so as not even to omit the most paltry and insignificant herbs; while they carelessly disregarded what they ought to have observed, namely, the more essential commandments given by Moses; such, for instance, as judgment, by which is meant justice in passing judgment, and the love of God. For it would have been a just judgment, and an upright sentence, to have considered every thing that was commanded deserving of equal care and attention, and not to neglect things of primary importance, while they paid a scrupulous regard to those only which were to their profit. And the effect of love to God would have been to avoid making Him angry in any respect, and to dread the violation of any part whatsoever of the law.

Or to put it in another light, one may say, that judgment would have been to decree just sentences, and to make upon no matter whatsoever an unfair decision. And this too was disregarded by the Pharisees; for the Spirit rebuked them by the voice of David, thus saying, ”God arose in the congregation of the Gods, and in the midst of the Gods He judges. How long will you judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?” He accused them also by the voice of Isaiah, saying, ”How has the faithful city Zion, that was full of judgment, become a harlot? Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers. Your silver is adulterate: your merchants mingle the wine with water: your princes are disobedient, the partners of thieves, loving bribes, running after recompense: they judge not the fatherless, and regard not the suit of the widow.” For to judge unjustly is not the part of those who practice love to the brethren, but the crime rather of an iniquitous mind, and a plain proof of a falling away into sin. While therefore you tithe mint, He says, and rue, and every herb, and ordain that the commandment upon these points is to be strictly kept, you deign to give no attention to the weightier matters of the law, to those commandments, I mean, which are more especially necessary and beneficial to the soul, and by means of which you might prove yourselves honourable and holy, and full of such praises as become those whose desire it is to love God, and please Him.

And He adds yet another woe to those already spoken, saying, ”Woe unto you, Pharisees, who love the uppermost seat in the synagogues, and greetings in the market places,” Is then this reproof useful to the Pharisees only? Not so: for the benefit of it extends even unto us: for by the rebukes He addressed to them, He effects also our improvement. For true it is, that those who are perfect in mind, and lovers of upright conduct, find in the rebukes of others the means of their own safety. For they of course avoid imitating them, and do not expose themselves to being caught in similar faults. The accusation therefore which Christ brings against the Pharisees, that they seek for greetings in the market places, and the uppermost seats in the synagogues, or meetings, shows that they were fond of praise, and wont to indulge themselves in empty ostentation, and an absurd superciliousness. And what can be worse than this? or how must not such conduct be hateful to every man, as being boastful and annoying, and destitute of the praises of virtue, and

intent solely upon stealing the reputation of being honourable. And how must not he be incomparably superior to men thus disposed, who is poor in spirit, and gentle, and affable; not loving boasting, but courteous; not deceiving men by outside and fictitious disguises, but being rather a true worshipper, and adorned with that rational beauty which the divine Word imprints in us by means of all virtue and holiness and righteousness.

For if we must prove ourselves better than others,----and there is nothing to prevent this,----let the sentence of superiority be given us of God, by our excelling them in point of conduct and morals, and in a wise and blameless knowledge of the sacred scriptures. For to be saluted by others, and seated higher than one's friends, does not at all prove us to be persons of merit: for this is possessed by many, who, so far from being virtuous, are rather lovers of pleasure, and lovers of sin. For they wrest honours from every one, because of their possessing either vast wealth or worldly power.

But that our being admired by others without investigation and inconsiderately, and without their knowing our real state, does not at all make us elect in the presence of God, Who knows all things, the Saviour at once demonstrates by Saying; "Woe unto you, for you are as those graves which appear not, and the men who walk over them know it not," Observe, I pray, very clearly the force of the example. Those who desire to be saluted by every one in the marketplace, and anxiously consider it a great matter to have the foremost seats in the synagogues, differ in no respect from graves that appear not, which on the outside are beautifully adorned, but are full of all impurity. See here, I pray, that hypocrisy is utterly blamed: for it is a hateful malady, both towards God and men. For whatsoever the hypocrite seems, and is thought to be, that he is not: but he borrows, so to speak, the reputation of goodness, and thereby accuses his real baseness: for the very thing which he praises and admires, he will not practise. But it is a thing impossible for you long to hide your hypocrisy: for just as the figures painted in pictures fall off, as time dries up the colours, so also hypocrisies, after escaping observation for a very little time, are soon convicted of being really nothing.

We then must be true worshippers, and not as wishing to please men, lest we fall from being servants of Christ. For so the blessed Paul somewhere speaks; "For now do I persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." For suppositions in matters of moral excellence are simply ridiculous, and worthy neither of account nor admiration. For just as in gold coins, that which is counterfeit and faulty is rejected, so the hypocrite is regarded with scorn both by God and men. But he who is true meets with admiration; just, for instance, as Nathaniel, of whom Christ said, "Behold one truly an Israelite, in whom is no guile." He who is such is esteemed before God; he is counted worthy

of crowns and honours; has a glorious hope given him; and is ”a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God.”

Let us therefore flee from the malady of hypocrisy: and may there rather dwell within us a pure and uncorrupt mind, resplendent with glorious virtues. For this will unite us unto Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXV.

11:45-48. Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto Him, Teacher, in saying these things you reproach us also. And He said, Also unto you, lawyers, woe! for you burden men with burdens heavy and grievous to be borne; and you yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you! for you build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Therefore you bear witness, and approve of the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and you build their sepulchres.

REPROOF is ever, so to speak, a thing difficult for any man to bear: but it is not without profit to the soberminded: for it leads them to the duty of performing those things which make them worthy of honour, and lovers of virtuous pursuits. But those who run into wickedness with all eagerness, and whose heart is set against admonition, are hurried into greater sins by the very things that should have made them more soberminded, and are only hardened by the words of those who try to benefit them. And, as an example of this state of mind, behold those who among the Jews were called lawyers. For the Saviour of all was rebuking the Pharisees, as men that were wandering far from the right way, and fallen into unbecoming practices. For He blamed them as being boasters, as hypocrites, as loving greetings in the markets, and as wishing to sit in front of everybody else in the synagogues: and He further called them ”whited sepulchres, which on the outside are beautiful, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all impurity. At these things the band of wicked lawyers was indignant, and one of them stood up to controvert the Saviour’s declarations, and said; ”Teacher, in saying these things, You reproach us also. Oh what great ignorance! what blindness in mind and understanding unto every thing necessary! These men subject themselves to blame:

or rather the force of truth showed them to be liable to the same accusations as the Pharisees, and of one mind with them, and partners of their evil deeds, if they thus consider that what Christ said unto the others was spoken also against them. For tell me, for what reason are you angry? When any reproof is addressed to the Pharisees, you say that you are reproached. You confess therefore your deeds. You are conscious, of course, to thyself of being a similar character. But if you

consider it a reproach for ought of this sort to be said of you, and nevertheless do not alter your behaviour, it is your own conduct you are found blaming. If you hate reproof as being a reproach, show thyself superior to the faults with which you are charged: or rather do not regard as a reproach the word of correction. Do you not see that those who heal the bodies of men converse with the sick upon the causes which have brought on their maladies, and use pungent drugs to counteract what has happened: but no one is angry with them on this account, or regards what they say as a reproach. But you are weak-minded in bearing admonitions, nor consent to learn what those passions are which are bringing injury to your heart. Far better would it be to love reproof, and ask for deliverance from your maladies, and healing for the ulcers of your soul.

Far better were it rather to say, ”Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, and I shall be saved: for You are my praise.”

Nothing however of this sort enters the mind of the lawyers, but they venture even to say; ”In speaking these things, You reproach us also: ignorantly giving the name of reproach to a reproof which was for their benefit and advantage. What then does Christ reply? He makes His reproof yet more severe, and humbles their empty pride, thus saying; ”Also to you, lawyers, woe! for you burden men with burdens heavy and grievous to be borne: and you yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. He frames His argument against them out of a plain example. For the law was confessedly grievous to the Israelites, as the divine disciples also acknowledged. For they even rebuked those who were endeavouring to make such as had already believed desire to return to the legal ritual: for they said; ”And now why tempt you God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? And the Saviour Himself taught us this, crying out and saying; ”Come unto Me, all you weary, and heavy laden; and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest for your-selves. Weary then and heavy laden are those, He says, who are under the law: while He calls Himself meek, as though the law had nothing in it of this character. For, as Paul says;

”Whosoever has despised Moses’ law is put to death without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses. Woe to you, therefore, He says, O lawyers: for while you bind burdens grievous to be borne, and intolerable to carry, and lay them on those who are under the law, you yourselves will not touch them. For while commanding that the ordinance of Moses should be kept inviolate, and passing sentence of death upon any who despise it, they themselves paid not the slightest heed to the duty of performing its precepts. As accustomed thus to act, the wise Paul also rebukes them, saying; ”Behold you are called a Jew, and rest in the law, and make your boast of God; and know His will, and discern the things that are more excellent, being instructed by the law; and are confident of thyself, that you are a guide of the

blind; an instructor of those without understanding; a teacher of babes; and that you have the form of knowledge and of truth in the law. You therefore that teach others, teach you not thyself? you that say that men should not steal, do you steal? you that say that men should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? And you that despise idols, do you plunder the sanctuary? And you that boast in the law, by the transgression of the law despise you God? For the teacher is rejected with infamy when his conduct does not agree with his words.

Upon him our Saviour also passes the sentence of severe punishment: ”for whosoever,” He says, ”has taught and done, shall be called great: but whosoever shall teach and not do, he shall ” be called small in the kingdom of heaven. And for the same reason the disciple of the Saviour also writes to us; ”Let there not be many teachers among you, my brethren; knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we all of us commit wrong.”

And having thus shown the worthlessness of this abominable crew of lawyers, He goes on to utter a common reproof to all the chiefs of the Jews: ”Woe unto you! for you build the sepulchres of the prophets: and your fathers killed them. Therefore you bear witness, and approve of the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their sepulchres.” Let us then carefully examine what the Saviour means; for what wicked act can we say that they were guilty of in building the tombs of the saints? Were they not rather doing them distinguished honour? What doubt can there be of this? It is necessary therefore to see what it is which Christ teaches us. The ancestors then of the Jews had from time to time put the holy prophets to death, when bringing them the word of God, and leading them unto the right way: but their descendants, acknowledging that the prophets were holy and venerable men, built over them sepulchres or tombs, as bestowing upon them an honour suitable to the saints. Their fathers therefore slew them; but they, as believing that they were prophets and holy men. became the judges of those that slew them. For by determining to pay honour to those who had been put to death, they thereby accused the others of having done wrongfully. But they, who condemned their fathers for such cruel murders, were about to incur the guilt of equal crimes, and to commit the same, or rather more abominable offences. For they slew the Prince of Life, the Saviour and Deliverer of all: and added also to their wickedness towards Him other abominable murders. For Stephen was put to death, not as being accused of any thing base, but rather for admonishing them, and speaking unto them what is contained in the inspired Scriptures. And other crimes besides were committed by them against every saint who preached unto them the Gospel message of salvation.

The lawyers therefore and Pharisees were reproved in every way, as being haters of God, and boastful, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: and as everywhere hating to be saved. For this reason Christ added always that word ”woe,” as

something peculiarly theirs: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXVI.

11:52 ... 12:1-3. Woe unto you, lawyers: for you have taken away the key of knowledge: you entered not in, and those that are entering in you hindered. And as He came out from thence, the scribes and Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently, and to put Him to silences about many things, lying in wait to catch something out of his mouth. Meanwhile many myriads of the people having assembled, so that they trod one upon another, He began to say unto His disciples first of all, Beware in yourselves of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed: neither hid, that shall not be known. All things whatsoever you have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light: and that which you have spoken in the ear in chambers, shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

THOSE who search the sacred Scriptures, and know the Lord's will, if they are virtuous men, and anxious for the people's good, and skilled in leading them aright unto every thing that is admirable, shall be rewarded with every blessing, if they discharge their duties with earnestness. And of this the Saviour assures us where He says, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord has set over his household, to give them meat in its season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord shall come and find so doing: verily, I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he has." But if he be indolent, and neglectful, and a cause of offence to those entrusted to his charge, so as for them to fall from the right way, most miserable is he, and in danger of hopeless punishment. For again Christ Himself has said; "Whosoever therefore shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in Me, it were better for him that the millstone of an ass were hung about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

Of faults thus grievous, Christ proved them guilty who professed to be skilled in the law; the scribes, I mean, and lawyers: and for this reason he said unto them; "Also to you lawyers woe! who have taken away the key of knowledge. By the key of knowledge we consider that the law itself is meant, and justification in Christ, by faith I mean in Him. For though the law was in shadow and type, yet those types shape out to us the truth, and those shadows depict to us in manifold ways

the mystery of Christ. A lamb was sacrificed according to the law of Moses; they ate its flesh, they anointed the lintels with its blood, and overcame the destroyer. But the blood of a mere sheep could not turn away death. It was Christ then Who was typified under the form of a lamb, Who endures to be the victim for the life of the world, and saves by His blood those who are partakers of Him. And one might mention many other instances as well, by means of which we can discern the mystery of Christ, sketched out in the shadows of the law. And He Himself once when speaking to the Jews said, "There is one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom you trusted. For if you had believed Moses, you would have also believed Me; for he wrote of Me. And again; Search the Scriptures: for in them you think that you have eternal life; and it is they that testify of Me.

And you are not willing to come unto Me, that you may have life. For every word of divinely inspired Scripture looks unto Him, and refers to Him. And whether it be Moses who speaks, he, as has been shown, was typifying Christ: or be it the holy prophets that you name, they also proclaimed to us in manifold ways the mystery of Christ, preaching beforehand the salvation that is by Him.

It was the duty therefore of those who were called lawyers, because they studied the law of Moses, and were well acquainted with the words of the holy prophets, to open, so to speak, to the Jewish multitudes the doors of knowledge. For the law directs men unto Christ, and the pious announcements of the holy prophets lead, as I said, to the acknowledgment of Him. But this the so-called lawyers did not do, but on the contrary they took away the key of knowledge, by which you are to understand the guidance of the law, or really faith in Christ. For by faith is the knowledge of the truth, as the prophet Isaiah somewhere says; " If you will not believe, neither shall you understand." This same way of salvation by faith in Christ He before declared unto us by the holy prophets, saying; "Yet a little, a little while, and he that comes shall come, and shall not tarry. And whosoever shall draw back, in him My soul shall have no pleasure." And what is meant by a person's drawing back is his giving way to slothfulness. When therefore He says, that no one of those who have been called must draw back, it means, that if he grow slothful in his progress towards the grace which is by faith, My soul shall have no pleasure in him.

