Four Discourses, chiefly on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus

John Chrysostom (c. AD 349–407)

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Discourse 1

DISCOURSE I. — A HOMILY DELIVERED AT ANTIOCH ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE MONTH.

CONCERNING DRUNKARDS AND FREQUENTERS OF TAVERNS, AND FESTAL PROCESSIONS IN THE STREETS----A TEACHER OUGHT NOT TO DESPAIR OF HIS DISCIPLES EVEN ’WHILE THEY DISREGARD HIS WORDS----ALSO, CONCERNING LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN. 1. Yesterday, on the festival of Satan, ye celebrated a spiritual feast, receiving with all favour the word we addressed to you; spending a great portion of the day in thus drinking in that rapture which is full of sobriety, and rejoicing in company with St Paul. In this way ye gained a twofold benefit, since ye were both separate from the disorderly throng of feasters, and rejoiced in a spiritual and decorous manner. Ye also partook of that cup, not overflowing with unmixed wine, but filled with spiritual instruction. While others were following the festive companies of the evil one, ye, by your presence in this place, prepared yourselves as instruments of spiritual music, and surrendered your souls to the Divine Spirit that He might influence them, and breathe His own grace into your hearts. Thus ye gave forth a melody of perfect harmony, pleasing not only to men but also to the heavenly powers.

Let us, therefore, to-day, take up arms against inebriety, and expose the folly of a drunken and dissolute life. Let us oppose those who live in intemperance; not that we may shame them, but that we may put them beyond the reach of shame; not that we may blame them, but reform them; not that we may hold them up to contempt, but that we may turn them from all dishonourable exposure, and snatch them from the grasp of the tempter. For he who lives daily in excess of wine and luxury and. gluttony is under the very tyranny of the devil. And oh that something better may result from our words! Should they, however, continue in the same course after our warning, we shall not on that account cease from giving right counsel. For the springs, even if no one drink of them, continue to flow; and fountains, though no one should use their water, still burst forth; and rivers, though no man profit by them, still run on. So then, also, it is right that the preacher, even if no one attend to his voice, should fulfil all his duty.

For also in His love to man, a law is given by God to those who are entrusted with the ministry of the word, never to cease to discharge the duties of their office nor to be silent, whether the people have regard to their voice, or whether they neglect it. Jeremiah, therefore, having declared many threatenings to the Jews and warnings of future evils, was mocked by those who heard his voice, and was ridiculed all the day long. From human infirmity, feeling unable to endure scoffs and reviling, he at one time endeavoured to escape from his ministry. Hear him speak concerning this when he says: "I am in derision daily; then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in the name of the Lord. But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay," (Jer. xx. 7, 9.) This it is which he says;---- "I was desirous to escape from prophesying, since the Jews did not listen to me; and all the while I was desiring this, the influence of the Holy Spirit penetrated like fire into my inmost soul, consuming all my inward parts and my bones, and devouring me, so that I could not endure the burning." If, therefore, he, when he was laughed at and derided each day; when he desired to be silent, underwent such punishment; of what forgiveness can we be worthy, who never at any time are treated thus, if we faint on account of the slowness of some, and cease from instructing them, and especially when there are so many who are attentive!

2. I do not say these things to console or to comfort myself, for I have made up my mind, as long as I breathe, and as long as it shall seem good to God that I remain in this present life, to fulfil this ministry, and, whether any one attends or not, to do the work allotted to me. But since there are some who weaken the hands of many, and who, besides that they bring forward nothing useful for our present life, and relax the zeal of others, by derision and ridicule, saying: "Cease counselling; leave off warning; they do not attend to you: you have no fellow-feeling with them;"---- since there are those who say such things,----purposing to expel this wicked and morose idea, this satanic counsel, from the minds of many, I address you thus at length. I know that such things were said even yesterday by many who, when they saw certain people spending time in taverns, said, laughing and deriding: "Are these fully persuaded? These are they who never enter a tavern! Have they all arrived at wisdom?" What dost thou say, O man? Is it this that we undertook to do, to enclose all in the net in one day? For if ten only were persuaded----if only five,----if even one,----is not this sufficient to console us? For my part I can even go beyond this. Suppose that none were persuaded by our words, although it is impossible that the word spoken to so many hearers can be fruitless----suppose, however, even this,----still the word would not be without profit.

For, if they did enter a tavern, they did not enter it with such shamelessness as was their wont; but even at the festive table they often thought of our words----of the rebuke,----of the blame; which, when they remembered, they would be ashamed---- they would inwardly blush. Neither, though acting in their usual way, did they do so

with their usual recklessness. And this is the beginning of salvation, and of the best kind of change----namely, the being in any degree ashamed----the disapproving in some measure of that which was being done. Besides this, another and not smaller gain accrues to us from this our work. What then is it? It is the making those who are already wise more careful. It is the persuading them by the word spoken that they are of all men the best advised, since they are not led away with the multitude. I did not restore the sick to health? But I strengthened those that were well. The word did not lead any away from their sin? But it made more steadfast those who were living virtuously.

To these reasons I will add a third. I have not persuaded to-day? But I shall persuade, perhaps, to-morrow. Or even if not to-morrow, I may after to-morrow, or even the day following. He who to-day heard and rejected the word, perhaps will hear and obey to-morrow; he who spurns the word to-day and to-morrow, perhaps in a few more days will attend to that which is spoken. For even the fisherman often casts his net the whole day in vain; and in the evening, when he is about to depart, captures and takes home the fish that had escaped him all the day long. And if, on account of frequent want of success, we were to live in idleness, and cease from all work, our whole life would be brought to nought, and not only spiritual affairs but also temporal would be ruined. For also the husbandman, if on account of the once, or twice, or oft-repeated inclemency of the season, were to abandon his work, we all should perish by famine. Again, it the mariner, on account of the once, or twice, or oft-recurring storms, were to forsake the sea, the ocean would become impassable, and in that way also our life would be quite marred. Thus, going through all employments, if men should act as you urge and advise us to do, all would utterly fail, and the earth would become uninhabitable. All men, therefore, having this in view, if once, or twice, or if often they fail to gain the object of the labour in which they spend their time, still apply themselves to the work again with undiminished alacrity.

3. Knowing, then, all these things, beloved, let us not, I beseech you, speak in this way; let us not say, ”What is the need of such discourses? No good results from them.” The husbandman once, or twice, or often sowing in the same field, and failing to profit by it, labours again in the same ground, and often recovers in one good year the loss of all his previous time. It often happens that the merchant, suffering from many shipwrecks, does not shun the sea; but prepares his vessel, and hires seamen, and spends money again in the same kind of undertaking, although the future is as uncertain as before. And all who are accustomed to engage in any occupation whatever act in the same way as the husbandman and the merchant. If then they show such zeal in the affairs of this life, although the result is doubtful, shall we, because when we speak we are not listened to, immediately desist? What excuse shall we have? Besides, in their misfortunes, there is no one to console them for their loss, no one who, if the sea engulf the ship, will remove the poverty

caused by the wreck. If the rain flood the field and cause the seed to perish, the husbandman must of necessity return home with empty hands. But with us, who preach and warn men, the case is not so. For when thou sowest the seed, and the hearer receives it not, and does not bring forth the fruit of obedience, thou hast the reward of thy intent, laid up with God; and thou wilt receive the same recompense whether the hearer obey or disobey; for thou hast performed all thy duty.

We are not responsible for not convincing those who hear, but only for giving them counsel. It is ours to warn; to give heed to the warning is theirs. And just as, if they do many good deeds without our giving any exhortation, all the gain would be theirs only, since we did not counsel them; so, if they give no heed when we warn, all the punishment falls on them; against us there is no accusation, but rather a great reward from God awaits us, since we have discharged our duty. We are commanded only to give the money to the exchangers, that is, to speak and to give counsel. Speak, therefore, and warn thy brother. He listens not? Still thou hast thy reward prepared. Only always act thus, and never give up as long as life lasts, until you succeed in producing conversion. Let the termination of your giving counsel be the reception of your warning.

The Tempter continually goes to and fro to baffle our salvation, while he himself gains nothing, but rather is to the last degree a loser by his zeal; but still so maddened is he, that he often attempts impossible things, and attacks not only those whom he expects to cause utterly to stumble or fall, but also those who in all probability will escape his snares. Therefore, when he heard Job praised by that God who knows all secrets, he thought to be able to overcome, nor did he in his guile cease trying every method and every device in order to cause the man to fall. The Spirit of all evil and wickedness did not shrink from the attempt, though God had ascribed such grace to that just man. Are not we then ashamed? Tell me, do we not blush if, while the Enemy never despairs of accomplishing our ruin, but always expects it, we despair of the salvation of our brethren? In fact, Satan ought, before the attempt, to have abstained from the contest, for it was God himself who testified to the virtue of the righteous man. Still he did not desist, but because of his mad hatred of us, he, even after the favourable testimony of God himself, hoped to deceive that just man. In our case there is no such circumstance to cause us to despair, and still we desist! The devil, also, although forbidden by God, does not cease from fighting against us;

but thou, whilst God enjoins and incites thee to the recovery of the fallen, dost fly from the work! The tempter heard God saying: A just man, true, God-fearing, and abstaining from every evil work, and that there was none like him on the earth; yet after such strong and high testimony in favour of Job, he persevered, and said: ”Shall I not at length, by the continuousness and greatness of the evils brought upon him, be able to circumvent him, and overthrow this great pillar?”

4. What forgiveness, therefore, will there be for us, if (while we undergo such fury of the wicked one against ourselves) we do not bring to bear even the smallest part of this zeal for the salvation of our brethren, even while in these matters we have God for our helper! For when thou seest thy brother wicked and morose and giving no heed to thee, say thus within thyself: "Shall I not some time or other bo able to persuade him." Thus also St Paul commanded us to do: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God per-adventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth," (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.) Dost thou not observe how often fathers, when in despair about their children, sit down weeping, bewailing, embracing them, trying everything in their power until the last breath? This do thou also for thy brother. Although parents by their lamentations and tears can neither remove sickness nor avert approaching death, yet thou, in the case of a soul even when given up, mayest through perseverance and assiduity, by lamentation and tears, bring about recovery and restoration. Hast thou given counsel and failed to convince? Then weep, and make frequent efforts; groan deeply, that, shamed by thy constancy, he may turn to seek salvation. What can I do alone? For I singly am not able to be present with you all every day, nor am I sufficient to convince such a multitude. But ye, if ye be minded to care for the salvation of each other, and every one to take in hand one of our neglected brethren----ye would quickly further the edification of us all.

And what need is there to speak of those who, after repeated warnings, have come to their right mind? It behoves us not to abandon or neglect even those who are diseased incurably, even if we foresee clearly that, after having had the benefit of our zeal and good counsel, they will not at all profit by it. And if this that I say seem to you unreasonable, suffer me to confirm it by things which Christ himself said and did. For we men being ignorant of the future, cannot therefore be certain, as to the hearers, whether they will be persuaded or whether they will disbelieve that which we say; but Christ, knowing both one and the other perfectly, did not cease instructing the disobedient even to the end. Thus, knowing that Judas would not be turned aside from his treachery, Christ did not desist from trying to turn him from his faithlessness, by counsel, by warnings, by kind treatment, by threatening, by every kind of instruction, and by continually checking him by His words as by a rein. This He did to teach us that, although we know beforehand that the brethren will not be persuaded, we must do all in our power, since the reward of our admonition is sure. Mark also how assiduously and wisely the Lord restrained Judas when He said, "One of you shall betray me," (Matt. xxvi. 21;) and again, "I speak not of you all. I know whom I have chosen," (John xiii. 18;) and again, "One of you is a devil," (John vi. 70.) He preferred to put them all in an agony of doubt rather than reveal the traitor or make him the more shameless by open reproof. For that these sayings

produced trouble and dread in the others, although conscious in themselves of no evil, hear them each with earnest striving say, ”Lord, is it I?” (Matt. xxvi. 22.)

Not only by words did He instruct him, but also by acts. For while Christ often and fully manifested., His love to man,----cleansing the lepers, casting out devils, healing the sick, raising the dead, restoring the paralytic, and doing good to all; on the other hand, He punished no one, and constantly said, ”I came not to judge the world, but to save the world,” (John xii. 47.) But that Judas should not think that Christ knew only how to bless and not to punish, Christ teaches him also this very thing, namely, that He was able to punish and inflict penalties on sinners. 5. Behold, then, how wisely and appropriately He teaches him this thing; and notice that He does not consent to punish or inflict a penalty on any human being. And why? In order that the disciple might learn His power to punish. For, had He punished any man, He would have seemed to have acted contrary to His own declaration when He said, ”I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.” On the other hand, had He exhibited no power of chastisement, the disciple would have remained in error, not learning from His deeds His power of inflicting punishment. How then did it come to pass?

In order that the disciple should be made to fear, and not become worse for lack of reverence, nor himself undergo punishment and penalty, Christ displayed this His power on the fig-tree, saying, ”Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward,” (Matt. xxi. 3 9,) and, by His mere word, caused it instantly to wither. In this way, without causing harm to any man, Pie himself showed His might, though it was only a tree that bore the infliction. And the disciple, if he had attended to this instance of punishment, would have reaped profit from it. Still, however, even thus he was not corrected. And Christ, foreseeing even this, not only did this thing, but afterwards wrought a much greater wonder. For when the Jews came against Him, armed with swords and staves, He caused them all to become blind; this being shown by His saying, ”Whom seek ye? Since Judas had said again and again, ”What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? (Matt. xxvi. 15,) the Lord, wishing to prove to the Jews, and to let Judas also know, that He went of His own accord to His sufferings, and that all these events were in His own power;----that He was not overpowered by the wickedness of another, He said, when the traitor with all his companions stood still, ”Whom seek ye? Judas did not know Him whom he came to betray, for his eyes were blinded.

Nor was this all, but Christ by His word caused them all to fall backward to the ground. And since even this did not render them less cruel, nor cause the wretched man to desist from his treachery,----for he was still incorrigible,----Christ even now did not give up His kindness and regard; but mark how movingly He deals with this mind devoid of shame, and how He speaks words which ought to melt a heart of stone. For when Judas advances to kiss Him, what does Christ say? ”Judas,

betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss? (Luke xxii. 48. Art thou not ashamed of the manner in which thou betrayest Me? This Christ said to touch him, and bring his former intimacy to remembrance. But while the Lord acted and spoke thus, the betrayer did not change for the better----not on account of the weakness of Him from whom the counsel came, but the worthlessness of him to whom it came. And Christ, although He foresaw all these things, did not cease, from the beginning to the close of the scene, to do all that was consistent with His own character.

Since we know all these things, we ought to teach and to love, constantly and fully, those of our brethren who are negligent, even though we do not gain the object of our counsel. For if, knowing such a result, the Lord exhibited such solicitude for him who would profit nothing by the warning, what allowance can be made for us, when, not knowing the result, we are thus careless about the salvation of our neighbour,----when we desist after the second or third warning? Besides all these things that we have said, let us take into consideration our own case, since God addresses us day after day, by the prophets, by the apostles, and day after day we are disobedient; and still He does not cease to reason with and to call upon those who are always obstinate and inattentive. Paul also cries aloud, using these words: ”We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God,” (2 Cor. v. 20.) If one may say a strange thing, he who foresees that the recipient of his counsel will in some degree be persuaded by it, and thus gives his advice, is not worthy of such praise as he who, oftentimes speaking and counselling, fails, but notwithstanding does not cease. For, in the first case, the hope of convincing stimulates him to exertion, even though he should be of all men most slothful; but the other, who gives counsel and is neglected, and still does not desist, gives proof of the most ardent and purest love; he is stimulated by no such hope as in the former instance;----only through love towards his brother does he persevere in his anxious care.