But that the fathers were proved by faith, the examination of their deeds demonstrates. Take, for instance, the patriarch Abraham, who was called the friend of God: what is written of him? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God." And it is written again; "By faith Noah, when it was revealed to him of things not seen as yet, prepared the ark for the saving of his house, in which few, that is, eight persons, were saved by water." And the blessed Paul has laid down for us a definition, so to speak, or rather a general law, thus saying; "Without faith it is impossible for any one whatsoever

to please God." "For by it, he said, the elders, that is, those in old time, obtained a good report."

But these so-called lawyers had taken away the key of knowledge; for they would not let men believe in Christ the Saviour of all. He wrought miracles in manifold ways; raising the dead from their graves; restoring beyond all hope their sight to the blind; making the lame whole in their feet; cleansing lepers; and rebuking unclean spirits. But they, though it was their duty to regard Him with admiration because of these things, despised His divine signs: and making the people entrusted to their charge to stumble, they said; "This man casts not out devils but in Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Here then you see them taking away the key of knowledge. He taught in their synagogues; He revealed to His hearers that good and acceptable and perfect will of God the Father; but they cannot leave even these His instructions without blame: for they called out to the multitudes, "He has a devil, and is utterly mad. Why hear you Him?" In truth therefore they took away the key of knowledge: they went not in themselves, and the others they hindered.

And thus being indignant at this reproof, "they began," it says, "to urge Him vehemently;" by which is meant, to attack Him with cunning, and oppose Him, and show their hatred of Him. And they ventured also, it says, even "to put Him to silence about many things." And what again is the meaning of their putting Him to silence? It is that they required Him at once, and so to speak, without consideration to make answer to their wicked questions; expecting forsooth that he would fall, and say something or other open to objection. But they knew not that He was God; or rather, they were despisers, and proud and contemptuous. And therefore it was that Christ told His friends, that is, His disciples, to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and scribes," meaning by leaven their false pretence. For hypocrisy is a thing hateful to God, and abominated by man, bringing no reward, and utterly useless for the salvation of the soul, or rather the cause of its perdition. For though sometimes it may escape detection for a little, yet before long it is sure to be laid bare, and bring upon them disgrace; like ill-featured women, when they are stripped of that external embellishment which they had produced by artificial means.

Hypocrisy therefore is a thing foreign to the character of the saints: for that it is impossible for those things that are done and said by us to escape the eye of the Deity, He showed by saying; "For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: neither hid that shall not be known." For all our words and deeds shall be revealed at the day of judgment. Hypocrisy therefore is superfluous trouble; and our duty is to prove ourselves true worshippers, serving God with free and open countenance, not submitting our judgment to those who take away the key of knowledge, but seeing even in the law the mystery of Christ, and seizing upon the words of the holy prophets to confirm our knowledge of Him. For this His disciple

also taught us thus saying; ”We have for confirmation the word of prophecy, into which you do well to look, as upon a torch shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the star of light arise in your hearts.” On us then who are in Christ the day has shone, and the star of the rational dawn has arisen, possessing as we do a correct and blameless knowledge of Him: for He has Himself put into our mind and heart divine knowledge, being the Saviour and Lord of all; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXVII.

THIS HOMILY IS FIT TO BE READ IN A TIME OF STRUGGLE AND PERSECUTION FOR FAITH IN GOD. 12:4-7. And I say unto you, My friends, Fear not them that kill the body, and afterwards have nothing more to do. But I will show you Whom you shall fear: fear Him Who after He has killed has power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear Him. Are not five sparrows sold for two halfpence; and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: you are of more value than many sparrows. PATIENCE, and an enduring and courageous mind, form the impenetrable armour of the saints: for they render them approved and resplendent with the praises of piety. For one also of the holy apostles thus spake, at one time; ”In patience possess you your souls:” at another; ”You have need of patience, that by doing the will of God, you may receive the promise.” By such manly virtues we become famous, and praiseworthy, and renowned among men everywhere, and worthy of honours and the blessings that are prepared for the saints: even those which ”eye has not seen, nor ear heard,” as wise Paul says. And how must not those things be worth the gaining and admirable, which surpass our understanding and reason? And therefore, as I said, He prepares those who love Him for spiritual fortitude, thus speaking; ”I say unto you, My friends.”

His present discourse therefore does not, as it seems, belong to every one absolutely: but, on the contrary, to those only who evidently love Him with all their heart, and can fitly say; ”Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” For those who have as yet no sure and certain and well-founded love of Him, as long as they live in tranquil times, may indeed possibly preserve their faith in Him: but if distress or persecution harass them a little, they turn away and forsake Him, losing, together with their faith, that which stirred them up to love Him. For just as young plants, which have lately sprung up, cannot endure the violence of too tempestuous a wind, because they have not as yet struck their roots deep; while those which are firmly fixed, and well rooted, remain secure in the ground, even though a gale of fierce winds shake them: so those whose mind is not yet firmly and securely fixed upon Him are very easily drawn aside, and readily desert; while those who have

stored up and possais in mind and heart a secure and unwavering love of Him, are unalterable in mind, and unwavering in heart, being superior to all indolence, and looking with contempt upon the most intolerable dangers, and making a mock at terrors, so as even to ridicule the violence of death. The commandment therefore so to act belongs to those who love Him.

But who are those who love Him? They are, so to speak, such as are like-minded with Him, and anxious to follow in His footsteps. And to this His disciple encourages us by saying; ”Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, do you for His sake arm yourselves with the same mind.” He laid down His life for us, and was ”among the dead as one free.” For death did not attack Him, as it attacks us, because of sin: for He was and is far removed from all sin, and incapable of iniquity: but of His own will He endured it for our sakes, because of His boundless love toward us. For listen to Him as He plainly says; ”Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And how then is it not a most base thing not to return to Christ, as a most necessary debt, that which we have received of Him? And, to put it in another light; as being His friends, we ought not to fear death, but rather imitate the faith of the holy fathers. The patriarch Abraham, when tempted, offered his only-begotten son Isaac, ”accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.” What terror of death, therefore, can assail us, now that ”Life has abolished death?” for Christ is ”the Resurrection and the Life.”

And this too we must bear in mind, that the crowns are to be won by labour. It is strong exertion united with skill that perfects those mighty athletes in the games. It is courage and a brave mind that are most serviceable to those who are skilled in battles: while the man who throws away his shield is ridiculed even by the foe: and if the runaway live, he leads a life of disgrace. But he who was steadfast in the battle, and stood stoutly and courageously with all his might against the enemy, is honoured if he win the victory; and if he fall, is looked upon with admiration. And so ought we to reckon for ourselves; for to endure patiently, and maintain the conflict with courage, brings with it great reward, and is highly desirable, and wins for us the blessings bestowed by God: while to refuse to suffer death in the flesh for the love of Christ, brings upon us lasting, or rather never-ending punishment. For the wrath of man reaches at most to the body, and the death of the flesh is the utmost that they can contrive against us: but when God punishes, the loss reaches not to the flesh alone;----how could it?----but the wretched soul also is cast alone; with it into torments. Let our lot therefore rather be the honoured death; for it makes us mount up to the commencement of an eternal life, to which of necessity are attached those blessings also which come from the divine bounty: and let us flee from and despise a life of shame; a life accursed, and of short duration, and which leads down to bitter and everlasting torment.

And to bestow yet another means of succour upon our minds, He forcibly added; ”that five sparrows are scarcely perhaps worth two halfpence, and yet not one of them is forgotten before God.” And further, He said; ”that also the separate hairs of your head are all numbered.” Consider, therefore, how great care He takes of those that love Him. For if the Preserver of the universe extends His aid to things thus worthless, and descends, so to speak, to the smallest animals, how can He forget those who love Him, especially when He takes so great care of them, and deigns so to visit them, as to know exactly each particular of their state, and even how many are the hairs of their head?

Where, then, is the vain and senseless babbling of heathen boasting? ”Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For some of them entirely deny the providence of God: while others make it reach down as far only as the moon, and set bounds to it, as though they had had this authority committed to them. Unto such we would say: Is the providence of God too weak to reach down to that which is below, and even as far as unto us, or is the Creator of all too weary to see what we do? If then they say that it is too weak, this is mere stupidity, and nothing else. But if they represent the divine nature as subject to indolence, they make it thereby liable also to envy. And this again is blasphemy, and a crime than which none is greater. But they answer, it is giving trouble to the divine and supreme will to impose upon it the care of all these earthly matters. They know not how great is that nature which the mind cannot understand nor speech describe, and which rules over all. For to it all things are small: and so the blessed prophet Isaiah teaches us where he says; ”If it is true that all the nations are as a drop from a cask, and are reckoned as the turn of a balance, and shall be counted as spittle, to what have you likened the Lord?” For what is one drop from a cask? and what is the turn of a balance? and what too is spittle?----that is, a single expectoration? If therefore this be the position of all things towards God, how can it be a great matter to Him, or one that occasions Him trouble, to have the care of all things? The noxious sentiments therefore of the heathen are bereft of reason.

Let us therefore not doubt but that with rich hand He will bestow His grace upon those who love Him. For either He will not permit us to fall into temptation: or if, by His wise purpose, He permit us to be taken in the snare, in order that we may gain glory by suffering. He will most assuredly grant us the power to bear it. And of this the blessed Paul is our witness, who says; ”God is powerful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of egress, that you may be able to bear it.” For He Who is the Saviour and Lord of us all, is the Lord of powers: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON LXXXVIII.

THIS HOMILY ALSO IS FIT TO BE READ IN A TIME OF STRUGGLE AND PERSECUTION FOR FAITH IN GOD. 12:8-10. And I say unto you, that whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall speak a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him. HERE too, you who love to hear, replenish yourselves with the words of holiness: receive within you the knowledge of the sacred doctrines, that advancing prosperously in the faith, you may obtain the crown of love and steadfastness in Christ. For He bestows it, not upon those whose heart is faint and easily shaken, but rather on those who can with fitness say; ”For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” For those who live holily, live unto Christ; and those, who for piety towards Him, endure dangers, gain the life incorruptible, being crowned by His decree before the judgment seat of God. And this He teaches us, saying; ”Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God,”

It is then a thing above all others worthy of our attention to see who it is that confesses Christ, and in what way one may rightly and blamelessly confess Him. Most wise Paul, therefore writes to us, ”Say not in yours heart, Who shall ascend unto heaven? that is to bring Christ down: or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. But what says the Scripture? The Word is nigh you, in your mouth and in your heart; that is, the Word of faith which we preach: because if you shall say with your mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shall believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall live. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. In which words the mystery of Christ is most excellently explained. For first of all it is our duty to confess that the Son, Who sprang from God the Father, and Who is the Only-begotten of His substance, even God the Word, is Lord of all: not as one on whom lordship has been bestowed from without, and by imputation, but as being by nature and in truth Lord, as the Father also is. And next we must believe, that ” God raised Him from the dead,” that is, when having become man,

He had suffered in the flesh for our sakes: for so He arose from the dead. The Son therefore is, as I said, Lord;

yet must He not be reckoned with those other lords, to whom the name of lordship is given and imputed: for He alone, as I said, is Lord by nature, being God the Word, Who transcends every created thing. And this the wise Paul teaches us saying; ”That though there be in heaven or in earth certain Gods many, and Lordships many: yet to us there is one God the Father, from Whom is everything and we from Him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom is everything and we by Him. But even though there be but one God, Whose name is the Father; and one Lord, Who is the Son; yet neither is the Father put aside from being Lord, by reason of His being God by nature: nor docs the Son cease from being God, because He is Lord by nature. For perfect freedom is the attribute of the divine and supreme substance only, and to be entirely separate from the yoke of servitude: or rather, to have the creation put in subjection under Its feet. And therefore, though the Only-begotten Word of God became like unto us, and, as for as regarded the measure of the human nature, was placed under the yoke of slavery:----for He purposely paid the Jewish tax-gatherers the two drachms according to the law of Moses; ----yet He did not conceal the splendour of the glory that dwelt in Him. For He asked the blessed Peter; ”The kings of the earth, of whom do they receive tribute and poll-tax;

of their own children, or of strangers? And when he had said, Of strangers: Then, said He, are the children free. The Son therefore is in His own nature Lord as being free: as the wise Paul has again taught us, thus writing: ”But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same likeness, from glory to glory, as by the Lord, the Spirit. ”Now the Spirit is the Lord: but where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Observe therefore how he affirms that the Spirit is Lord: not as possessed of sonship; for He is the Spirit, and not the Son; but as being co-essential with the Son, Who is Lord and free, and proved by this natural equality with Him to possess that freedom which befits God.

Whosoever therefore confesses Christ before men, as God and Lord, shall be acknowledged by Him before the angels of God. But where and how? Evidently at that time, when He shall descend from heaven in the glory of His Father with the holy angels at the end of this world: then shall He crown His true confessor, who possessed an unwavering and genuine faith, and so made profession. There also shall the company of the holy martyrs shine, who endured the conflict even unto life and blood, and honoured Christ by their patient endurance: for they denied not the Saviour, nor was His glory unknown to them, but they kept their fealty to Him. Such shall be praised by the holy angels; and shall themselves glorify Christ the Saviour of all, for bestowing upon the saints those honours which especially are their due. And so the Psalmist also declares, ”And the heavens shall declare

His righteousness; because God is judge." And such then shall be the lot of those who confess Him.

But the rest, those who denied and despised him, shall be denied: when the Judge shall say to them that, as it were, which was spoken by the holy prophets to certain of old; "As you have done, it shall be done unto you; and your requital shall be requited upon yours own head;" and shall deny them in these words: "Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity, I know you not." And who then are they that shall be denied? First of all, those who when persecution was pressing upon them, and tribulation had overtaken them, deserted the faith. The hope of such shall depart utterly from its very root: for such no human words can suffice; for wrath and judgment and the unappeasable fire shall receive them. And in like manner both the followers and teachers of heresy deny him. For they venture to say that the Only-begotten Word of God is not by nature and in truth God; and they traduce His ineffable generation, by saying that He is not of the substance of the Father: yes rather, they count among things created Him Who is the Creator of all, and wickedly class with those who are under the yoke Him Who is Lord of all; although Paul affirms, that we must say that "Jesus is Lord."

The disciples also of the vain babbling of Nestorius deny Him by acknowledging two sons, one false, and one true; the true one, the Word of God the Father: the false one, to whom the honour and name of a son belongs by imputation only, who in their phrase is the son only, and sprung from the seed of the blessed David, according to the flesh. Most heavy is the judgment of these also; for they have denied "the Lord Who bought them." They have not understood the mystery of His dispensation in the flesh: for "there is one Lord, one faith," as it is written. For we do not believe in a man and a God, but in one Lord, the Word Who is from God the Father, Who became man, and took upon Him our flesh. And thus then these also are numbered among those Who deny Him.