But that we ought never to desert the fallen, even when we foresee that they will not be persuaded by us, we have already sufficiently shown. In the rest of this discourse, we must proceed with a charge against those who live in luxury. For as long as this feast lasts, Satan inflicts the wounds of excess on the souls of those who indulge in revels, and it is our duty to apply the healing remedies. 6. Yesterday, we alleged against such feasters the testimony of St Paul, who says, ”Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,” (1 Cor. x. 31.) To-day, we shall show them the Lord of Paul not only advising or counselling to abstain from luxury, but also punishing and inflicting penalties on one who lived in luxury; for the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, and of the things which befell them, proves nothing less than this. And rather than that our consideration of this subject should be superficial, I will read to you the parable from the commencement. ”There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his

gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores," (Luke xvi. 19-21.)

Now for what reason did the Lord speak to them in parables? Why also did He explain some of these, and leave others unexplained? And what indeed is a parable? These, and other questions of this nature, we will reserve until another opportunity, so as not to digress from the argument now claiming our attention. One thing, however, we will ask: Which of the evangelists has delivered to us this parable as spoken by Christ? Which then is it? It is St Luke only. For it is also necessary to know that, of the things which are related, some are related by all four; some, as by special information, by one only. And why? In order that the reading of the other Gospels might be necessary, and that their agreement with each other might be made manifest. For if they all delivered all the events, we should not examine them all with such care, since one only would be sufficient to inform us about everything. If, again, all spoke of different events, we should fail to discover their agreement. On this account they all wrote many things in common, while at the same time each received and delivered matters peculiar to himself.

To return, however, to Christ's teaching in the parable. It is this: A certain man, it is said, living in great wickedness, was rich; and he experienced no ill fortune, but all good things flowed to him as from a perennial fountain. For that nothing undesirable happened to him----no cause of trouble----none of the ills of human life ----is implied when it is said, that "he fared sumptuously every day. And that he lived wickedly is clear from the end allotted to him, and even before his end, from the neglect which he displayed in the case of the poor man; for that he felt pity neither for the poor man at his gate nor for any other, he himself showed. For if he had no pity on the man continually laid at his gate, and placed before his eyes, whom every day, once or twice, or oftentimes, as he went in and out, he was obliged to see;---- for the man was not placed in a by-way, nor in a hidden and narrow place, but in a spot where the rich man, in his continual coming-in and going-out, was obliged, even if unwilling, to look upon him;----if, therefore, the rich man did not pity him lying there in such suffering, and living in such distress,----yea, rather, all his life long in misery because of sickness, and that of the most grievous kind,----would he ever have been moved with compassion towards any of the afflicted whom he might casually meet?

For though on one occasion the rich man passed him by, it was likely that he would manifest some feeling the next day; and if even then he disregarded the poor man, still on the third day, or the fourth, or even after that, he might be expected in some way to be moved to compassion, even if he were more cruel than the wild beasts. But he had no feeling: he was more severe and harsh than that judge who neither feared God nor regarded man. For the judge, though so cruel and stern, was moved by the perseverance of the widow to be gracious and listen to her

petition; but this man could not even thus be induced to give aid to the poor man, notwithstanding that his petition was not like that of the widow, but much easier and fairer. For she requested aid against her enemies, while this poor man was entreating that his hunger might be allayed, and that he should not be allowed to perish. The widow also caused trouble by her entreaties; but this man, though often in the day seen by the rich man, only lay without speaking: and this circumstance was quite sufficient to soften a heart harder than stone. When we are urged, we frequently feel annoyed; but when we see those who need our help remaining in perfect silence and saying not a word, and though always failing to gain their object, not bearing it hardly, but.

only appearing before us in silence, even though we are more unfeeling than the very stones, we are shamed and moved by such exceeding humility. There is also another circumstance of not less weight, namely, that the very appearance of the poor man was pitiable, since he was emaciated by hunger and long sickness. Yet none of these things influenced that cruel man.

First, then, there was this vice of cruelty and inhumanity in a degree that could not be exceeded. For it is not the same thing for one living in poverty not to assist those who are in need, as for one who enjoys such luxury to neglect others who are wasting away through hunger. Again, it is not the same thing for one to pass by a poor man when he sees him once or twice, as to see him every day without being moved by the oft-recurring sight to pity and benevolence. Again, it is not the same thing for one who is in difficulties and anxiety, and troubled in soul, not to help his neighbour, as for one enjoying such good fortune and unbroken prosperity, to neglect others who are perishing from hunger, and to shut up his bowels of compassion, and not rather, for the very sake of his own happiness, to become more benevolent. For know this of a truth, that unless we are the most cruel of all men, we are, by our very nature, apt, by our own prosperity, to be rendered milder and more gentle. But this rich man did not grow better on account of his prosperity, but remained ill-natured; or rather had, deep in his disposition, cruelty and inhumanity greater than that of a beast of the field.

Still it came to pass that a man living in wickedness and inhumanity enjoyed every kind of good fortune, and a just and virtuous man lingered in the greatest ills. For that Lazarus was a just man is made plain, as in the other case, by his end, and even before his end, by his patience and poverty. Do you not, indeed, seem to see these things present before our eyes? The ship of the rich man was laden with merchandise, and sailed with a fair wind. But do not marvel; for it was borne on to shipwreck, since he was not willing to bestow its burden wisely. Would you that I should give another proof of his wickedness? It is his living in luxury every day without fear. For this in truth is the height of wickedness; and not only now, (in this dispensation,) when we are required to show such moderation, but even in the

beginning, under the old covenant, when there was no revelation of the need of this self-control. For hear what the prophet says: ”Woe to them that come to an evil day, that come near, and that make a Sabbath of lies,” (Amos vi. 3, LXX.)

The Jews suppose that the Sabbath was given to them for the sake of ease. But this is not the object of it; but it was in order that, separating themselves from, worldly affairs, they might bestow all that leisure on spiritual things. For that the Sabbath was not for the sake of idleness, but for spiritual work, is clear from its very circumstances. The priest, on that day, does a double portion of work, a single sacrifice being offered each common day, while on that day he is commanded to offer a double sacrifice. And if the Sabbath were for the sake of idleness, the priest before all others ought to be idle. Since therefore the Jews, separating themselves from worldly things, devoted not themselves to spiritual things, to temperance, and gentleness, and hearing the divine word, but did the very opposite, feasting, drinking, indulging in excess and luxury; on this account it is, that the prophet condemns them. For he says, ”Woe to them that come to an evil day,” and, in continuation, ”that make a Sabbath of lies.” He shows by that which follows how their Sabbath became unprofitable. How then did they make it unprofitable? By their working wickedness, living in luxury, drinking, and doing numberless other base and vile acts. And that this charge is true, hear what follows; for he intimates that which I am affirming, by that which he immediately adds, saying: ”That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that drink refined wine, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments,” (Amos vi. 4, 6.)

Thou didst receive the Sabbath that thou mightest purify thy soul from wickedness; but thou hast increased wickedness. For what can be worse than this effeminacy ----this ”sleeping upon beds of ivory?” The other sins, as drinking, covetousness, or prodigality, may be accompanied with some small amount of pleasure; but the sleeping on beds of ivory, what pleasure is there in it? Is more refreshing or sweeter sleep brought to us by the beauty of the couch? Nay, rather this beauty is more burdensome and more troublesome to us, if we reflect upon the matter. For whenever thou dost consider that while thou art sleeping on an ivory couch, another fellow-creature is not even able to enjoy the certainty of having bread to eat, will not conscience condemn thee and rise up to accuse this wrong? And if to sleep on an ivory couch be a reproach, what defence can we make when the bed is also decked with silver? Dost thou wish to know the true beauty of a couch? I will show thee the adornment, not of a couch belonging to one in private life, nor to a soldier, but to a king. Though thou shouldst be of all men the most desirous of honour, be assured that thou couldst not wish to have a couch more becoming than that of this king. It is also not that of an ordinary king, but of a very great king, a king of all kings most kingly, and even to this day magnified in the whole world. I show thee the couch of the blessed David. Of what kind then was it? It was not

decked with silver and gold, but everywhere with tears and confessions. And this he himself says, speaking thus: ”All the night make I my bed to swim, and water my couch with my tears,” (Ps. vi. 6.) Thus with tears was it in all parts adorned as if with pearls.

8. Mark then with me this godly soul. For although by day manifold cares----about the rulers, about the governors, about the tribes, about the different races, about soldiers, about war, about peace, about affairs of state, about household affairs, about things far off, about things near home, distracted and disturbed him, nevertheless, the leisure time which we all give to sleep he spent in confessions and prayers and tears. And this he did not for one night to cease from it the next, not for two or three nights, after intervals of repose; but he was doing this every night; for ”every night,” said he, ”wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears,” (Ps. vi. 6, Prayer-book version,) indicating the abundance of his tears and their continuance. For when all were quiet and at rest, he alone held converse with God; and the eye of Him who never sleepeth was turned towards the man who bewailed and lamented and confessed his indwelling sins. Such a couch as this do thou prepare. For silver ornaments both excite the envy of man and enkindle wrath from above. But such tears as those of David can even extinguish the fire of Gehenna.

Do you wish me to show thee another couch? I mean that of Jacob. He lay on the ground, and a stone was under his head. Therefore also, he saw the symbolical stone, and that ladder on which angels were ascending and descending. Couches of this kind let us also have, that we may see such visions. If we lie upon silver, we not only gain no pleasure, but also endure trouble. For whenever thou dost consider that in the severest cold in the middle of the night, while thou art sleeping on thy couch, the poor man lying on chaff in the porticoes of the baths, covered with straw, is trembling, numb with cold, and fainting with hunger, even if thou shouldst be most stony-hearted, be assured that thou wilt condemn thyself for being content that while thou art luxuriating in things superfluous, he is not able to enjoy even the necessaries of life. ”No man that warreth,” saith the apostle, ”entangleth himself with the affairs of this life,” (2 Tim. ii. 4. Thou art a spiritual soldier; but such a soldier does not sleep on an ivory bed, but on the ground; he does not use scented unguents, for this is the habit of sensual and dissolute men----of those who live on the stage, or in indolence; and it is not the odour of ointment that thou shouldst have, but that of virtue. The soul is none the more pure when the body is thus scented.

Yea, this fragrance of the body and of the dress may even be a sign of inward corruption and uncleanness. For when Satan makes his approaches to corrupt the soul and fill it with all indolence, then also by means of ointments he impresses upon the body the stains which mark its inner defilement. And just as those who suffer continually from flux and catarrh defile their garments and person, constantly dis-

charging these humours; in the same way the soul denies the body with the evil of this corrupt discharge. What noble or useful deed can be expected from a man scented with myrrh and living effeminately, or rather keeping company with meretricious women, and giving himself up to the company of low actors? Rather let the soul exhale spiritual odours, in order that thou mayest in the greatest degree benefit both thyself and thy associates.

For nothing----nothing is worse than luxury. Hear what Moses again says concerning it: ”He is waxen fat, he is grown thick, he is increased, he that is beloved kicked,” (Deut. xxxii. 15, LXX.) And he does not say: ”he rebelled,” but he ”kicked,” indicating to us his wildness and intractableness. And again, in another place; ”When thou hast eaten and art full, beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God,” (Deut. viii. 10, 11.) Thus does luxury lead to forgetfulness. Then do thou also, beloved, when thou sittest at table, remember that after the meal thou shouldst pray: and so moderately refresh thyself that thou mayest not through fulness be unable to bend the knee and call upon God. Do you not see beasts of burden, how after feeding, they recommence the journey, they bear loads, they fulfil all the service that falls to their lot? But thou when thou risest from table, art unfit for any work; thou art become useless. How wilt thou avoid being thought less worthy of honour than the very beasts? Wherefore? Because it is then the proper time to be sober and to watch. For the time after meals is the time for thanksgiving; and he who gives thanks should not indulge in excess, but be sober and vigilant. Let us not turn from the table to the couch, but to prayer, that we become not more irrational than the beasts.

9. I am aware that many will condemn that which is said, as leading to a new and strange manner of living. But I the more condemn the evil customs that are now prevalent amongst us. For that when we rise from food, and from the table, we ought to proceed, not to sleep and the couch, but to prayers and the reading of the Holy Scriptures; this is made most clear by Christ. For when He had feasted the innumerable multitude in the wilderness, He did not dismiss them to lie down to sleep, but called them to hear the divine word. He did not fill them to repletion, nor allow them to fall into excess; but having satisfied their need, he led them to a spiritual feast. Thus let us also act, and let us accustom ourselves to eat so much only as will sustain our higher life, and not hinder and oppress it. For it was not for this that we were born, and exist----namely, that we should eat and drink; but let us eat for this----namely, that we may live. It was not given us at first to live for the sake of eating, but to eat for the sake of living. But we, as if we had come into the world merely to eat, upon this we spend everything.

In order that this charge against luxury may be corroborated, and come home to those who are living in it, let us return in our discourse to Lazarus. And thus the warning will become clearer, and the counsel more effectual, since you will see

those who live in excess instructed and corrected, not by words only, but by acts. The rich man lived in this kind of wickedness, and luxuriated day by day, and was splendidly attired; but he was bringing on himself severer punishment, stirring up a fiercer flame, making his condemnation more complete, and the penalty more inexorable. But the poor man who was cast at his gate grieved not, nor blasphemed, nor complained. He did not say within himself, as many do, ”Why is this so? This man living in wickedness and cruelty and inhumanity enjoys all things even beyond his need, and endures no trouble nor any of the unlooked-for reverses that often happen in human affairs. He enjoys unmixed pleasure, while I have not the opportunity of partaking even of necessary food. To this man, who squanders all his substance on parasites and flatterers and wine----to him all good things flow like a river; while I live as an object to be gazed at ----an object of shame and derision, and am wasting through hunger. Is this Providence? Can it be Justice that overrules human affairs?”

He did not say any of these things, nor had he them in his mind. How is this manifest? From the circumstance that guardian angels surrounded him at his death, and bore him away to Abraham’s bosom. Had he been a blasphemer, he would not have gained this glory. Thus also most people wonder at this man merely because of his poverty; but I proceed to show that he endured these ninefold afflictions, not for punishment, but that he might become more glorious. This result accordingly happened.

A dreadful thing, in truth, is poverty, as all who have had experience of it know. For no words can express the trouble which they endure who live in poverty, without knowing the relief of true philosophy. And in the case of Lazarus, there was not only this evil, but bodily ’weakness superadded, and that in the highest degree. Notice how it is shown that both these inflictions reached the highest pitch. That the poverty of Lazarus at that time surpassed all other poverty, is clear, when it is said that he did not obtain the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. And that his weakness had reached the same pitch as his poverty, beyond which it could not go, this also is shown when it is said that the dogs licked his sores. He was so feeble as not to be able to drive away the dogs; but he lay like a living corpse, seeing their approach, but powerless to keep them at a distance-To such an extent were his limbs emaciated; so much was he wasted by bodily sickness; so far was he worn down by trials. You see that poverty and weakness in the highest degree, as it were, besieged his body. And if each of these evils by itself is unbearable and dreadful, what adamantine strength must he have who must bear them both united! Many people are often in ill health, but they do not at the same time lack necessary food. Others may live in utter poverty, but they may enjoy health; and the blessing on the one hand may counterbalance the evil on the other; but in the case we are considering, both these evils came together.

Suppose, however, that there may be some alleviation even in weakness and in poverty. But this cannot be, when in such a state of desertion. For if there were no one connected with him or at his home, to pity him, yet he might have met with compassion from some of the beholders, when lying before the public; but in this case the utter lack of helpers increased the afore-mentioned evils. And the being laid at the gate of the rich man added to his distress. If he had been placed in a desert and uninhabited place when he suffered this neglect, he would not have felt such grief; for the fact of there being no one nigh would have led him, even though unwillingly, to submit to these unavoidable evils; but being placed in the midst of so many people carousing and rejoicing, and meeting with not the slightest attention from any of them, made the thought of his own woes more bitter, and the more inflamed his grief. For we are so constituted as not to be so much distressed by evils when all helpers are at a distance, as when helpers who are near are unwilling to stretch out a hand to aid us. This grief, then, this poor man felt. There was no one either to console him by a word, or to comfort him by a kind act; no friend, no neighbour, no relation, no one of those who saw him; not one of all the corrupt household of the rich man.