And that blasphemy is a most wicked crime for men to commit, He has further taught us by saying, "that whosoever shall speak a word against the son of man", it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven. And in what way is this too to be understood? Now if the Saviour means this, that if any scornful word be used by any one of us towards some more man, he will obtain forgiveness if he repent, the matter is free from all difficulty. For as God is by nature good, He will free from blame all those who repent. But if the declaration has reference to Christ himself, the Saviour of all, how can he he innocent, or secure from condemnation, who has spoken against Him? What then we say is this; that whenever any one, who has not yet learnt the meaning of His mystery, nor understood that being by nature God, He humbled Himself to our estate, and became man, speaks anything against Him, blasphemous to a certain extent, but yet not so wicked as to pass forgiveness, such things God will pardon in

those who have sinned from ignorance. And to explain my meaning by an example; Christ somewhere said, ”I am the living bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world.

Because therefore some did not know His glory, but thought that he was a mere man, they said, ”Is not this the carpenter’s son, Whose father and mother we know? How does He now say that I came down from heaven? And again, He was once standing teaching in a synagogue, and was wondered at by them all. But some, it tells us, said, ”How knows this man learning, having never been taught? For of course they knew not that ”in Him are all the treasures of wisdom, and the hidden things of knowledge. Such things might well be forgiven, as being spoken inconsiderately from ignorance.

But for those who have blasphemed the Godhead itself, condemnation is inevitable, and the punishment eternal both in this world and in that which is to come. For by the Spirit He here means not only the Holy Spirit, but also the whole nature of the Godhead, as understood (to consist) in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And the Saviour Himself also somewhere said, ”God is a Spirit.” Blasphemy therefore against the Spirit, is against the whole supreme substance: for as I said, the nature of the Deity, as offered to our understanding in the holy and adorable Trinity, is one. Let us therefore, as the writer of the book of Proverbs says, ”put a door and a bar to the tongue,” and draw near to the God over all, thus saying, ”Set a watch, O Lord, upon my mouth; and a door of safety about my lips; incline not my heart to wicked words;” for those are wicked words which are against God. And if thus we rightly fear Him, Christ will bless us: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON LXXXIX.

12:13-21. And one of the multitude said unto Him, Teacher, bid my brother divide with me the inheritance. But He said unto him, Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you? And He said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all greediness: for a man's life is not from his possessions by reason of his having a superfluity. And He spoke a parable unto them, saying, The land of a certain rich man brought forth unto him plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to gather my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my storehouses, and build greater: and there will I gather all my crops and my goods. And I will say to myself, Self you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy thyself But God said unto him, You fool, this night they demand of you your soul. But whose shall those things be which you have provided? So is he that lays up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God.

PAUL, as a wise man, recommends constancy in prayer: for he said, "Pray without ceasing. And in very truth it is a thing full of benefit. But I say this, that whosoever draws near unto God, ought not to do so carelessly; nor may he offer unbefitting petitions. And one may very justly affirm, of a multitude of petitions, that they are unbefitting, and such as are not suitable for God to give, nor beneficial for us to receive. And if we will direct the penetrating glance of the mind upon the passage before us, we shall see without difficulty the truth of what I have said. For a certain man drew near to Christ, the Saviour of us all, and said, "Teacher, bid my brother divide with me the inheritance. But He said unto him, Man, who set Me as judge or divider over you? For the Son indeed, when He appeared in our likeness, was set by God the Father as "Head and King over Sion, His holy mount," according to the Psalmist's words: and the nature of His office He again Himself makes plain, "For I am come, He says, to preach the commandment of the Lord. And what is this? Our virtue-loving Master wishes us to depart far from all earthly and temporal matters; to flee from the love of the flesh, and from the vain anxiety of business, and from base lusts; to set no value on hoards, to despise wealth, and the love of gain; to be good and loving unto one another;

not to lay up treasures upon earth; to be superior to strife and envy, not quarrelling with the brethren, but rather giving way to them, even though they seek to gain an advantage over us; ”for from him, He says, who takes away what is yours, demand it not again; and rather to strive after all those things which are useful and necessary for the salvation of the soul. And for those who habitually thus live, Christ lays down laws by which they become illustrious and praiseworthy. For He said, ”Possess neither silver nor gold: nor two coats, nor scrip, nor brass in your purses. And again, ”Make for yourselves purses that grow not old: a treasure that does not fail for ever in heaven. And when a young man drew near saying, ”Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? ”Go, He answered, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven, and come after Me. To those therefore who bow down to Him the obedient neck of their minds, He both gives commandments and appoints laws: He lays down for them precepts, distributes to them the heavenly inheritance, gives them spiritual blessings, and is a storehouse for them of never-failing gifts. While for those who think only of earthly things, and whose heart is set on wealth, and their mind hardened, and unmerciful, and without gentleness or love for the poor, to such He will justly say, ” Who set Me as ruler or divider over you?

He rejects the man therefore as troublesome, and as having no desire to learn ought fitting for him to know.

But He does not leave us without instruction: for having found, so to speak, a seasonable opportunity, He frames a profitable and saving discourse; and protesting as it were against them, declares, ”Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness.” He showed us that pitfall of the devil, covetousness, a thing hateful to God, and which the wise Paul even calls idolatry, perhaps as being suitable for those only who know not God, or as being equal in the balance with the defilement of those men who choose to serve stocks and stones. It is a snare of evil spirits, by which they drag down man’s soul to the meshes of hell. For this reason He says very justly, as setting them on their guard, ”Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness:” that is, from great and small, and from defrauding any one whoever he may be. For as I said, it is a thing hateful to God and men. For who does not flee from him who uses violence, and is rapacious and greedy, and ready for iniquity in those things to which he has no right, and who with avaricious hand gathers that which is not his? What beast of prey does not such a man surpass in savageness? Than what rocks is he not more hard? For the heart of him who is defrauded is torn, and even melted sometimes by the penetrating pain as it were by fire: but he takes pleasure therein, and is merry, and makes the pains of them that suffer a cause of rejoicing. For the wronged man is sure generally to be one without power, who can but raise his eyes to Him Who alone is able to be angry for what he has suffered. And He, because He is just and good, accepts his supplica-

tion, and pities the tears of the sufferer, and brings punishment on those who have done the wrong.

And this you may learn from what He Himself says thereupon by the mouth of the holy prophets; ”Therefore because you have bruised the heads of the poor, and taken from them chosen gifts, you shall build houses of carved stone, but you shall not dwell therein: and you shall plant desirable vineyards, but you shall not drink of their wine. For I know your many wickednesses, and mighty are your sins.” And again, ”Woe unto those who add house to house, and join field to field, that they may take away something from their neighbour. Will you dwell alone in the earth? For these things have been heard in the ears of the Lord of hosts. For though your houses be many, they shall be a desolation: though they be great and fair, there shall be none to inhabit them. For the ground that ten yoke of oxen till shall produce one pitcher full: and he that sows six artabae shall gather three measures,” Although therefore houses and fields may be the fruit of the oppression of others, yet these, He says, shall lie waste, without inhabitants, and shall yield no profit whatsoever to those who will act wickedly, because the just wrath of God is poured out upon them. In every way therefore there is no profit in covetousness.

And to view it in yet another light; it avails nothing, because a man’s life, as He says, is not from his possessions, by reason of his having a superfluity. And this is plainly true: for the duration of a man’s life is not extended in proportion to his wealth, nor does the sum of his life run parallel with that of his wicked gains. And this the Saviour has clearly and manifestly shown us, by very excellently adding the present parable in connexion with His previous argument. ”For the ground, He said, of a certain rich man brought forth abundant crops.” Consider it exactly, that you may admire the beautiful art of the discourse. For He has not pointed out to us an estate of which one portion only brought forth abundant harvests; but the whole of it was fertile for its owner, showing thereby the vastness of his wealth. Similar to this is that passage of one of the holy apostles; ”Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped your land, which is of you kept back by fraud, cries out: and the supplications of those that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.” The Saviour therefore said that all his estate brought forth abundant harvests.

What therefore does the rich man do, surrounded by a profusion of so many blessings beyond all numbering? In distress and anxiety he utters the words of poverty. ”For what, he says, shall I do? The man who is in want of necessaries constantly ejaculates this miserable language: but lo! one here of boundless wealth uses similar expressions. He determined then to build more spacious storehouses: he purposed to enjoy for himself alone those revenues that were sufficient for a populous city. He looks not to the future; he raises not his eyes to God; he does not count it worth his while to gain for the mind those treasures which are above in heaven: he

does not cherish love for the poor, nor desire the estimation to be gained thereby: he sympathizes not with suffering; it gives him no pain, nor awakens his pity. And what is still more irrational, he settles for himself the duration of his life, as if he would reap this too from the ground: for he says, ”I will say to myself, Self, you have goods laid up for many years; eat, drink, enjoy thyself.” ’But, O rich man, one may say, you have indeed storehouses for your fruits, but from where will you obtain your many years? for by the decree of God your life is shortened. For God, it tells us, said unto him, You fool, this night they shall require of you your soul. But whose shall these things be that you have prepared?’

It is true therefore, that a man’s life is not from his possessions, by reason of his having a superfluity: but very blessed, and of glorious hope is he who is rich towards God. And who is he? Evidently one who loves not wealth, but virtue rather, and to whom few things are sufficient: and whose hand is open to the necessities of the indigent, comforting the sorrows of those in poverty, according to his means, and the utmost of his power. It is he who gathers in the storehouses that are above, and lays up treasures in heaven. Such a one shall find the usury of his virtue, and the recompense of his upright and blameless life; Christ shall bless him: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XC.

12:22-31. And He said unto His disciples; Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what you shall eat: nor for your body, what you shall put on. For the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment. Consider the ravens, that they sow not nor reap: which have neither closet nor store, and God feeds them: how much more are you better than the birds! And which of you by being anxious can add to his stature one cubit? If you then be not able to do even that which is least, why are you anxious about any thing else? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: but I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He you, O you of little faith? And seek not what you shall eat, nor what you shall drink, neither let your mind be unsettled: for all these things the nations of the world seek after: but your Father knows that you have need of them. But seek His kingdom, and all these things shall be added unto you.

THE law of Moses was ordained for the Israelites, to guide them unto all which it was their duty to do, and to set clearly before them whatever was for their benefit. And they made this a matter of the greatest joy, saying, ” Blessed are the children of Israel: for unto us arc made known the things that please the Lord.” But I affirm, that we can even more fitly and appropriately use these words: for it was not a prophet, nor yet an angel, who spake unto us, but the Son in His own person, even He Who is Lord of the holy angels and of the prophets. And this the wise Paul, the minister of His mysteries, clearly teaches us, thus writing; ”God, Who in manifold parts and manifold manners spoke in old times to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by the Son, Whom He has appointed Heir of all; and by Whom also He made the worlds.” Blessed therefore are we, in that we are taught by Himself His good and saving will, by which we are guided into all virtuous pursuits, that having so fulfilled a life worthy of emulation, such as befits the elect, we may reign with Him.

Observe therefore how carefully, and with what great skill He fashions the lives of the holy apostles unto spiritual excellence. But with them He benefits us also: for

He wills that all mankind should be saved, and should choose the wise and more excellent life. For this reason He makes them abandon superfluous anxiety, and does not permit them to practise a careworn and urgent industry through the wish of gathering what exceeds their necessities; for in these matters a superfluity adds nothing to our benefit. ”Be not anxious therefore, He says, for your life, what you shall eat: nor for your body, what you shall put on. For the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment.” He did not simply say, ”Be not anxious;” but added ”for your life:” that is, do not expend any careful study on these things, but bestow your earnestness on things of far higher importance. For the life indeed is of more importance than food, and the body than raiment. Since therefore a risk is laid upon us that concerns both life and body, and pain and punishment are decreed against those who will not live uprightly, let all anxiety be laid aside respecting raiment and food.

And besides how is it not a base thing for those who arc lovers of virtue, and earnest followers after such manly virtues as are excellent and approved of God, to be intoxicated with fine apparel like young boys, and to run after expensive banquets! For there follow immediately upon these things a savage crowd also of other lusts: and the result is apostasy from God: for it is written, ”Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” And again; ”Know you not that the love of the world is enmity with God!” It is our duty therefore to keep our foot apart from all worldly desires, and rather to take delight in those things which please God.

But perchance you will reply to this, ’Who then will give us the necessaries of life?’ And to this be our answer as follows; The Lord is worthy to be trusted; and He clearly promises it to you, and by little things gives you full assurance that He will he true also in that which is great. ”For consider, He says, the ravens: that they sow not, nor reap: they have neither closet nor store: and God feeds them.” For just as, when He was strengthening us unto spiritual fortitude, He taught us to despise even death itself by saying, ”Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul;” and in the same way to make His providence plain to you, used for His proof things utterly valueless, saying; ”Are not two sparrows sold for one halfpenny? and not one of them falls to the ground without your Father: and the individual hairs of your head are all counted: fear not therefore; for you are of more value than many sparrows:” so also here, from the birds and the flowers of the field, he produces in you a firm and unwavering faith. Nor does He permit us at all to doubt, but that most certainly He will grant us His mercy, and stretch out His comforting hand, to bestow upon us in all things a sufficiency. It is moreover a very wicked thing, that while those who arc placed under the yoke of bodily slavery depend upon their masters, as sufficient to supply them with food and clothing; we will not consent to put our trust in Almighty God, when He promises us the necessaries of life.

And what benefit at all is there in living luxuriously? Or rather, will it not bring with it utter destruction? For quickly of a certainty there enter along with luxurious pleasures the infamies of sensuality, and the assaults of base and contemptible lusts;----things whose approach is difficult to combat. And the being clad too in splendid apparel is of no benefit whatsoever. ”For consider,” He says, ”the lilies, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin. I tell you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these.” And this also is true: for both in lilies and other flowers that spring up in the fields, the lustre of the colours possesses an admirable beauty, both by the diversity of the hues, and the variety of the arrangement, as they glitter in their natural purple, or shine with the brilliancy of other colours: but all that is made by the art of man in imitation of them, whether by the painter’s skill, or in embroidery, altogether falls short of the reality: and even though it be successful as a work of art, it scarcely even approaches the truth.

If therefore these representations by means of art, are so inferior to the glory of the lily, and the beautiful colours of other flowers, how is it not true, that even Solomon, though so magnificent a king, in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these? Vain therefore is our toil for beautiful apparel. Sufficient is it for men of sense that their raiment being such as necessity requires should be decorous, and easily procurable; and with it such a bare sufficiency of food as merely satisfies the demands of nature. Let their banquet in Christ be sufficient for the saints: a banquet spiritual, divine, and intellectual: and the glory that will follow. ”For He shall change the body of our humiliation into the likeness of the body of His glory;” and as He Himself says, ” They shall shine like the sun in the glory of their Father.” What garments therefore are not surpassed in splendour by the magnificence that is in Christ?

And in another view it was unbefitting for those who were to be the type and pattern for others of holy conduct, themselves carelessly to fall into those things, which as soon as they became the world’s teachers, they would have to warn others to abandon. And it would have been no slight injury both to their zeal, and to the usefulness of their sacred preaching, for the disciples to have been burdened with the care of worldly pursuits. On the contrary, it was their duty with determined mind entirely to disregard such things, and simply and earnestly to be anxious for apostolic victories. Very justly for this reason He openly reprobates the pursuit of the things of time, ”for the nations of the world,” He says, ”seek after them:” and raises them to the unwavering conviction, that certainly and under all circumstances they will have enough, because their Father well knows of what things they have need, even He Who is in heaven. And at a most fitting season He calls Him Father, that they may know, that He will not forget His children, but be kind and loving unto them.

Let us seek, therefore, not such food as is unnecessary and superfluous, but whatsoever tends unto the salvation of the soul: not raiment of great price, but how to

deliver our body from the fire, and from judgment. And this let us do, seeking His kingdom; even all that will aid us in becoming partakers of the kingdom of Christ: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XCI.

12:32-34. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,. Sell your possessions, and give alms: make you purses that do not grow old: and a treasure in heaven that does not fail, where no thief approaches, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. AGAIN the Saviour deigns to bestow upon us a pathway to eternal life, and opens wide the door of salvation; that travelling thereon, and adorning the soul with every virtue, we may attain to the city which is above, and of which the prophet Isaiah also bore witness, saying; "Your eyes shall see Jerusalem, the wealthy city, even the tents that shake not." For immoveable is that tabernacle which is in heaven, and unending joy is the lot of those that dwell therein. And the nature of the way that leads us thereto He shows us, by saying; "Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." This therefore is indeed spiritual consolation, and the pathway that leads us to assured faith.

I think, however, that I ought first of all to show you the reason why the Saviour spake words such as these; for so the full signification of the passage before us will become the more plain to the hearers. In teaching therefore His disciples not to be covetous of wealth, He also withdraws them from worldly anxiety, and from vain toils and luxury and splendour of attire, and whatsoever evil habits follow upon these things: and bids them rather courageously be earnest in the pursuit of these things, [which are good and more excellent, by saying; "Be not anxious for your life, what you shall eat: nor for your body, what you shall put on. For the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment?" And He also] added to this, that "your Father which is in heaven knows that these things are needed by you." And, so to speak, He enounced as a general law, useful and necessary for salvation, not only to the holy apostles, but to all who dwell upon the earth, that men must seek His kingdom, as being sure that what He gives will be sufficient, so as for them to be in need of nothing. For what does He say? "Fear not, little flock." And by Do not fear, He means that they must believe that certainly and without doubt their heavenly Father will give the means of life to them that love Him. He will not neglect His own: rather He will open unto them His hand, which ever fills the universe with goodness.

And what is the proof of these things? ”It is,” He says, ”your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” And He Who gives things thus great and precious, and bestows the kingdom of heaven, what unwillingness can there be on His part to be kind towards us; or how will He not supply us with food and clothing? For what earthly good is equal to the kingdom of heaven? or what is worthy to be compared with those blessings, which God is about to bestow, and which neither the understanding can conceive, nor words describe? ”For eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.” When you praise earthly wealth, and admire worldly power, these things are but as nothing compared with that which is in store. ”For all flesh,” it says, ”is grass: and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.” And if you speak of temporal affluence and luxuries and banquets, yet ”the world,” it says, ”passes away, and the desire thereof.” The things therefore which are of God surpass in an incomparable degree ought which this world possesses. If therefore God bestow the kingdom of heaven upon those that love Him, how can He be unwilling to give food and raiment?

And He calls these on earth a ”little flock.” For we are inferior to the multitude of the angels, who are innumerable, and incomparably surpass in might our mortal things. And this too the Saviour has Himself taught us, in that parable in the Gospels so excellently framed for our instruction: for He said, ”What man of you, that has a hundred sheep, and one of them go astray, will not leave the ninety and nine upon the mountains, and go to seek that which has strayed? And if he chance to find it, verily I say unto you, that he will rejoice in it more than in the ninety and nine which went not astray.” Observe therefore, that while the number of rational created beings extends to ten times ten, the flock that is upon earth is but as one out of a hundred. But though it is little, both by nature and number and dignity, compared with the countless troops of the spirits that are above, yet has the goodness of the Father, which surpasses all description, given also to it the portion of those transcendent spirits, I mean the kingdom of heaven: for permission is given to whosoever will to attain thereunto.

[And the means by which we may attain to it, we learn from the Saviour’s words: for He says, ”Sell that you have, and give alms.” And this perchance] is a commandment hard and difficult for the rich to endure: for so He Himself has somewhere said; ”That hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God.” And yet the commandment is not impossible for them that are of perfect mind. For come, let me address a few words to those who are rich. Withdraw your attention a little from these temporal things; cease from too worldly a mind; fix the eye of the understanding upon the world that is to be hereafter: for that is of long duration; but this is limited and short: the time of every individual’s life here is allotted by measure; but his life in the world to come is incorruptible and enduring. Let our earnestness therefore after things to come be unwavering: let us store up as our

treasure the hope of what will be hereafter: let us gather beforehand for ourselves those things, by which we shall even then be counted worthy of the gifts which God bestows.

To persuade us, however, to take due care of our souls, come, and let us consider the matter among ourselves with reference to men's ordinary calculations. Suppose one of us wanted to sell a fertile and productive farm, or, if you will, a very beautifully-built house; and so one of you, who had plenty of gold and plenty of silver, were to conceive the desire of purchasing it; would be not feel pleasure in buying it, and readily give the money that was laid up in his coffers, and even add to what he had by him other money on loan? Of this I think there can be no doubt, and that he would feel pleasure in giving it: for the transaction would not expose him to loss, but rather the expectation of his future gains would make him in a flutter of joy. Now what I say is somewhat similar to this. The God of all offers to sell you paradise. There you will reap eternal life; an unending joy; an honourable and glorious habitation. Once there, right blessed will you be, and will reign with Christ. Draw near therefore with eagerness: purchase the estate: with these earthly things obtain things eternal: give that which abides not, and gain that which is secure: give these earthly things, and win that which is in heaven: give that which you must leave, even against your will, that you may not lose things hereafter: lend to God your wealth, that you may be really rich.

And the way in which to lend it He next teaches us, saying; "Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make you purses that grow not old: and a treasure that fails not, eternal, in "heaven." And the very same the blessed David also teaches us in the Psalms, where he says by inspiration of every merciful and good man: "He has dispersed, and given to the poor, and his righteousness is stored up for ever." For worldly wealth has many foes: for thieves are numerous, and this world of ours is full of oppressors; of whom some are wont to plunder by secret means, while others use violence, and tear it away even from those who resist. But the wealth that is laid up above in heaven, no one injures: for God is its Keeper, Who sleeps not.

And besides it is a very absurd thing, that while we often entrust men of probity with our earthly wealth, and feel no fear lest any loss should result from our confidence in the uprightness of those who receive it; we will not trust it to God, Who receives from us these earthly things, so to speak, as a loan, and promises to give us things eternal, and that with usury. "For good measure," He says, "and pressed close, and weighing down the scale, and running over, shall they give into your bosom. And for the measure to run over, is a direct proof of its great abundance. Away then with this pleasure-loving wealth; this parent of base lusts; this inciter to carnal impurity; this friend of covetousness; this worker of boasting: which, as with indissoluble bonds, chains the human mind in effeminacy and indolence towards all that is good,

and stretches out, so to speak, a stiff and haughty neck against God: for it yields not itself to that yoke which would lead it unto piety. And be gentle, and merciful, ready to communicate, and courteous. For the Lord is true, Who says; ”that where your treasure is, there is your heart also. For the whole earnestness of those who value these temporal things is set upon them; while those who wish for that which is in heaven, direct thither the eye of the mind. Bo therefore, as I said, friendly to your companions, and merciful. And the blessed Paul makes me speak unto you, where he writes;

”Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in riches, wherein is no reliance, but on God, Who gives us all things richly to enjoy: that they do good: that they be rich in good works, ready to give, and willing to share with others; laying up for themselves treasures that shall be a good foundation for that which is to come, that they may lay hold upon true life. These are the things which, if we earnestly practise, we shall become heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and over, Amen.

SERMON XCII.

12:35-40. Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning, and be like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the banquet: that when he has come and knocked they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom their lord at his coming shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he will gird up his loins, and make them sit down to meat, and pass by and minister unto them. And if he come in the second watch, or if he come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief would come, he would be awake, and not have suffered his house to be dug through. Be you therefore also ready, for in an hour that you expect not the Son of man cometh.

THE Psalmist has somewhere said unto Christ, the Saviour of all; ”Your commandment is exceeding broad.” And any one may see if he will from the very facts that this saying is true: for He establishes for us pathways in countless numbers, so to speak, to lead us unto salvation, and make us acquainted with every good work, that we, winning for our heads the crown of piety, and imitating the noble conduct of the saints, may attain to that portion which is fitly prepared for them. For this reason He says, ”Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning.” For He speaks to them as to spiritually-minded persons, and describes once again things intellectual by such as are apparent and visible. For let no one say, that He wishes us to have our bodily loins girt, and burning lamps in our hands:----such an interpretation would suit only Jewish dullness:----but our loins being girt, signifies the readiness of the mind to labour industriously in every thing praiseworthy; for such as apply themselves to bodily labours, and are engaged in strenuous toil, have their loins girt. And the lamp apparently represents the wakefulness of the mind, and intellectual cheerfulness. And we say that the human mind is awake when it repels any tendency to slumber off into that carelessness, which often is the means of bringing it into subjection to every kind of wickedness, when being sunk in stupor the heavenly light within it is liable to be endangered, or even already is in danger from a violent and impetuous blast, as it were, of wind. Christ therefore commands us to be awake: and to this His disciple also arouses us by saying; Be awake: be

watchful." And further, the very wise Paul also says; "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead: and Christ shall give you light."

It is the duty therefore of those who would be partakers of eternal life, and firmly believe that in due season Christ will descend from heaven as Judge, not to be lax, and dissolved in pleasures; nor, so to speak, poured out and melted in worldly dissipation: but rather let them have their will tightly girt, and distinguish themselves by their zeal in labouring in those duties with which God is well pleased. And they must further possess a vigilant and wakeful mind, distinguished by the knowledge of the truth, and richly endowed with the radiance of the vision of God; so as for them, rejoicing therein, to say, "You, O Lord, will light my lamp: You, my God, will lighten my darkness." Quite unbefitting is an expression like this for heretics, whether they be the sectaries or the teachers. For as Christ Himself said, "Darkness has blinded their eyes." And this Paul explains to us, saying, that "the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ may not shine upon them." It is our duty therefore carefully to avoid their false speaking, and not to turn aside from the doctrines of the truth; and admit into our minds the darkness of the devil; but rather to draw near to the true light, even Christ, praising Him in psalms and sayings "Lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not for death." For it is in very deed death, and that not of the body, but of the soul, to fall from the uprightness of true doctrines, and choose falsehood instead of the truth. Let therefore our loins be girt, and our lamps burning, according to what has here been spoken unto us.

And let us know that the law also of the very wise Moses is found to have commanded something of the kind to the Israelites. For a lamb was sacrificed on the fourteenth day of the first month, as a type of Christ. "For our passover, Christ is sacrificed," according to the testimony of most sacred Paul. The hierophant Moses then, or rather God by his means, commanded them, when eating its flesh, saying, "Let your loins be girt, and your shoes on your feet, and your staves in your hands." For I affirm that it is the duty of those who are partakers of Christ, to beware of a barren indolence; and yet further, not to have as it were their loins ungirt and loose, but be ready cheerfully to undertake whatever labours become the saints; and to hasten besides with alacrity whithersoever the law of God leads them. And for this reason He very appropriately made them wear [at the passover] the garb of travellers.

And that we ought to look for the coming again of Christ from heaven;----for He will come in the glory of the Father with the holy angels;----He has taught us saying, "That we must be like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the banqueting-house, that when he has come and knocked, they may open to him immediately." For Christ will return as from a feast: by which is plainly shown, that God over dwells in festivals, such as befit Him. For above there is no

sadness whatsoever: since nothing can grieve That nature Which is incapable of passion, and of being affected by anything whatsoever of this kind. When therefore He comes and finds us girt and wakeful, and with our heart enlightened, then forthwith He will make us blessed: for ”He will gird up His loins, and serve them.” By which we learn that he will requite us proportionately: and because we are as it were weary with toil, He will comfort us, setting before us spiritual banquets, and spreading the abundant table of His gifts.

”And whether He come in the second watch, it says, or whether He come in the third watch, blessed are they. Here observe I pray, the breadth of the divine gentleness, and the bountifulness of His mildness towards us. For verily He knows our frame, and the readiness with which man’s mind wanders into sin. He knows that the power of fleshly lust tyrannizes over us, and that the distractions of this world even, so to speak, against our will drag us on by force, leading the mind into all that is unseemly. But in that He is good, He does not leave us to despair, but on the contrary, pities us, and has given us repentance as the medicine of salvation. For this reason He says, that ”whether He come in the second watch, or whether He come in the third watch, and find them so doing, blessed are they. Now the meaning of this you will certainly wish clearly to understand. Men therefore divide the night into three or four watches. For the sentinels on city walls, who watch the motions of the enemy, after being on guard three or four hours, deliver over the watch and guard to others. So with us there are three ages: the first, that in which we are still children; the second, in which we are young men; and the third, that in which we come to old age.

Now the first of these, in which we are still children, is not called to account by God, but is deemed worthy of pardon, because of the imbecillity as yet of the mind, and the weakness of the understanding. But the second and the third, the periods of manhood and old age, owe to God obedience and piety of life, according to His good pleasure. Whosoever therefore is found watching, and, so to speak, well girt, whether, if it so chance, he be still a young man, or one who has arrived at old age, blessed shall he be. For he shall be counted worthy of attaining to Christ’s promises.

And in commanding us to watch, He adds further for our safety a plain example, which very excellently shows that it is dangerous to act otherwise. For He says, ”that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief would come, he would be awake, and not have suffered his house to be dug through. Be you therefore also ready, for in an hour that you expect not, the Son of man comes.” For as His disciple said, ”The day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens shall suddenly pass away, and the elements being on fire shall melt, and the earth, and the works that are therein shall be utterly burned. But we look for new heavens and a new earth, and His promises.” And to this he adds, ”Since then

all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be found, being holy and without blame before Him? ” For no one at all knows the time of the consummation of all things, at which Christ shall appear from above, from heaven, to judge the world in righteousness. Then shall He give an incorruptible crown to them that are watching; for He is the Giver, and Distributor, and Bestower of the Divine gifts: by Whom, and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XCIII.