10. Besides, in addition to these things, it would cause another accession of woe to see another man in such prosperity. Not that he was envious and evil-minded, but because it is the nature of us all to feel our own private misfortunes more acutely when we see others in prosperity. And with respect to the rich man, there was another circumstance which would give Lazarus pain. For, in truth, not only by comparing his own ill-fortune with another's prosperity did he feel the more deeply his own woes, but also by the consideration that another who acted with cruelty and inhumanity was in every respect fortunate; while he himself, with his virtue and meekness, suffered extreme misery; and thus, again, he would feel inconsolable grief. For if the rich man had been just, if he had been gentle, if he had been worthy of admiration, full of all virtue, the thought would not thus have grieved Lazarus. But now, when the rich man was living in wickedness, proceeding to the extreme of evil, displaying such inhumanity, and acting as an enemy, passing him by as shamelessly and pitilessly as though he were a stone; and notwithstanding all this was enjoying such prosperity, consider how likely it would be that this state of things would plunge the soul of the poor man in continual waves of woe! Consider how Lazarus would feel when he saw parasites, flatterers' servants going up and down, coming in and out, as they hastened about, noisy, drinking, dancing, and displaying every form of wantonness. For, just as if he had come for the very purpose of being a witness of another's prosperity, he was laid at his gate, having life only sufficient to make him sensible of his own ills. He suffered, as it were, shipwreck at the very harbour's mouth, and was consumed with thirst at the very edge of the spring.

Shall I add to these yet another woe? It is this,---- that he could nowhere see another Lazarus. We ourselves even though we suffer ten thousand ills, still are able looking at him (Lazarus) to gain effectual comfort and feel great consolation. For to find fellowship in his private ills, whether they be physical or mental, brings great alleviation to the sufferer. Lazarus, however, could not look to any other man suffering the same things as himself; or rather he could not even hear of any one of those going before him, who had endured such things. This of itself was enough to becloud his mind. And, besides this, we have to mention another thing:----that he was unable to console himself with any hope of the resurrection, but thought that present things are bounded by the present existence, for he lived under the old dispensation, (πρὸ τῆς χάριτος. And if even now, in these days, after such a revelation of God's character, and the blessed hope of the resurrection, and the knowledge of the punishment laid up for sinners, and the good things prepared for the righteous, many men are so feeble-minded and weak as not even to be confirmed by such expectations as these, what would he, in all probability, endure who was without such an anchor of hope? This man could not at any time thus console himself, because the time had not yet arrived when such revelations were vouchsafed to man.

And even in addition to this, there was yet another thing, namely, that his character was maligned by foolish men. For the generality of men are accustomed, when they see any in hunger and thirst, or living in great trouble, not to entertain any charitable feeling respecting them, but rather to pass judgment on their life by their misfortunes, and to suppose that they are thus afflicted entirely on account of their wickedness; and they say to each other many things of this kind----foolishly no doubt----but still they say so:----"This man, if he were favourably regarded by God, would not have been suffered to be afflicted with poverty and other woes. In this way it happened to Job and to Paul. To the former they said:----"Hath it not often been said to thee in trouble, The force of thy words who can bear? For if thou didst instruct many, and strengthen the weak hands, and raise up the feeble with thy words, and give power to the tottering knees; yet now trouble has come upon thee, and thou art over-anxious. Is not thy fear the offspring of folly? (Job iv. 2-6, LXX. The meaning of these words is this ----"If," they say, "thou hadst acted rightly thou wouldst not have suffered these present ills; but thou art paying the penalty of sins and transgressions."

And this it was especially that wounded the blessed Job. Again concerning Paul, the barbarians spoke in the same strain; when they saw the viper hanging from his hand, they had no favourable opinion of him, but supposed that he was one of those who dare to commit the greatest crimes. This is plain from that which they said:----"This man though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live," (Acts xxviii. 4.) This same thing frequently disturbs ourselves not a little. But notwithstanding that the waves of trouble, dashing against each other, were so

great, the bark of this poor man was not overwhelmed; and though he was placed as it were in a furnace, he preserved his tranquillity as if refreshed with perpetual dew.

11. Nor did he say within himself anything of this kind----as it seems many do say, namely:----"This rich man when he departs this life will undergo punishments and penalties, and then one will have become one again; but if he there be honoured two will have come to nothing." Now, do not many among yourselves use such expressions in the market, or introduce into the church words which belong to the circus or the theatre? I should be ashamed, and blush to utter such words aloud, were it not necessary to say such things in order that you may avoid the unlicensed mirth and shame and harm springing from the use of such expressions. Many frequently laugh when they say these things; but this is the effect of satanical guile, in order to bring corrupt expressions into common use instead of sound words. Such things as these many constantly repeat in the workshop, in the market, in their houses,----things full of utter unbelief and folly----things that are in reality ridiculous and puerile. For to say, "if the wicked when they depart are punished," and not to be fully persuaded in one's own mind that they will in truth be punished, is a mark of unbelief and scepticism. If also it should result, even as it will result, even the very thought that the evil will enjoy the same rewards as the just, is utter folly.

What dost thou mean, tell me, when thou sayest, if the rich man when he departs should receive punishment, "one has become one? (There is equality. And how is the saying true? For how many years do you wish that we suppose that he has here enjoyed wealth? Do you wish to suppose a hundred? I, for my part, am willing rather to suppose two hundred, or three hundred, or twice as many; or even, if you wish, a thousand, however impossible it may be. The days of our years, it is said, are eighty years, (alluding to Ps. xc. 10. Suppose, however, a thousand. But can you, I pray, show me in this world a life that has no end?----one that knows no limit, such as is the life of the just in heaven? Tell me then, if some one in the course of a hundred years, seeing for a single night a dream of prosperity; and, after enjoying in his sleep great luxury, should be punished for a hundred years----would you be able to say of him one has become one, (there is an equal balance,) and place the one night of dreams as a counterpoise to the hundred years? It is impossible to say so. Think, then, in the same way concerning the life to come. For the proportion that the dream of one night has to the hundred years, the same the present life has to the future life; or, rather, the latter proportion is much the less.

As a little drop to the fathomless ocean, so is a thousand years to that future glory and bliss. And what can one say more, except that that life has no limit, and knows no end; and that there is as much difference between dreams and realities as there is between our condition in this world and our condition in the next. Besides, even

before the future punishment, those who live wickedly are punished now. For do not tell me only of enjoying a sumptuous table, and of being clothed in silken garments, and of being followed by troops of slaves, and of proceeding in state through the public places of resort; but lay open to me the conscience of such a man, and there you shall see within great trouble on account of sins, perpetual dread, tempest, and confusion, and the reason, as in a court of justice, ascending the royal throne of conscience, sitting there as a judge, bringing forward the thoughts as ministers of justice, racking the mind, torturing it on account of sin, and vehemently accusing it; and this state of things is known to no one else, save only God, who sees all that takes place.

Again, he who commits fornication, though he be rich in the highest degree, and though he have no accuser, never ceases inwardly to accuse himself. The pleasure is fleeting, while the pain is lasting; there is fear from all sides and trembling, suspicion, and agony; he fears the by-ways, he trembles at the very shadows, at his own domestics, at those who know his guilt, at those who know it not, at the injured one, at her wronged husband: he goes about bearing with him a keen accuser----his own conscience----being self-condemned, and unable to find the slightest relief. And even on his bed, or at his table, or in the market, or in his house, by day, by night, even in his very dreams he often sees the image of his sin; he lives the life of a Cain, groaning and trembling on the earth; and though no one knows it, he has within himself the unquenchable fire.

This also they who rob and who are covetous suffer; this also does the drunkard suffer, and, in short, every one living in sin. It is impossible that that tribunal can in any way be influenced. And if we do not follow after virtue, yet we are pained for not following after it; and if we follow vice, as soon as we lose the pleasure that accompanies the sin, we feel the pain. Let us therefore not say concerning those who are prosperous here, and yet do ill, and concerning the just who enjoy felicity in the next world, that ”one becomes one” (all is equally balanced,) but that ”two come to nothing” (all the good is on one side.) For, to the just the life here and the life yonder both bring much pleasure; but they who live in wickedness and in luxury are punished both in the life here and the life yonder. For even here they are harassed by the expectation of the coming penalty, as well as by the bad opinion in which they are held by all, and by the fact that by the very sin itself their soul is corrupted; and after their departure thither they endure insupportable penalties.

Again, the just, even if they suffer a thousand ills here, are encouraged by pleasant hopes; they have unmixed, sure, and abiding pleasure; and after these things, innumerable blessings accrue to them, as also we see in the case of Lazarus. Therefore do not say to me that he was full of sores; but mark this----that he had within him a soul more precious than all gold; or rather, mark not only his soul, but also his body; for bodily perfection consists not in stoutness and vigour, but in being able

to bear so many and so great afflictions. For, if one have in his body wounds of this kind, he is not therefore to be despised. But rather, if one have in his soul so many defects, for him we should have no regard;----and such was that rich man, covered with wounds within. And as dogs licked the wounds of the one, so the evil spirits aggravated the sins of the other; as the one starved for lack of food, so the other for lack of virtue.

12. Knowing, therefore, these things, let us act wisely, and let us not say that if God loved such a one, He would not have allowed him to be in poverty. This very thing is the greatest token of love. For "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," (Heb. xii. 6.) And again, "My son, if thou dost purpose to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for trial, make ready thy heart, and be strong," (Ecclesiasticus ii. 1.) Let us then, beloved, cast these vain imaginations away from us, and these common sayings; for "filthiness and foolish talking and jesting, let it not proceed out of your mouth," (Eph. v. 4.) Let us not say such things; and if we see others speaking thus, let us refute them, let us boldly arise and put a stop to such shameless speech. Tell me, if you should see any robber prowling about the road, lying in wait for those that pass by, and plundering the land, secreting gold and silver in caves and hiding-places, and shutting up in such places a great quantity of booty, gaining from this course of life rich garments and many captives; tell me, should you then think him happy on account of such wealth? Or should you think him miserable on account of the judgment about to overtake him? And even if he should escape this, if he should not be delivered into the hand of justice, nor fall into prison, nor have any accuser, nor come to trial, but eat and drink and enjoy great abundance, still we do not think him happy because of present and visible circumstances; but we think him miserable on account of the things which are to come, and to which we look forward.

In the same way reason with yourself concerning the rich and the avaricious. Robbers lie in wait in the way and plunder travellers, and hide the wealth of others in their own lurking-places----in caves or dens. Do not, therefore, think them happy on account of the present, but miserable on account of the future----on account of the fearful judgment, the inevitable account to be rendered----the outer darkness which will envelop them. Even though robbers often escape the hand of men, yet, notwithstanding though we know this, we deprecate for ourselves such a life as theirs, or even for our enemies we should deprecate such an accursed prosperity. Yet with respect to God such a thing cannot be said. No one can escape His judgment, but all who in any way live in covetousness and rapine will undergo the punishment allotted by Him----that deathless punishment which has no end,----in the same way as also did this rich man.

Taking all this, therefore, into consideration, beloved, think those blessed, not who live in wealth, but in virtue; think those miserable, not those who live in poverty, but

in wickedness: let us look not at the present, but at the future; let us examine, not the outward appearance, but the conscience of each man; and following after the virtue and the bliss of right actions, let us, whether we be wealthy or poor, emulate Lazarus. He endured not one, nor two, nor three, but many tests of his goodness. These tests were his poverty, his weakness, his lack of helpers, his suffering these evils in a place where there was at hand the means of complete relief, while no one vouchsafed a word of comfort, his seeing him who disregarded him possessing all that abundance, and not only possessing abundance, but living in wickedness, and suffering no ill; also, his being able to look to no other Lazarus, and his being unable to console himself by the thought of the resurrection. And besides all the aforesaid ills, there was his having to bear an ill-character among many, for the very reason that he was a sufferer. There was, not only for two or three days, but for his whole life, the seeing himself in such circumstances, and the rich man in the very opposite.

What excuse, therefore, shall we have if, while this man bore all these excessive evils with such fortitude, we cannot bear even the half of them? for you are unable----you are unable, I say, to show, or even to name, any man who has borne such numerous and heavy evils. For this cause, therefore, Christ brought them before our notice, in order that whensoever we fall into trouble, seeing in his case the exceeding greatness of his affliction, we may, from his wisdom and patience, gain effectual consolation and comfort; for he is set as a general instructor of the whole world, for all who are suffering any kind of distress; enabling all to look to one who surpassed them all in the exceeding greatness of his woes. For all these things, therefore, let us give thanks unto God----the merciful God; let us reap the benefit of this narrative, continually bearing it in mind, in the assembly, at home, in the market, yea everywhere; and let us diligently gain all the wealth of wisdom contained in this parable, in order that we may without grief pass through evils, and that we may attain the good things in store. Which benefits may we all be enabled to gain, by the grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be praise, honour, adoration, now and ever, even to all eternity. Amen.

[Footnotes moved to the end and numbered]

Discourse 2

DISCOURSE II.
CONCERNING LAZARUS ---- AND THAT THE SOULS OF THOSE THAT DIE A VIOLENT DEATH DO NOT BECOME WANDERING SPIRITS----CONCERNING ALSO FUTURE JUDGMENT, AND CHARITY. 1. I was pleased yesterday to see your right feeling when I entered upon the subject of Lazarus, inasmuch as you approved of the patience of the poor man, and shrank from the cruelty and inhumanity of the rich man. These are no small tokens of a noble mind. For if, though not possessing virtue, we yet praise it, then we may be at all events more able to attain it. In like manner if, though we do not flee from sin, we still blame sin, then we may at all events be able to escape from it. Since, therefore, you received that address with great favour, let me deliver to you those things which still remain.

You then saw Lazarus in the gateway of the rich man; to-day behold him in Abraham's bosom. You saw him then licked by dogs; see him now guarded and tended by angels. You saw him then in poverty; behold him now in affluence. You saw him wanting food; behold him enjoying the greatest plenty. You saw him engaged in the contest; behold him crowned as victor. You saw his labour; behold his reward; behold it, whether you be rich or poor,----if rich, that you may not think highly of wealth apart from virtue,----if poor, that you may not think poverty, in itself, an evil. To both classes this man may afford instruction. If he, living in poverty, did not resent his lot, what excuse will they have who do so in wealth? If, living in want and amid so many ills, he could give thanks, what defence can they make who, while they possess abundance, have no desire to attain to the virtue of thankfulness? Again; those who are poor, and who on that account are vexed and discontented, what excuse can they have, when this man, who lived in continual hunger and poverty, desertion and weakness, and who passed his days hard by the dwelling of a rich man; who was scorned by all, while there was no one else who had suffered the like, to whom he might look, still showed such patience and resignation? Prom him we may learn not to think the rich happy nor the poor miserable.

Or rather, to speak the truth, he is not rich who is surrounded by many possessions, but he who does not need many possessions; and he is not poor who possesses

nothing, but he who requires many things. We ought to consider this to be the distinction between poverty and wealth. When, therefore, you see any one longing for many things, esteem him of all men the poorest, even though he possess all manner of wealth; again, when you see one who does not wish for many things, judge him to be of all men most affluent, even if he possess nothing. For by the condition of our mind, not by the quantity of our material wealth, should it be our custom to distinguish between poverty and affluence. As also in the case of a man who is always thirsty, we do not say that he is in health, even should he enjoy abundance,----even should he lie beside rivers and streams; for what is the use of this abundance of water while his thirst is unquenched? Thus also we conclude in the case of the rich; we can never think those wealthy who are perpetually desiring and thirsting for other people's possessions, not even if they enjoy a certain kind of abundance. For he who cannot restrain his desires, even if he should be surrounded by every kind of possessions, how can he ever be rich?

Those, indeed, who are satisfied with their own property, enjoying what they have, and not casting a covetous eye on the substance of others, even if they be, as to means, of all men the most limited, ought to be regarded as the most affluent. For he who does not desire other people's possessions, but is willing to be satisfied with his own, is the wealthiest of all.