12:41-48. And Peter said, Lord do You speak this parable unto us, or also unto all? And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give the portion of food in its season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord at his coming shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will appoint him over all that he has. But if that servant say in his heart, My lord delays his coming, and begin to beat the men servants and female servants, and to eat and drink, and be drunken: the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he expects not, and at an hour of which he is not aware, and will cut him asunder, and give him a portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew his lord's will, and did it not, neither prepared according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But He who knew it not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will require the more.

IT is a good and saving thing for us to direct the penetrating glance of the mind unto the words of God. For it is written of the words which God speaks, "Who is wise, and he will understand them? or prudent, and he will know their meaning?" For simply to hear, and receive the spoken word in the ear, is common to all men, both to the wise, and to those who are not so: but the habit of penetrating deep into profitable thoughts is found only with those who are truly wise. Let us therefore ask this of Christ: let us imitate the blessed Peter, that chosen disciple, that faithful steward and true believer; who, when he had heard Christ say somewhat highly advantageous for their benefit, prayed that it might be explained to him, and did not allow it to pass by, because he had not as yet clearly understood it. For he said, "Lord, speak You this parable unto us, or also unto all? Is it, he asks, a general law, and one that appertains in equal measure to all, or is it fitting for those only who are superior to the rest? What then was it which troubled the wise disciple, or what led him to wish to learn things such as this from Christ? This point then we will first discuss.

There are then some commandments which befit those who have attained to apostolic dignities, or possess a more than ordinary knowledge, and the higher spiritual virtues; while others belong to those in an inferior station. And that this is true, and according to my words, we may see from what the blessed Paul wrote unto certain of his disciples, ”I have given you milk to drink, and not meat: for you were not as yet strong enough, nor even yet could you bear it.” ”For solid food belongs to them that are full grown, who by reason of perfectness have the senses of the heart exercised for the discerning of good and evil.” For just, for instance, as very heavy burdens can be carried by persons of a very powerful frame, to which men of weaker stature are unequal, so those of a vigorous mind may justly be expected to fulfil the weightier and more excellent commands among those which become the saints; while such as are, so to speak, simple, and quite easy, and free from all difficulty, suit those who have not yet attained to this spiritual strength. The blessed Peter therefore, considering with himself the force of what Christ had said, rightly asked, which of the two was meant; whether the declaration referred to all believers, or only to them; that is, to those who had been called to the discipleship, and especially honoured by the grant of apostolic powers?

And what is our Lord’s reply? He makes use of a clear and very evident example, to show that the commandment especially belongs to those who occupy a more dignified position, and have been admitted into the rank of teachers. ”For who, He says, is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord will set over his household, to give the allowance of food at its season,” ’Let us suppose, He says, a householder; who being about to go upon a journey„ has entrusted to one of his faithful slaves the charge of all his house, to give his household, that is, his servants, their allowance of corn at its due season. When therefore, He says, he shall return, if on coming to his house he shall find him so doing as he commanded, very blessed shall that servant be. For he will set him, He says, over all that he has. But if he be neglectful and indolent, and take pleasure in oppressing his fellow-servants, eating and drinking, and given up to self-indulgent voluptuousness, he will be cut asunder, that is, will have to bear the severest punishment, when his lord shall come to him in a day that he expects not, and at an hour of which he is not aware.’

Such then is the simple and plain meaning of the passage: but if we now fix our mind accurately upon it, we shall see what is signified by it, and how useful it is for their benefit who have been called to the apostleship, to the office, that is, of teacher. The Saviour has ordained as stewards, so to speak, over his servants;----that is, over those who have been won by faith to the acknowledgment of His glory;----men faithful and of great understanding, and well instructed in the sacred doctrines. And He has ordained them, commanding them to give their fellow-servants their allowance of food; and that not simply and without distinction, but rather at its proper season: by which is meant such food, I mean spiritual food, as is sufficient and fitting for each individual. For it is not fitting to address simply to

all who have believed in Christ instruction upon all points; for it is written, ”With knowledge learn the souls of your flock.” For very different is the way in which we establish in the paths of truth one who has but just now become a disciple, using simple teaching, in which there is nothing profound nor difficult to understand, counselling him to escape from the error of polytheism, and fittingly persuading him to discern by the beauty of things created, the universal Creator and Artificer, Who is One by nature, and verily God: from the way in which we instruct those who are more confirmed in mind, and able to understand what is the height and depth, and what the length and breadth, of the definitions of the supreme Godhead. For as we have already said, ” Solid meat belongs to them that are full grown.”

Whoever therefore shall wisely in due season, and according to their need, divide to his fellow-servants their portion, that is, their food, very blessed shall he be, according to the Saviour’s word. For he shall be counted worthy of still greater things, and shall receive a suitable recompense for his fidelity. ”For he will set him, He says, over all that he has.” And this the Saviour has elsewhere taught us, where praising the active and faithful servant, He said, ”O good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over few things, I will set you over many things: enter into the joy of your lord.”

But if, He says, neglecting the duty of being diligent and faithful, and despising watchfulness in these things as superfluous, he let his mind grow intoxicated with worldly cares, and is seduced into improper courses, dragging by force, and oppressing those who are subject to him, and not giving them their portion, in utter wretchedness shall he be. For this I think, and this only, is the meaning of his being cut asunder. ”And his portion too,” He says, ”shall be with the unbelievers. For whosoever has done wrong to the glory of Christ, or ventured to think slightingly of the flock entrusted to his charge, differs in no respect whatsoever from those who know Him not: and all such persons will justly be counted among those who have no love for Him. For Christ even once said to the blessed Peter, ” Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me? feed My sheep; feed My lambs. If therefore he who feeds his flock loves it, then of course he that neglects it, and leaves the flock that has been entrusted to him without oversight, hates it: and if he hate it he will be punished, and be liable to the condemnation pronounced upon the unbelievers, as being convicted by the very facts of being negligent and contemptuous.

Such was he who received the talent to trade with in things spiritual, and did not do so, but on the contrary brought that which had been given him without increase, saying, ”Lord, I knew that you are a hard man, that you reap where others have sown, and gather whence others have scattered; and I was afraid, and hid the talent: lo! you have what is yours. But those who had received the five talents, or even yet more, and laboured and loved service, were honoured with glorious dignities. For they heard, the one of them, ”Be you over ten,” and the other, ”Be you

over five cities: while that contumelious and slothful servant suffered the severest condemnation. To be negligent therefore in discharging the duties of the ministry is everywhere dangerous, or rather, brings upon men perdition: but to perform them with unwearying zeal earns for us life and glory. And this means to discourse to our fellow servants correctly and without error the things which relate to God, and whatsoever is able to benefit them in attaining both to the knowledge and the ability to walk uprightly. And the blessed Paul [Peter] also writes to certain persons, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive your reward. And as knowing that slothfulness is the door of perdition, he again said, "Woe is me, if I preach not."

And that bitter and inevitable punishment is threatened against those who are slothful in this duty, the Saviour immediately showed, by adding to what had been already said two examples one after the other. "For the servant," He says, "who knew his master's will, and did it not, neither prepared according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes: but he who knew it not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Now the guilt is indisputable in the case of him who knew his master's will, but afterwards neglected it, and did nothing that was fitting, and which it was his duty to do. For it is manifest contumely, and therefore the many stripes. But for what reason were the few stripes inflicted on him who neither knew nor did his master's will? For some one, for instance, may say, How can he who knew it not be guilty? The reason is, because he would not know it, although it was in his power to learn. But if he who is. entirely ignorant of it does not escape from anger, because when it was his duty to know he neglected the means of learning, what plea can deliver him from justly bearing many stripes, who knew, and disregarded it? "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will require the more."

Very severe therefore is the condemnation of those who teach. And this Christ's disciple shows us, saying, "Let there not be many teachers among you, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." For abundant is the bestowal of spiritual gifts upon those who are the chiefs of the people: for so the wise Paul also somewhere wrote to the blessed Timothy; "The Lord shall give you wisdom in every thing." And, "Despise not the gift that is in you, which was given you by the laying on of my hands." From such as these then, the Saviour of all, in that He has given them much, requires much in return. And what are the virtues He requires? Constancy in the faith; correctness in teaching; to be well grounded in hope; unwavering in patience; invincible in spiritual strength; cheerful and brave in every more excellent achievement: that so we may be examples to others of the evangelic life. For if we will thus live, Christ will bestow upon us the crown; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XCIV.

12:49-53. I am come to cast fire upon the earth: and what will I, if already it be kindled? And I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened, until it be accomplished! You think that I am come to give peace upon earth: I tell you, Nay, but division. For henceforth there shall be five in one house divided; three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. GOD the Father for the salvation of all sent down for us the Son from heaven. For to the Israelites indeed He gave the law to be their helper, according to the Scripture; and also spoke to them by the holy prophets such things as were profitable for their salvation, promising them the deliverance that is by Christ. But when the season had arrived, in which those things that had been prophesied of old were to be accomplished, He Who is God and Lord shone forth upon us. And He tells us the cause thereof in these words; ”I am come to cast fire upon the earth; and what will I if already it be kindled? Come therefore, and let us examine of what nature is this fire, concerning which He here speaks. Is it useful for those upon earth? Is it for their salvation? Or does it torture men, and cause their perdition, like that which is prepared for the devil and his angels?

We affirm therefore that the fire which is sent forth by Christ is for men’s salvation and profits’: God grant that all our hearts may be full thereof. For the fire here is, I say, the saving message of the Gospel, and the power of its commandments; by which all of us upon earth, who were so to speak cold and dead because of sin, and in ignorance of Him Who by nature and truly is God, are kindled unto a life of piety, and made ”fervent in spirit,” according to the expression of the blessed Paul. And besides this we are also made partakers of the Holy Spirit, Who is as fire within us. For we have been baptized with fire and the Holy Spirit. And we have learnt the way thereto, by what Christ says to us: for listen to His words; ”Verily I say unto you, that except a man be born of water and spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

It is the custom moreover of the divinely inspired Scripture to give the name of fire sometimes to the divine and sacred words, and to the efficacy and power which is by the Holy Spirit, and whereby we are made, as I said, ”fervent in spirit. For one of the holy prophets thus spoke as in the person of God respecting Christ our common Saviour: ”The Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, Whom you desire: behold He comes, says the Lord. And who shall endure the day of His coming? or who shall stand at the sight of Him? For lo! He comes like the fire of a furnace, and like the sulphur of the bleacher. And He shall sit, like one that smelts and purifies as silver and as gold. Now by the temple he here means the body, holy of a truth and undefiled, which was born of the holy virgin by the Holy Spirit in the power of the Father. For so was it said to the blessed virgin, ”The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you. And he styles Him the Messenger of the covenant,” because He makes known and ministers unto us the good-will of the Father. For He has Himself said to us, ”All things that I have heard of the Father, 1 have made known unto you. And the prophet Isaiah also thus writes respecting Him; ”Unto us a Child is born;

yes, unto us a Son is given: and His government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called, The Messenger of the great counsel. Just therefore as those who know how to refine gold and silver, melt out the dross contained in them by the use of fire; so also the Saviour of all cleanses by the doctrines of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit, the mind of all those who have believed in Him.

And further the prophet Isaiah also said, that ”He saw the Lord of Sabaoth sitting upon a throne high, and lifted up: and around Him stood the Seraphim, praising Him. Then said He to himself, Alas for me a sinner, for I repent me: in that being a man, and of unclean lips, I dwell among a people of unclean lips, and have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Sabaoth.” But to this he adds, that ” one of the Seraphim was sent unto me, and in his hand he had a live coal, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar, and he touched with it my mouth, and said, Lo! this has touched your lips, and it shall take away your sins, and cleanse you of your iniquities.” What interpretation then are we to put upon the coal which touched the prophet’s lips, and cleansed him from all sin? Plainly it is the message of salvation, and the confession of faith in Christ, which whosoever receives with his mouth is forthwith and altogether purified. And of this Paul thus assures us; ”that if you say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.”

We say then that the power of the divine message resembles a live coal and fire. And the God of all somewhere said to the prophet Jeremiah, ”Behold, I have made My words in your mouth to be fire, and this people to be wood, and it shall devour them.” And again, ”Are not My words as burning fire, says the Lord? Rightly there-

fore did our Lord Jesus Christ say unto us, ”I am come to throw fire upon earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled!” For already some of the Jewish crowd believed on Him, whose first-fruits were the divine disciples: and the fire being once kindled was soon to seize upon the whole world, immediately that the whole dispensation had attained to its completion: as soon, that is, as He had borne His precious passion upon the cross, and had commanded the bonds of death to cease. For He rose on the third day from the dead.

And this He teaches us by saying, ”But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!” And by His baptism He means His death in the flesh: and by being straitened because of it He means, that He was saddened and troubled until it was accomplished. For what was to happen when it was accomplished? That henceforth not in Judaea only should the saving message of the Gospel be proclaimed: comparing which to fire He said, ”I am come to send fire upon earth:”----but that now it should be published even to the whole world. For before the precious cross, and His resurrection from the dead, His commandments and the glory of His divine miracles, were spoken of in Judaea only. But because Israel sinned against Him, for they killed the Prince of Life, as far as they were concerned, even though He arose having spoiled the grave: then immediately He gave commandment to the holy apostles in these words: ”Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and teaching them to observe all those things which I have commanded you.” Behold therefore, yes see, that throughout all nations was that sacred and divine fire spread abroad by means of the holy preachers.

And of the holy apostles and evangelists Christ somewhere spoke by one of the prophets: ”And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make the heads of the thousands of Judaea like a firebrand among wood, and like a fiery lamp among reeds; and they shall devour on the right hand and on the left all the nations round about.” For, so to speak, like fire they ate up all the nations, and fed upon the whole earth, kindling all its inhabitants, who as I said were cold, and had suffered the death of ignorance and sin. Would you like to see the effects of this divine and rational fire? hear then again His words: ”Or think you that I am come to give peace upon earth? I tell you, no, but division.” And yet Christ is our peace, according to the Scriptures. ”He has broken down the middle wall: He has united the two people in one now man, so making peace: and has reconciled both in one body unto the Father.” He has united the things below to them that are above: how therefore did He not come to give peace upon earth? What then say we to these things?

That peace is an honourable and truly excellent thing when given by God. For the prophets also say; ”Lord, grant us peace: for You have given us all things.” But not every peace necessarily is free from blame: there is sometimes, so to speak,

an unsafe peace, and which separates from the love of God those who, without discretion or examination, set too high a value upon it. As for instance: the determination to avoid evil men. and refuse to be at peace with them;----by which I mean the not submitting to entertain the same sentiments as they do;----is a thing profitable and useful to us. And in like manner the opposite course is injurious to those who have believed in Christ, and attained to the knowledge of His mystery: to such it is unprofitable to be willing to follow the same sentiments as those who wander away from the right path, and have fallen into the net of heathen error, or been caught in the snares of wicked heresies. With these it is honourable to contend, and to set the battle constantly in array against them, and to glory in holding opposite sentiments; so that even though it be a father that believes not, the son is free from blame who contradicts him, and resists his opinions. And in like manner also the father, if he be a believer, and true unto God, but his son disobedient and evilly disposed, and that opposes the glory of Christ, is also free from blame, if he disregard natural affection, and disowns him as his child. And the same reasoning holds with respect to mother and daughter: and daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. For it is right that those who are in error should follow those who are sound in mind: and not, on the contrary, that those should give way whose choice is to entertain correct sentiments, and who have a sound knowledge of the glory of God.