However, with your permission, let us return to the proposed subject. "It came to pass," it is said, "that Lazarus died; and he was carried up by angels," (Luke xvi. 22.) Here, before I proceed, I desire to remove a wrong impression from your minds. For it is a fact that many of the less instructed think that the souls of those who die a violent death become wandering spirits, (demons.) But this is not so. I repeat it is not so. For not the souls of those who die a violent death become demons, but rather the souls of those who live in sin; not that their nature is changed, but that in their desires they imitate the evil nature of demons. Showing this very thing to the Jews, Christ said, "Ye are the children of the devil," (John vii. 44.) He said that they were the children of the devil, not because they were changed into a nature like his, but because they performed actions like his. Wherefore also He adds:---- "For the lusts of your father ye will do." Also John says: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Do therefore works meet for repentance. And think not to say, We have Abraham for our father" (Matt. iii. 7-9.) The Scripture, therefore, is accustomed to base the laws of relationship, not on natural origin, but on good or evil disposition; and those to whom any one shows similarity of manners and actions, the Scripture declares him to be their son or their brother.

2. But for what object did the evil one introduce this wicked saying? It is because he would strive to undermine the glory of the martyrs. For since these also died a violent death, he did this with the intention of spreading a low estimation of them.

This, however, he is unable to effect; they remain in possession of their former glory. But another and more grievous thing he has brought to pass; he has, by these means, persuaded the wizards who do his work to murder many innocent children, expecting them to become wandering spirits, and afterward to be their servants. But these notions are false: I repeat they are false. What then if the demons say, ”I am the spirit of such and such a monk”? Neither because of this do I credit the notion, since evil spirits say so to deceive those who listen to them.

For this reason St Paul stopped their mouth, even when speaking the truth, in order that they might not, on this pretext, at another time mingle falsehood with the truth, and still be deemed worthy of credit. For when they said, ”These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation,” (Acts xvi. 17;) being grieved in spirit, he rebuked the sorceress, and commanded the spirits to go out. What evil was there in saying, ”These men are the servants of the most high God”? Be that as it may, since many of the more weak-minded cannot always know how to decide aright concerning things spoken by demons, he at once put a stop to any credence in them. ”If,” he implied, ”thou art one of those in dishonour, thou hast no liberty of speaking: be silent, and open not thy mouth; it is not thy office to preach; this is the privilege of the apostles. Why dost thou arrogate to thyself that which is not thine? Be silent! thou art fallen from honour.” The same thing also Christ did, when the evil spirits said to Him, ”We know Thee who Thou art,” (Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 24.) He rebuked them with great severity, teaching us never to listen to spirits, not even when they say what is true. Having learnt this, therefore, let us not trust at all in an evil spirit, even though he speak the truth; let us avoid him and turn away. Sound doctrine and saving truth are to be learned with accuracy, not from evil spirits, but from the Holy Scripture.

To show that it is not true that the soul, when it departs from the body, comes under the dominion of evil spirits, hear what St Paul says: ”He that is dead is freed from sin,” (Rom. vi. 7,) that is, he no longer sins. For if while the soul dwells in the body, the devil can use no violence against it, it is clear that he cannot when the soul has departed. How is it then, say they, that men sin, if they do not suffer any violence? They sin voluntarily and intentionally, surrendering themselves without compulsion or coercion. And this all those prove who have overcome the evil one’s devices. Thus [Satan] was unable to persuade Job to utter any blasphemous word, though he tried a thousand plans. Hence it is manifest that it is in our power either to be influenced or not to be influenced by his counsels; and that we are under no necessity nor tyranny from him. And not only from that which has just been said, but from the parable, it is quite certain that souls when they leave the body do not still linger here, but are forthwith led away. And hear how it is shown: ”It came to pass,” it is said, ”that he died, and was carried away by the angels. Not the souls of the just only, but also those of sinners are led away. This also is clear from the case of another rich man.

For when his land brought forth abundantly, he said within himself, ”What shall I do? I will pull down my barns and build greater,” (Luke xii. 18. Than this state of mind nothing could be more wretched. He did in truth pull down his barns; for secure storehouses are not built with walls of stone; they are ”the mouths of the poor. But this man neglecting these, was busy about stone walls. What, however, did God say to him? ”Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul of thee. Mark also: in one passage it is said that the soul is carried away by angels; in the other, that ”they require it; and in the latter case they lead it away as a prisoner; in the former, they guard and conduct it as a crowned victor. And like as in the arena a combatant, having received many wounds, is drenched with blood; his head being then encircled with a crown, those who stand ready by the spot take him up, and with great applause and praise they bear him home amid shouting and admiration. In this way the angels on that occasion led Lazarus also away. But in the other instance dreadful powers, probably sent for that purpose, required the soul. For it is not of its own accord that the soul departs this life; indeed, it is not able.

For if when we travel from one city to another we need guides, much more does the soul stand in want of those who can conduct it, when it is separated from the flesh, and is entering upon the future state of existence. For this reason it often rises up and again sinks down into the depth below; it fears and shivers as it is about to put off the flesh. The consciousness of sin ever pierces us, and chiefly at that hour when we are about to be led hence to the account there to be rendered, and to the awful tribunal. Then, if a man has robbed, if he has been covetous, if he has been haughty, if he has unjustly been any one’s enemy, if he has committed any other sin whatsoever, all the load of guilt is brought fresh to light, and being placed before the eye causes mental compunction. And as those who live in prison are always in sorrow and pain, and especially on that day when they are to be led forth, and brought to the place where they are to be tried, and placed at the bar, and hear the voice of the judge within; as they then are full of fear, and seem no better than dead men, so the soul, though it is much pained at the very moment of the sinful act, is much more afflicted when about to be hurried away.

3. Ye are silent as ye listen to these things. Much rather would I have silence than applause. Applause and praises tend to my own glory; but silence tends to make you wiser. I know that what has been said causes pain, but it brings also great and inexpressible advantage. That rich man, if he had had some one to admonish him of these things, and had not had those flatterers counselling him always with a view to favour, and encouraging him in luxury, would not have come to the place of punishment; he would not have endured those insupportable tortures, he would not afterwards have repented so inconsolably. But since all his associates spoke with a view to favour, they betrayed him to the fire. Oh that we could at all times and constantly act wisely with respect to these things, and speak thus concerning future punishment! ”In all thy words,” it is said, ”remember thy latter end, and

thou wilt never sin," (Ecclus. vii. 36. And again, "Prepare thy work for going forth, and make ready for thy journey," (Prov. xxiv. 27, LXX. If thou hast defrauded any one of anything, restore it, and say with Zacchaeus "I restore him fourfold," (Luke xix. 8. If thou hast slandered any, if thou hast been any one's enemy, be reconciled before thou comest before the Judge. Settle every affair here, that thou mayest see that tribunal with untroubled mind.

As long as we are here we have good hope, but when we come there, we no longer have it in our power to repent nor to cleanse ourselves from our sins. Wherefore it is necessary to be always ready for our going thither. For what if this evening it should seem good to the Lord to call us? What if He should do so to-morrow? The future is left uncertain, that we may be constantly striving and prepared for departure. Thus then Lazarus was at all times submissive and patient, and therefore he was led away with such honour. The rich man also died and was buried: his soul also was buried in the body as in a tomb, and bore about its sepulchre, the flesh. Having fettered his soul by drinking and gluttony as by a chain, he had thus made it inactive and dead.

Beloved, do not carelessly pass by this word "he was buried; but let us think of the tables inlaid with silver, the couches, the carpets, the vestments, all the ornaments throughout the house, the unguents, the perfumes, the abundance of wine, the variety of meats, the confections, the cooks, the flatterers, the attendants, the household slaves, and all the rest of the display, all burnt up and come to nought. All is ashes, all cinders and dust, lamentations and mourning; no one any longer able to help him, or to bring back the departing soul. Then was made manifest the real power of gold, and of all the rest of his wealth. From all that crowd of attendants, he departed naked and alone, not being able out of all that abundance to carry anything away; but he went away destitute and deserted. No one of all his servants, no one of his supporters was at hand to rescue him from punishment, but led away from all these, he is alone taken to bear those insupportable penalties. Truly "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth; but the word of the Lord abideth for ever," (Isa. xl. 6, 7. Death came and withered all those things, and seizing the man himself as a captive, led him away downcast, filled with shame, speechless, trembling, afraid; him who had, as in a dream, enjoyed all that luxury.