And this Christ has also declared to us in another manner; ”He that loves father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he that loves son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me.” When therefore you deny an earthly father for your piety’s sake towards Christ, then shall you gain as Father Him ”Who is in heaven. And if you give up a brother because he dishonours God, by refusing to serve Him, Christ will accept you as His brother: for with His other bounties He has given us this also, saying; ”I will declare Your Name unto My brethren.” Leave your mother after the flesh, and take her who is above, the heavenly Jerusalem, ”which is our mother:” so will you find a glorious and mighty lineage in the family of the saints. With them you will be heir of God’s gifts, which neither the mind can comprehend, nor language tell. Of which may we too be counted worthy by the grace and loving-kindness of Christ, the Saviour of us all; by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XCV.

12:54-59. And He said also to the multitudes, When you have seen a cloud rising out of the west, straightway you say, that rain comes; and so it is. And when [you see] the south wind blowing, you say, There will be heat: and so it is. You hypocrites! you know how to prove the face of the sky, and of the earth: how then know you not how to prove this time? and why even of yourselves judge you not what is just? For whilst you are going with him who has a suit against you in the way to the magistrate, give diligence that you may be delivered, from him; lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the exactor, and the exactor cast you into prison. I tell you, you shall not come out thence, until you have made compensation unto the last mite.

THOSE physicians who are exact in their art, and have become proficients by great practice, deliver the sick from their maladies, by making use of many kinds of drugs, by the aid of which they appease the anguish of men's sufferings, gathering from all quarters whatever may benefit them. And this we also find Christ, the Saviour of all, here doing: for He is the Physician of spirits, and delivers us from the maladies of the soul For He even said by one of the holy prophets; "Return, you returning sons; and I will heal your breaches." And as knowing this, the prophet Jeremiah offered up his supplications unto Him in these words: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, O Lord, and I shall be saved: for You are my glory,"

Observe, therefore, how he prepares for us the medicine of admonition, not using as He so often did direct discourse, but mingling, so to speak, and entwining with it images drawn from examples, to make it the more abundantly profitable. For He cried unto the multitudes, saying; "When you see a cloud rising out of the west, straightway you say that rain comes; and it is so. And when [you see] the south wind blowing, you say there will be heat: and so it is. For men fix their attention on things of this kind, and from long observation and practice tell beforehand when rain will fall, or gusts happen of violent winds: and one especially sees sailors very skilful in this matter. Well therefore, He says, well would it become those who can calculate things of this sort, and foretell, it may be, storms that are about to happen, to fix the penetrating glance of the mind also upon matters of importance. And what

are these? The law showed beforehand the mystery of Christ; and that certainly He would shine forth in the last ages of the world upon the inhabitants of the earth, and submit to be a sacrifice for the salvation of all. For it even commanded a lamb to be sacrificed as a type of Him towards evening, and at lamp-lighting; that we might understand, that when, like the day, this world was declining to its close, the great and precious and truly-saving passion would be fulfilled:

and the door of salvation be thrown widely open unto those who believe in Him, and abundant happiness be their lot. For also in the Song of Songs we find Christ calling to the bride there described, and who represents the person of the Church, in these words: ”Arise, come, My neighbour, My beautiful dove: for lo! the winter is past, and the rain is gone: it has passed away. The flowers appear on the ground: the time of the pruning is come. As I said, therefore, a certain springlike calm was about to arise for those who believe in Him.

But against those, who, in the greatness of their wickedness, have scorned His goodness, and rejected the Saviour, there is decreed wrath and misery; and, as it were, a winter of torment and punishment, from the blast of which hard will it be to escape. For, as the Psalmist says; ”Fire, and brimstone, and the whirlwind, is the portion of their cup.” And why so? Because they have rejected, as I said, the grace that is by faith; and therefore the guilt of their sins cannot be wiped away, and they must bear, as they deserve, the punishment due to those who love sin. For so, when speaking of the Jews, He said; ”Verily I say unto you, that if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins.” And that the blessed prophets also in manifold ways preached the mystery of Christ, no one can doubt. For one of them thus speaks as in the person of God the Father: ”Behold I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence: and whosoever believes in Him shall not be ashamed.” For those who are in their sins are full of shame. For so it is somewhere said of the Israelites, who violated the law of Moses: ”Like the shame of a thief when he is caught, so shall the children of Israel be ashamed.” But those who are in Christ by faith, escaping from the pollutions of sin, are not only not full of shame, but have that boldness which becomes those who are free.

It was their duty, therefore, yes! their duty, He says, as being possessed of understanding, and able to discern the face of the sky and of the earth, to examine also things future, and not to let those tempests escape their observation, which come after this world. For there will be the south wind and rain: that is to say, fiery torment. For the south wind is hot: and the infliction of that punishment is vehement and inevitable, like the rain falling upon those overtaken by it. They must not, therefore, let the time of salvation pass by unnoticed: that time in which our Saviour came, and at which perfect knowledge of the truth reached mankind, and the grace shone forth which purifies the wicked. And that, not by means of the law: for ”it made nothing perfect,” having only types and shadows; but by faith rather

in Christ, not rejecting the law, but fulfilling it by a spiritual service. For the very wise Paul wrote; ”Do we then make void the law through faith? It may not be: but we establish the law.” For we who are justified by Christ establish that law of faith, which in manifold ways was proclaimed beforehand by Moses and the prophets.

That it is our duty, therefore, to be watchful, in seeking quickly to attain to deliverance from our sins, and the means of escaping from blame, before we arrive at the termination of our natural lives, He has shown, by saying; ”And why even of yourselves judge you not what is just? For while you are going with him who has a suit against you, in the way to the magistrate, give diligence that you may be delivered from him; lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the exactor, and the exactor cast you into prison. I tell you, you shall not come out thence, until you have made compensation unto the last mite.” Now perhaps it may be imagined that the sense of this passage is difficult to comprehend: but it will become very easy if we examine the metaphor by what takes place among ourselves. For let there be supposed, He says, some one who has brought a charge against you before one of those in authority, and has pointed you out to those whose office it is to carry the accused into court, and is causing you to be taken thither. ”While therefore, He says, you are still with him on the way,” that is, before you have come to the judge, ”give diligence,” that is, weary not, in using all your earnestness that you may be delivered from him. For otherwise he will give you up to the judge; and then, when you have been proved to be indebted to him, you will be delivered to the exactors, to those, that is, whose office it is to exact the money; and they will cast you into prison, and make you pay the last mite.

Now all of us, without exception, upon earth are guilty of offences: he who has a suit against us and accuses us is the wicked Satan: for he is ”the enemy and the exactor.” While therefore we are in the way: that is, ere yet we have arrived at the termination of our life here, let us deliver ourselves from him: let us do away with the offences of which we have been guilty: let us close his mouth: let us seize upon the grace that is by Christ, which frees us from all debt and penalty, and delivers us from fear and torment: lest if our impurity be not cleansed away, we be carried before the judge, and given over to the exactors, that is, the tormentors, from whose cruelty no man can escape: yea, rather, who will exact vengeance for every fault, whether it be great or small.

Far removed from this danger are those who search for the time of Christ’s corning, and are not ignorant of His mystery, but well know that the Word, though He be God, has shone forth upon the inhabitants of earth in likeness as one of us, that freeing them from all blame, He may bless with exceeding happiness those who believe in Him, and acknowledge Him as God and the Son of God: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XCVI.

13:6-9. And He spoke this parable. A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, but found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Lo, three years indeed I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none. Out it down therefore: why does it make the ground also barren? But he answered and said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also: until I dig around it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit in the coming [year, well], and if not, you shall cut it down.

THE Psalmist shows the surpassing gentleness of Christ, the Saviour of us all, in these words; ”Lord, what is man, that You art mindful of him, or the son of man, that You visit him?” For man upon earth, as far as his bodily nature is concerned, is dust and ashes: but he has been honoured by God, by having been made in His image and likeness: not in his bodily shape, that is, but rather because he is capable of being just and good, and fitted for all virtue. The Creator therefore takes care of him, as being His creature, and for the purpose of adorning the earth. For as the prophet Isaiah says; ”He made it not in vain, but that it should be inhabited:”----inhabited of course by a rational animal, who can discern with the eyes of the mind the Creator and Artificer of the Universe, and glorify Him like the spirits that are above. Put because by the deceiving arts of the serpent he had turned aside unto wickedness, and was held fast by the chains of sin, and removed far from God, Christ, to enable him once again to mount upwards, has sought him out, and fashioned him anew to what he was at first, and granted him repentance as the pathway to lead him unto salvation.

He proposes therefore a wise parable: but we ought perhaps first to explain what was the occasion which led to it, or what at all the necessity why He brought it forward. There were therefore certain who told Christ, the Saviour of us all, that Pilate had put to death cruelly and without pity certain Galilaeans, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices. And others that the tower near Shiloh had fallen, and eighteen persons perished beneath the ruins. And afterwards referring to these things, Christ had said to His hearers; ”Verily, I say unto you, that except

you repent, you also shall in like manner perish." This was the head and root of the present parable, and that at which it was, as it were, aimed.

Now the outer sense of this passage needs not a single word for its explanation: but when we search into its inward and secret and unseen purport, it is, we affirm, as follows. The Israelites, after our Saviour's crucifixion, were doomed to fall into the miseries they deserved, Jerusalem being captured, and its inhabitants slaughtered by the sword of the enemy. Nor were they to perish thus only, but their houses were to be burnt with fire, and even the temple of God demolished. It is probable therefore that He likens the synagogue of the Jews to a fig tree; for the sacred Scripture also compares them to various plants: to the vine, for instance, and the olive, and even to a forest. For the prophet Jeremiah at one time says of Jerusalem, or rather of its inhabitants; "Israel is a vine with many branches. And again at another addressing it, he says; "The Lord has called your name a beautiful olive tree, well shaded in appearance: at its pruning time a fire was kindled in it: great was the tribulation that was upon it; its branches were destroyed. And another of the holy prophets, comparing it to Mount Lebanon, thus speaks; "Open your doors, O Lebanon, and the fire shall devour your cedars. For the forest that was in Jerusalem, even the people there, many as they were and innumerable, was destroyed as by fire.

He takes therefore, as I said, the fig tree spoken of in the parable as a figure of the Jewish synagogue, that is, of the Israelites: and "three years," He says, "He sought fruit upon it, and found none. By which, I think, are signified to us those three periods during which the Jewish synagogue bore no fruit. The first of these, one may say, was that in which Moses and Aaron and his sons lived: who served God, holding the office of the priesthood according to the law. The second was the period of Jeshua, the son of Nun, and the judges who succeeded him. And the third, that in which the blessed prophets flourished down to the time of John the Baptist During these periods Israel brought forth no fruit.

But I can imagine persons making to this the following objection; 'But lo! it did fulfil the service ordained by the law, and offered the sacrifices which consisted in the blood of victims and burning incense.' But to this we reply: that in the writings of Moses there was only a type of the truth, and a gross and material service: there was not as yet a service simple, pure, and spiritual, such as we affirm God chiefly loves, having so learnt of Christ, Who said; "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." As far therefore as regarded the good-will of the Father, and evidently that also of the Son, the service which consisted in shadows and types was unacceptable, being utterly without fruit in whatsoever appertains to a sweet spiritual savour. And therefore it was rejected: for so the Saviour teaches us, when saying to God the Father in heaven; "Sacrifice and offering You would not: and whole burnt offerings, and sin offerings You did

not require." And again by the voice of Isaiah He says Himself to those who were seeking to fulfil it: "For who has required this at your hands? Tread My court no more: if you bring fine meal, it is in vain: incense is an abomination unto Me." How therefore can that which God hates and abominates be supposed to be the rational and spiritual fruit of the soul, and acceptable unto Him?

He says therefore, "Lo, three years do I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none. Cut it down therefore: why does it make the ground also useless." As though He would say, Let the place of this barren fig tree be laid bare: for then there will come up or may be planted there some other tree. And this too was done:. for the multitude of the Gentiles was summoned into its room, and took possession of the inheritance of the Israelites. It became the people of God; the plant of Paradise; a germ good and honourable; that knows how to bring forth fruit, not in shadows and types, but rather by a pure and perfectly stainless service, even that which is in spirit and in truth, as being offered to God, Who is an immaterial Being. The owner then of the ground said, that the fig-tree, which during so long a time had been barren and without fruit, must be cut down. But the vinedresser, it says, besought him, saying; "Lord, let it alone this year also: until I dig around it and dung it: and if it bear fruit in the coming [year, well;] and if not, you shall cut it down."

Now it is necessary to inquire, who is to be understood by the vinedresser. If then any one choose to affirm that it is the angel who was appointed by God as the guardian of the synagogue of the Jews, he would not miss a suitable interpretation. For we remember that the prophet Zechariah wrote, that one of the holy angels stood offering supplications for Jerusalem, and saying, "O Lord Almighty, how long will You not have mercy upon Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah; which You have abandoned, lo! for seventy years?" And it is written also in Exodus, that when the ruler of the land of the Egyptians with his warriors was pursuing after the Israelites, and was already upon the point of engaging with them in battle, the angel of God stood between the camp of the Israelites and of the Egyptians, and the one came not near the other all the night. There is therefore nothing unbefitting in supposing here also, that the holy angel who was the guardian of the synagogue offered supplications in its behalf, and prayed for a respite, if perchance yielding to better influence it might yet bring forth fruit.

But if any one should say that the vinedresser is the Son, this view also, has a reason on its side not unbefitting right arguments. For "He is our Advocate with the Father," "and our propitiation," and the husbandman of our souls, Who prunes away constantly whatever is to our hurt, and fills us with rational and holy seeds, that so we may bring forth for Him fruits: and so He spoke of Himself. " A sower went out to sow his seed." And it in no respect militates against the glory of the Son, that He assumes the character of the vinedresser: for the leather is Himself

also found to have taken it, without being exposed to any blame for so doing. For the Son said to the holy apostles, ” I am the Vine: you are the branches: My Father is the Husbandman.” For the verbal expression must from time to time be made to accord with the suppositions which are laid down.

Let Him therefore be supposed to be the Advocate in our behalf: and He says, ”Let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and dung it.” And what then is this year? But plainly this fourth year, this time subsequent to those former periods, is that in which the Only-begotten Word of God became man, to stir up like some husbandman by spiritual exhortations the Israelites who had withered away in sin, digging round them, and warning them, to make them ”fervent in spirit.” For He repeatedly denounced against them destruction and ruin, wars and slaughters, burnings and captivities, and immitigable wrath: while, on the other hand, He promised, if they would believe on Him, and now at length become fruitful trees, that he would give them life and glory, the grace of adoption, the communion of the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of heaven. But Israel was incapable of being taught even thus. It was still a barren fig tree, and continued so to be. It was cut down, therefore, that it might not make the ground useless: and in its stead there sprung up, as a fertile plant, the gentile church, beautiful, and fruit-bearing, deeply-rooted, and incapable of being shaken. For they have been counted as children unto Abraham, and have been ingrafted into the good olive-tree: for a root has been preserved, and Israel has not utterly perished.

But that it was doomed to be cut down, on account of its utter barrenness, the blessed John the Baptist also declared in these words; ”Behold the axe is laid at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” And one of the holy prophets also * * * * * [The rest of this (96th) Exposition, the whole of the 97th, and the commencement of the 98th, having perished, their place is supplied from Mai’s Nov. Bib. Pat. vol. ii. pp. 315-321; and Cramer, ii. 107, where some of the following extract is given anonymously: and from the Aurea Catena, p. 201. ed. Venet. 1775. -- translator] Behold there was a woman, who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years.

Now there was in the synagogue a woman who for eighteen years was bowed down by infirmity. And her case may prove of no little benefit to those who have understanding: for we must gather what is to our advantage from every quarter:----since by what happened to her we may see that Satan often receives authority over certain persons, such, namely, as fall into sin, and have grown lax in their efforts after piety. Whomsoever therefore he gets into his power, he involves, it may be, in bodily diseases, since he delights in punishment and is merciless. And the opportunity for this the all-seeing God most wisely grants him, that being sore vexed by the burden of their misery, men may sot themselves upon changing to a better course. For which reason St. Paul also delivered over to Satan a certain person at Corinth

accused of fornication, ”for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved. The woman therefore who was bowed down is said to have suffered this from the cruelty of the devil, according to our Master’s words, ”Whom Satan has bound for eighteen years: God, as I said, so permitting it, either for her own sins, or rather by the operation of a universal and general law. For the accursed Satan is the cause of disease to the bodies of men, inasmuch as Adam’s transgression was, we affirm, his doing, and by means of it our human frames have become liable to infirmity and decay. But when this was the state of men.

God, Who by His very nature is good, did not abandon us when suffering under the punishment of a protracted and incurable malady, but freed us from our bonds, revealing as the glorious remedy for the sufferings of mankind His own presence and manifestation in the world. For He came to fashion our state again to what it was originally: for ”God, as it is written, made not death: neither has He pleasure in the destruction of the living. For He created all things that they might have their being; and healthful were the generations of the world; and there is in them no poison of destruction,” ” but by the envy of the devil death entered into the world.”

The Incarnation of the Word, and His assumption of human nature took place for the overthrow of death and destruction, and of that envy nourished against us by the wicked serpent, who was the first cause of evil. And this is plainly proved to us by facts themselves. And so He set free the daughter of Abraham from her protracted sickness, calling out and saying, ”Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.” A speech most worthy of God, and full of supernatural power: for with the kingly inclination of His will He drives away the disease. And He also lays His hands upon her: and immediately, it says, she was made straight. And hence too it is possible to sec that His holy flesh bore in it the power and activity of God. For it was His own flesh, and not that of some other Son beside Him, distinct and separate from Him, as some most impiously imagine.

And the ruler of the synagogue answered, being indignant, that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, &c.

And yet how ought he not rather to have wondered at Christ’s having freed from her bonds this daughter of Abraham? You have seen her unexpectedly delivered from her misfortune: you were an eyewitness that the Physician prayed not, nor received as a boon from another the healing of the sick woman; but that He wrought it as a deed of power. As being the ruler of a synagogue, you know, I suppose, the writings of Moses. You saw him praying upon every occasion, and working nothing whatsoever by his own power. For when Mariam was struck with leprosy, for having merely spoken something against him in the way of reproach, and that true, ”for he had taken, she says, unto himself an Ethiopian wife,” Moses could not overcome the disease, but, on the contrary, fell down before God, saying, ”O

God, I beseech You, heal her." And not even so, though he besought it, was the penalty of her sin remitted her. And each one of the holy prophets, if anywhere at all they wrought any miracle, is seen to have done it by the power of God. But here observe, 1 pray, that Christ, the Saviour of all, offers no prayer, but refers the accomplishment of the matter to His own power, healing her by a word and the touch of the hand. For being Lord and God, He manifested His own flesh as of equal efficacy with Himself for the deliverance of men from their diseases. And hence it was intended that men should understand the purport of the mystery concerning Him. Had therefore the ruler of the synagogue been a man of understanding, he would have perceived Who and how great the Saviour was from so wonderful a miracle, nor would he have talked in the same ignorant manner as the multitudes, nor have accused those occupied with healing of a breach of the law respecting the traditional abstinence from labour on the sabbath day.

'But plainly to heal is to labour.' Is the law then broken when God shows mercy even on the sabbath day? Whom did He command to desist from labour? Himself? or was it not rather you? If Himself, let His providence over us cease on the sabbath: let the sun rest from his daily course; let the rains not fall; let the springs of waters, and the streams of ever-flowing rivers, and the winds be still: but if He commanded you to rest, blame not God because with power He has shown mercy on any even on the sabbath. And why did He command men at all to rest upon the sabbath? It was, you art told, that your manservant, and your ox, and your horse, and all your cattle might rest. When therefore He gives men rest by freeing them from their diseases, and you forbidd it, plainly you break the law of the sabbath, in not permitting those to rest who are suffering under sickness and disease, and whom Satan had bound.

But the ruler of the unthankful synagogue, when he saw the woman whose limbs were crippled, and her body bent and crooked even to the ground, receiving mercy from Christ, and made perfectly upright by the touch alone of His hand, and walking with that erect gait which becomes man, and magnifying God for her deliverance, is vexed thereat, and burning with rage against the glory of the Lord, is entangled in envy, and calumniates the miracle; nevertheless he passes by our Lord, Who would have exposed his hypocrisy, and rebukes the multitudes, that his indignation might seem to be aroused for the sake of the sabbath day. But his object really was to prevail upon those who were dispersed throughout the week, and occupied with their labours, not to be spectators and admirers of the miracles of the Lord upon the sabbath, lest ever they also should believe. But tell me, O you slave of envy, what kind of work did the law forbid in commanding you to abstain on the sabbath day from all manual labour? Does it forbid the labour of the mouth and speaking? Abstain then from eating and drinking, and conversing, and singing psalms on the sabbath. But if you abstain from these things, and do not even read the law, what good is the sabbath to you? If however you confine the prohibition

to manual labour, how is the healing of a woman by a word a manual labour? But if you call it an act because the woman was actually healed, you also perform an act in blaming her healing.

'But says he, He said, you are loosed from your infirmity: and she is loosed.' Well! do not you also unloose your girdle on the sabbath? Do not you put off your shoes, and make your bed, and cleanse your hands when dirtied with eating? Why then are you so angry at the single word "you art loosed?" And at what work did the woman labour after the word was spoken? Did she set about the craft of the brazier, or the carpenter, or the mason? Did she that very day begin weaving or working at the loom? 'No. She was made straight, he says. It was the healing absolutely that is a labour.' But no! you are not really angry on account of the sabbath: but because you see Christ honoured, and worshipped as God, you are frantic and choked with rage, and pine with envy. You have one thing concealed in your heart, and profess and make pretext of another; for which reason you art most excellently convicted by the Lord, Who knows your vain reasonings, and receive the title which befits you, in being called hypocrite and dissembler and insincere.

You hypocrite! does not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? You wonder, He says, at Me, Who have loosed a daughter of Abraham; and yet you give rest to your ox and your ass, loosing them from their labours, and leading them away to watering: but when a human being suffering from sickness is marvellously healed, and God has shown mercy, you blame both as transgressors: the One for having healed, and the other for being delivered from her malady. Behold, I pray, the ruler of the synagogue, how a human being is of less account in his sight than a beast, since at least he counts his ox and his ass worthy of care on the sabbath, but in his envy would not have Christ deliver from her infirmity the woman who was bowed together, nor wishes her to recover her natural form.

But the envious ruler of the synagogue would have preferred the woman who was made straight to be bowed down after the manner of four-footed beasts, rather than that she should recover the form fitting for man; having no other view than that Christ might not he magnified, nor he proclaimed as God by His deeds. But he is convicted of being a hypocrite, if at least he leads his dumb cattle upon the sabbath to watering, but is indignant that this woman, who was a daughter of Abraham by descent, and still more by her faith, should be freed from the chain of her infirmity. For he considers her deliverance from sickness as a transgression of the sabbath. All His adversaries were ashamed. Shame fell then on those who had uttered these corrupt opinions: who had stumbled against the chief corner stone, and been broken; who had resisted the Physician, who had clashed against the wise Potter, when busied in straightening His crooked vessels: and there was no reply which they could make. They had unanswerably convicted themselves, and

were put to silence, and in doubt what they should say. So had the Lord closed their audacious mouth. But the multitudes, who reaped the benefit of the miracles, were glad. For the glory and splendour of His works solved all inquiry and doubt in those who sought Him without malice.

It is like a grain of mustard seed. The comparison is an excellent one, and most fit to set before them what took place and happened at the divine and sacred preaching of the Gospel, to which He here gives the name of the kingdom of heaven; because it is through it that we gain the right of sharing Christ's kingdom. At first then it was addressed to few persons, and within a narrow range, but afterwards it widened its influence, and spread abroad unto all nations. For at first it was spoken in Judaea only, where also the blessed disciples were very few in number: but when Israel disobeyed, the commandment was given to the holy apostles, "having gone to make disciples of all the nations, &c." As therefore a grain of mustard seed is far inferior in size to the seeds of other plants, but shoots up to a great height, far beyond what is usual among herbs, so as for it even to become the lodging of many sparrows, so also the kingdom of heaven, even the new and sacred preaching of salvation, by which we are guided into every good work, and learn Him Who both by nature and verily is God, being at first addressed to but few persons, and as it were small and limited, shot up afterwards into rapid growth, and became the refuge of those who fled to it for shelter, and who may be compared to sparrows, because human things are but of small measure in comparison with God.

The law of Moses was given to the Israelites: but inasmuch as the inhabitants of earth could not be saved by the shadow which alone it contained and its material service, as a necessary consequence the saving preaching of the Gospel sprang up, and is spread abroad unto all under heaven. And this the letter of the Mosaic law has signified to us in an enigma: for it runs thus, "And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, You shall make unto thyself two trumpets of beaten metal, of silver shall you make them, and they shall be unto you to call the synagogue together, and to move the camp." And soon afterwards, "And the priests, the sons of Aaron, shall sound the trumpets, and it shall be a perpetual law for your generations." By this then you are intended to understand both the preparatory training of the law, and the perfectness attained to in Christ by the gospel mode of life, and the teaching which surpasses shadows and types. The law then is a trumpet, and equally so is the saving preaching of the Gospel; for by this name does the prophet Isaiah also make mention of it, saying, "And it shall come to pass on that day that they shall sound with the great trumpet," For in very deed a great trumpet sounded forth by the voice of the holy apostles, not setting at nought the first [trumpet], but [Sermon 98 restarts here]containing it also within it; for they ever prove what they say concerning Christ by the law and the prophets, making use of the testimonies of older times.

There were then two trumpets made of beaten silver, in which the silver signifies splendour; for every word of God is glorious, having in it none of the darkness of the world: and the hammering out of the metal showed that the sacred and divine trumpet, that is, both the old and new preaching, would advance and grow onward: for that which is hammered out advances as it were continually onward, and extends in breadth and length. ”For at Christ’s rising for the inhabitants of earth, both the ancient law was to advance unto its spiritual interpretation; for so we preach it who have attained unto spiritual illumination in Christ: and the message of the Gospel was to spread until it embraced the whole world. And to the priests the law gave the use of the trumpets to command the people: but Christ gave the ministers of the new proclamations, by whom are meant the holy apostles, the command to preach Him and His precepts. For they proclaim His mystery, using as it were two trumpets, both preaching Him, as having been ”from the beginning eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word,” and adding, in confirmation of their words, the true testimonies of the law and the prophets.

And it is no difficult thing to see, that the message of the Gospel preaching, being small at first, was soon to leap forth as it were unto great increase, inasmuch as God had foretold of it by the voice of Isaiah, ”that the whole earth has been filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the deep waters that cover the seas.” For the preaching of salvation is everywhere poured forth like a sea, and its onward course is irresistible. And this too the God of all clearly told us by the voice of the prophet, ”And judgment shall roll as the waters, and righteousness as an impassable flood.” For He gives the names of judgment and righteousness to the gospel message, and grants us the assurance that it shall roll over the world like waters and as a flood, whoso rushing streams, as it violently pours along, no man can stay.

And the same method of explanation will hold good of the kingdom of God being also compared unto leaven. For the leaven is small in quantity, yet forthwith it seizes upon the whole mass, and quickly communicates to it its own properties. And the word of God operates in us in a similar manner: for when admitted within us, it makes us holy and without blame, and pervading our mind and heart, it renders us spiritual, that as Paul says, ”Our whole body and spirit and soul may be ”kept blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And that the divine word is poured out even into the depth of our understanding, the God of all clearly shows, where He says by one of the holy prophets, ”Behold the days come, says the Lord, and I will accomplish upon the house of Israel and upon the house of Judah a new covenant, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, because they have not continued in My covenant, and I have also rejected them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with them, after those days, says the Lord, I will put My laws in their mind, and will write them on their hearts.”

We receive therefore the rational and divine leaven in our mind and understanding, that by this precious and holy and pure leaven we may be found spiritually unleavened, as having in us none of the wickedness of the world, but being rather pure and holy and partakers of Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XCIX.

13:22-30. And He went about among the cities and villages teaching; and journeyed towards Jerusalem. And one said unto Him, Lord, are they few that be saved? And He said unto them; Strive to enter in at the strait door: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, directly that the master of the house arises, and shuts the door: and you begin to stand outside, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are. Then you will begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets: and He will say, I tell you, I know you not, whence you are; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down to meat in the kingdom of God. And lo! there are last that shall be first, and first that shall be last.

A SHIP is guided to the right port by means of the helm; but the word of God pilots the soul of man, and leads him without risk of error to every thing that is necessary for salvation. For so spoke one of the holy prophets; ”Take with you words:” even those which are inspired by the Holy Spirit: for no man of sense will say, that it means the words of the wise of this world. For their words lead men unto the pit of destruction, by bringing polytheism into the world, and by inciting unto carnal pleasure, and to the desire of the world’s vain distractions: but the words of God point out the pathway to a better life, and beget in us an earnestness which makes us cheerfully advance unto the duty of performing all those things, by means of which we are made partakers of eternal life.

Let us listen therefore to the Saviour’s words, which He addressed unto those who wanted to learn, whether they be few who are saved: and to whom the Saviour answered, ”Strive to enter in by the strait door.” Now this reply may seem perhaps, to wander from the scope of the question. For the man wanted to learn, whether they be few who are saved: but He described unto him the way whereby he might be saved himself, saying, ”Strive to enter in by the strait door.” What reply then

do we make to this objection? We answer as follows; that it was the custom of our common Saviour Christ to meet His questioners, not of course according to what might seem good to them, but as having regard to what was useful and necessary for His hearers. And this He especially did when any one wanted to learn what was superfluous and un-edifying. For what good was there in wishing to learn, whether there be many or few that be saved? What benefit resulted from it to the hearers? On the contrary it was a necessary and valuable thing to know in what way a man may attain to salvation. He is purposely silent therefore with respect to the useless question which had been asked Him, but proceeds to speak of what was essential, namely, of the knowledge necessary for the performance of those duties by which men can enter in at the strait and narrow door. For this He has also taught us in another place, saying; ”Enter in at the strait door: for wide is the door, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are they that go in thereby. For strait is the door, and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few are they that find it.”

Now I consider it my duty to mention why the door is narrow, through which a man goes unto life. Whosoever then would enter must of necessity first before everything else possess an upright and uncorrupted faith: and, secondly, a spotless morality, in which is no possibility of blame, according to the measure of human righteousness. For so the prophet David also somewhere says, very excellently framing his supplications unto God, ” Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness; and according to my innocency requite me.” For the innocency and righteousness of the holy angels, being in proportion to their nature and glory, is entirely distinct from that which belongs to the inhabitants of earth: for theirs is of a lower kind, and inferior in every respect, just as they are inferior to them also in nature. Nevertheless those who wish to live holily cannot do so without labour: for constantly, so to speak, the pathway that leads unto virtue is rugged and steep, and for most men too difficult to walk upon. For labours spring up before us and we have need altogether of fortitude and patience, and nobleness of conduct: yes, moreover, and of a mind that cannot be prevailed upon dissolutely to take part in base pleasures, or to be led by irrational impulses into carnal lust. He who has attained unto this in mind and spiritual fortitude will enter easily by the strait door, and run along the narrow way. For it is written, that ”by labours a man labours for himself, and violently gains the mastery over his destruction.” You hear how the prophet plainly says, that he gains the mastery over his destruction by violence; for as the Lord himself again said, ”The kingdom of heaven is gained by violence, and the violent seize it.”

”For wide is the door, and broad the way that brings down many to destruction.” And what are we to understand by its broadness? It means an unrestrained tendency to carnal lust; a base and pleasure loving life; luxurious feastings, and revellings and banquetings, and unresisted inclinations unto every thing which is con-

demned by the law, and displeasing to God: a stiff-necked mind that will not bow to the yoke of the law: a life accursed, and relaxed in all dissoluteness, thrusting from it the divine law, and utterly unmindful of the sacred commandments: wealth and the vices that spring from it, scorn and pride, and the vain imagining of transitory boastings. From all such things must those withdraw who would enter in by the strait door, and be with Christ, and keep festival with Him.

And that such as are not thus minded cannot walk upon this way, He showed at once by a plain example. For those who were too late, and so to say, did not arrive at the feast, their lot was to be at once rejected. ”For when,” He says, ”the master of the house enters in, and shuts the door, and they begin to say from without, Lord, open to us; he will say, I know you not whence you are.” For in the character as it were of some householder, who has gathered many of his neighbours to his house and table, and has afterwards entered in with his guests and closed the door, He says that those who subsequently knock, shall have for answer, ”I know you not whence you are:” and though, He says, you importune, saying, ”we have eaten before You and drunk; and You have taught in our streets; you shall hear none the less, I know you not whence you are. Depart far from Me, all you workers of iniquity.” For the light has no communion at all with the darkness: nor can any one he near unto the perfectly pure God who is held by the pollutions of sin, and whose stain is not yet washed away.

We must however next inquire who we are to understand by those who say unto Christ, ’We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets? Such an assertion then would suit the Israelites, to whom also Christ said, ”you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out.” But how then were they eating and drinking before God? I answer, by performing the service enacted in the law: for when offering unto God sacrifices by the shedding of blood, they ate and made merry. And they heard also in their synagogues the writings of Moses, interpreting God’s messages: for constantly he prefaced his words with, ’Thus says the Lord.’These then are they who say, ”We have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.” But the worship by the shedding of blood is not sufficient for justification, nor verily does a man wash away his stains by having become a hearer of the divine laws, if he does nothing of what has been commanded.

And in another way, as long as they refused to accept the faith, which justifies the wicked, nor would follow the evangelic commands, by means of which it is possible to practice the excellent and elect life, how could they enter the kingdom of God? The type therefore profits not: for it justifies no man, and it is a thing impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins. With the above-named, you may number certain others also as able to say to the Judge of all, ”we have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.” And who again

are these? Many have believed in Christ, and celebrate the holy festivals in His honour; and frequenting the churches they also hear the doctrines of the Gospel: but they lay up in their mind of the truths of Scripture absolutely nothing. And it is with difficulty that the practice of virtue is brought with them even to this extent, while of spiritual fruitfulness their heart is quite bare. These too shall weep bitterly, and gnash their teeth; for the Lord shall deny them also. For He has said, that "not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father Who is in heaven."

But that the Jews were about to fall utterly from their rank of being in a spiritual sense His household, and that the multitude of the Gentiles should enter in their stead, He showed by saying, that "there shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, many who received the call, and shall rest with the saints; but they shall be driven away: and whereas they once had the first rank, they shall now take the second, by reason of others being preferred before them." Which also happened; for the Gentiles have been honoured far above the Jewish herd. For it was guilty both of disobedience and of the murder of the Lord: but they honoured the faith that is in Christ; by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON C.

13:31-35. That same hour there drew near certain Pharisees, saying unto Him, Depart, and go hence: for Herod desires to kill you. And He said unto them, Go you, and tell this fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and on the third I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk today and tomorrow and the day afterward: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her, how often would I have gathered your children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not. Behold your house is abandoned for you: and I say unto you, that you shall not see Me, until you say, Blessed is He That comes in the name of the Lord.

THE Pharisaic crew was always, so to speak, wicked and designing, and eager for fraud, gnashing their teeth at Christ, whenever He was regarded with admiration, and with their heart consumed by the fire of envy. And yet how was it not rather their duty as being the people's guides, and set over the ordinary multitude, to lead them on unto the confession of Christ's glory, as being the purpose both of the enactment of the law, and of the preaching of the holy prophets. But this in their great wickedness they did not do: yes! rather in every way they resisted Him, and provoked Him incessantly to anger; and therefore Christ said unto them, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for you have taken away the key of knowledge: you enter not in yourselves, and those that were entering you have hindered." For one can see that they had fallen into such a state of malice, and into a disposition so contrary to the love of God, that they were not willing for Him even to dwell in Jerusalem, lest He should benefit men, partly by filling them with wonder at His divine miracles, and partly by shedding upon them the light of the accurate vision of God by means of the teaching of truths superior to those of the law.

Such are the thoughts to which we are here led by the purport of the lessons now set before us. "For in that same hour, it says, certain Pharisees drew near, and said unto Him, Depart and go hence: for Herod desires to kill You." Come, then, and let us fix the scrutinizing eye of the mind on what is hero said by them. Let

us accurately examine which of the two is the case, whether the speakers are to be reckoned among those who love Him, or among those who would oppose Him. But, as it appears, there is no difficulty whatsoever in perceiving that they were His thorough opponents. For Christ, for instance, raised the dead from the grave, employing therein a power such as belongs to God: for He cried, ”Lazarus, come forth:” and to the widow’s son, ”Young man, I say unto you, arise.” But they made the miracle food for their envy, and even said, when gathered together, ”What do we, because this man does many miracles? If we thus leave Him alone, the Romans will come, and take away our people and our land.” And then, even then, it was that Caiaphas, planning wicked murder against Him, said; ”As for you, you know nothing at all, that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and not that the whole people perish.”

And they resisted Him also in other ways; at one time treating Him with scorn, and mocking His miraculous power, and venturing even to accuse His godlike authority, saying, that whatever was done was wrought by the help of Beelzebub: and at another even endeavouring to give Him up to Caesar’s satellites. For as though He prohibited the Israelites from paying tax unto Caesar, they drew near to Him in treachery and guile, saying, ”Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?” Can those then who laid for Him all kinds of snares; who, in their audacity and hardihood, did not even abstain from murder; who, being cunning for wickedness, attacked Him with remorseless violence, and readily practised all such arts as those do who hate utterly; how, I say, can such be reckoned among those who love Him?

Why then did they draw near, saying, ”Depart hence: for ”Herod wishes to kill You: and what object had they in so doing? The Evangelist tells us this, by saying, ”That same hour they drew near to Him. And what is the meaning of this carefulness of language? Why was there this exactitude? or what hour does he mean as that in which the Pharisees said these things to Jesus? He was occupied in teaching the Jewish multitudes, when some one asked Him whether there be many that are saved. He passed by the question, however, as unprofitable, and turned to that which was fitting for Him to tell, the way, namely, by which men must walk to become heirs of the kingdom of heaven. For He said, ”Strive to enter in at the strait door: and told them that if they refuse so to do, they will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and themselves cast out. And He added thereunto, that ”whereas they had been the first, they should be the last,” upon the calling namely of the heathen. These remarks goaded the mind of the Pharisees unto anger: they saw the multitudes already repenting, and receiving with eagerness faith in Him; and that they needed now but a little more instruction to learn His glory and the great and adorable mystery of the incarnation.

As being likely therefore to lose their office of being chiefs of the people, and as already fallen and expelled from their authority over them, and deprived of their

profits,----for they were fond of wealth, and covetous, and given to lucre,----they made pretence of loving Him, and even drew near, and said, ”Depart and go hence: for Herod desires to kill You. But, O stonyhearted Pharisee, had you been wise; had you been well acquainted with the law of the most wise Moses; had you really fixed your mind upon the declarations of the holy profits; it could not have escaped you that there was no possibility of your being undetected in feigning a false show of affection, while your mind was full of gall. He was not a mere man, and one of those like unto us, and so liable to deception; but God in our likeness: God Who understands everything, and ”knows secrets,” as it is written, and ”tries the hearts and reins; ”to Whom all things are naked, and spread open,” and from Whom nothing is hid. But you knew not this precious and mighty mystery: you thought that you could deceive even Him Who says; ”Who is this that hides from Me his mind, and shuts up words in his heart, and thinks that from Me he hides them?”

What then does Christ answer to these things? He replied to them gently, and with His meaning veiled, as was His wont: ”Go and tell, He says, this fox.” Attend closely to the force of the expression: for the words used seem forsooth to be directed, and to have regard, as it were, to the person of Herod: but they really rather refer to the craftiness of the Pharisees. For while He would naturally have said, ”Tell that fox,” He does not do so, but using very skilfully a middle sort of expression, He, so to speak, pointed to the Pharisee, who was close beside Him, and said, ”this fox.” And He compares the man to a fox: for it is constantly a very crafty animal, and, if I may so speak, malicious, such as were the Pharisees. But what did He bid them say? ”Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures today and tomorrow, and the third I shall be perfected.” You see that He declares His intention of performing what He knew would grieve the troop of Pharisees: for they drive Him from Jerusalem, lest by the display of miracles He should win many unto faith in Him. But inasmuch as their purpose herein did not escape Him as being God, He declares His intention of performing what they hated, and says, that ”He shall also rebuke unclean spirits, and deliver the sick from their sufferings, and be perfected;” which means, that of His own will He would endure the passion upon the cross, for the salvation of the world. He knew, therefore, as it appears, both how and when He would endure death in the flesh.

The Pharisees, however, imagined that the power of Herod would terrify Him, and humble Him unto mean fears, although He is Lord of powers, and begets in us spiritual bravery by His words, ”Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul,” And that He too makes no account of the violence of men He showed, saying, ”But I must walk today and tomorrow and the day after.” And in saying, ”I must,” He does not imply that an inevitable necessity, so to speak, was laid upon Him, but rather that by the power of His own will, freely and without danger He would go wherever He chose, and traverse Judaea without any one opposing Him or plotting Him ill, until of His own accord He received His consummation upon the

precious cross. Let not therefore those murderers of the Lord pride themselves, or superciliously vaunt themselves against Him. You did not win a victory over One Who fled from suffering. You didst not seize One unwilling. You didst not prevail over One Who refused to be caught in the meshes of your craftiness. Of His own will He consented to suffer, as being well assured that by the death of His flesh He would abolish death, and return again to life. For He arose from the dead, having raised up with Him the whole nature of man, and having fashioned it anew unto the life incorruptible.

But He shows that Jerusalem is guilty of the blood of many saints, declaring, "that it is not possible for a prophet to perish out of her." And what follows from this? That they were about to fall from being members of God's spiritual family; that they were about to be rejected from the hope of the saints, and entirely deprived of the inheritance of those blessings which are in store for them who have been saved by faith. For that they were forgetful of God's gifts, and intractable, and slothful unto everything that might have profited them, He showed, saying; "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her, how often would I have gathered your sons, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not: behold your house is abandoned unto you." For He taught them by the most wise Moses, and ordained for them the law to direct them in their conduct, and be their ruler and guide in the life worthy of admiration, and which though it was but as yet in shadows, nevertheless possessed the type of the true worship: He admonished them by the holy prophets: He would have had them under His wings, under the protection, that is, of His power: but they lost blessings thus valuable by being evil-disposed and ungrateful, and despisers.

"But," says He, "you shall not see Me henceforth until you say, Blessed is he that comes in the Name of the Lord." And what again is this? The Lord withdrew from Jerusalem, and left as unworthy of His presence those who said, "Depart and go hence." And afterwards having traversed Judaea, and saved many, and performed miracles which no words can adequately describe, He returned again to Jerusalem. And then it was, even then, that He sat upon a foal and an ass, while vast multitudes and young children, holding up branches of palm-trees, went before Him, praising Him, and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He That comes in the Name of the Lord." Having left them therefore as being unworthy, He says that He will then barely be seen by them when the time of His passion has arrived. For then again He went up to Jerusalem, and entered amid praises, and at that very time endured His saving passion in our behalf, that by suffering He might save, and renew unto incorruption the inhabitants of the earth. For God the Father has saved us by Christ: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

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.