And after this, the rich man became a suppliant of the poor man, and required a supply from the table of him who once was famishing, and who lay at his gate, licked by dogs. Affairs were now reversed. All men now learned which was the rich man and which the poor, and that Lazarus was one of the most wealthy of men, and the rich man one of the most destitute. Just as in a play, certain men enter, wearing masks of kings and generals, and physicians and orators, and sophists and soldiers, being themselves in reality none of these; thus also, with respect to the present life,

both poverty and wealth are only masks. As, therefore, when sitting in the theatre, you see one of the players on the stage, having on the mask of a king, you do not think him happy, nor think him really a king; neither would you wish to become like him; but since you know that he is some common man or other----a rope-maker, perhaps, or a worker in brass, or some one else of that sort, you do not think him happy because of his mask and his dress, nor do you judge of his condition in life by these things, but you rather look down upon him because of his insignificance in other respects. Thus in truth also, here in this present life, it is as if we were sitting in a theatre, and looking at the players on the stage.

Do not, when you see many abounding in wealth, think that they are in reality wealthy, but dressed up in the semblance of wealth. And as one man, representing on the stage a king or a general, often may prove to be a household servant, or one of those who sell figs or grapes in the market; thus the rich, man may often chance to be the poorest of all. For if you remove his mask and examine his conscience, and enter into his inner mind, you will find there great poverty as to virtue, and ascertain that he is the meanest of men. As also, in the theatre, as evening closes in, and the spectators depart, those who come forth divested of their theatrical ornaments, who seemed to all to be kings and generals, now are seen to be whatever they are in reality; even so with respect to this life, when death comes, and the theatre is deserted, when all, having put off their masks of wealth or of poverty, depart hence, being judged only by their works, they appear, some really rich, some poor; some in honour, some in dishonour. Thus it often happens, that one of those who are here the most wealthy, is there most poor, as it was also in the case of this rich man.

For when evening, that is, death, came, and he went out from the theatre of the present life, and put off his mask, he was seen there to be poorest of all, even so poor as not to possess a drop of water, but obliged to beg for this, and not gain the object of his petition. What could be more abject than poverty like this? And hear how having lifted up his eyes, he said to Abraham, ”Father, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue,” (Luke xvi. 24. Do you see how great his tribulation is? Him whom he passed by when he was close at hand, he now calls to when far off; him upon whom he often, in going out and coming in, did not bestow a glance, he now, when far off, regards steadfastly.

But why does he now look at him? Very often, perhaps, the rich man had said, ”What need have I of piety and goodness? All things flow to me as from a perennial fountain. I enjoy great honour, great prosperity. I suffer no unwished-for casualty. Why should I strive after goodness? This poor man, though he lives in piety and goodness, suffers a thousand ills. Many in these days often say such things. In order, therefore, that these false notions might be completely rooted out, it is

shown to the rich man, that for wickedness there is in store punishment, and for righteous toil, a crown and honour. And not only on this account did the rich man then see the poor man, but also that the rich man should endure the same that the poor man had endured, and in a higher degree. As therefore, in the case of the poor man, his being laid at the gate of the rich man, and thus seeing the prosperity of another, had made his affliction much heavier, thus also, in the case of the rich man, it made his pain greater, that he, now lying in the place of punishment, also sees the bliss of Lazarus; so that, not only by the very nature of torture, but by the contrast with the other's honour, he should bear more insufferable punishment.

And as God, when He drove Adam forth from Paradise, caused him to dwell opposite to Paradise, that the constant sight, ever renewing his grief, might produce in him a sense of his falling away from good; thus also did He place this man within sight of Lazarus, that he might see of what he had deprived himself. "I sent to thee," He might say, "this poor man Lazarus to thy gate, that he might be to thee a teacher of virtue, and an oportunity for the exercise of benevolence. Thou didst overlook the gain; thou wert not willing to use aright this means of salvation. From henceforth find it to be a cause of increased pain and punishment."

We learn from this that all those whom we have de-spitefully treated or wronged will then meet us face to face. Still this man was not in any way wronged by the rich man: for the rich man did not seize any of his property; yet he bestowed not upon him any of his own. And since he did not bestow anything on him, he had the neglected poor man for his accuser. What mercy can he expect who has robbed other men's goods, when he is surrounded by all those whom he has injured! No need is there of witnesses, none of accusers, none of evidences or proofs; but the very deeds themselves, whatsoever we have committed, will then be placed before our own eyes.

Behold, then, it is said, the man and his works. This also is robbery----not to impart our good things to others. Very likely it may seem to you a strange saying; but wonder not at it, for I will, from the Divine Scriptures, bring testimony showing that not only robbery of other men's goods, but also the not imparting our own good things to others,----that this also is robbery, and covetous-ness, and fraud. What then is this testimony? God, rebuking the Jews, speaks thus through the prophet: "The earth has brought forth her fruit, and ye have not brought in the tithes; but the plunder of the poor is in your houses," (Mal. iii. 10. Since, it is said, ye have not given the customary oblations, ye have robbed the poor. This is said in order to show to the rich that they possess things which belong to the poor, even if their property be gained by inheritance,----in fact, from what source soever their substance be derived. And, again, in another place, it is said, "Do not deprive the poor of life," (Ecclus. iv. 1. Now, he who deprives, deprives some other man of property. It is said to be deprivation when we retain things taken from others. And

in this way, therefore, we are taught that if we do not bestow alms, we shall be treated in the same way as those who have been extortioners. Our Lord's things they are, from whencesoever we may obtain them.

And if we distribute to the needy we shall obtain for ourselves great abundance. And for this it is that God has permitted you to possess much,----not that you should spend it in fornication, in drunkenness, in gluttony, in rich clothing, or any other mode of luxury, but that you should distribute it to the needy. And just as if a receiver of taxes, having in charge the king's property, should not distribute it to those for whom it is ordered, but should spend it for his own enjoyment, he would pay the penalty and come to ruin; thus also the rich man is, as it were, a receiver of goods which are destined to be dispensed to the poor----to those of his fellow-servants who are in want. If he then should spend upon himself more than he really needs, he will pay hereafter a heavy penalty. For the things he has are not his own, but are the things of his fellow-servants.

5. Let us then be as sparing of our possessions as we should be of those of other people, that they may become really our own. In what manner, then, can we be as sparing of them as of those of other people? By not expending them on superfluous wants, nor for our own needs only, but by imparting them also to the poor. Even if you are a rich man, if you spend more than you need, you will render an account of the property which has been entrusted to you. This same thing happens in great households. Many in this way entrust their entire property into the hands of dependants; yet those who are thus trusted take care of the things delivered to them, and do not squander the deposit, but distribute to whomsoever and whensoever the master orders. The same thing do you. If you have received more than others, you have received it, not that you only should spend it, but that you should be a good steward of it for the advantage of others.

It is worth while to inquire here, why it was that the rich man beheld Lazarus, not in company with any other of the just, but in the bosom of Abraham? Abraham was hospitable, and that there might be this rebuke of his own inhospitality, therefore it was that the rich man saw Lazarus there. Abraham used to lie in wait for those who passed by, and constrain them to enter his abode; but this rich man neglected even one that lay within his very porch; and while he had such a treasure, such an opportunity of salvation, overlooked it each day, and did not show kindness to the poor man, even with respect to the necessaries of life. But the patriarch was not like this. He was the very opposite. Sitting at the tent-door he captured, as it were, all those that passed by, and as a fisher casting his net into the sea, draws up fishes, and draws up also, it may be, sometimes gold or pearls, so also he, a fisher of men, once entertained even angels; and there was this wonderful circumstance, that he did so without knowing it. The same thing also St Paul with much admiration insists on, in these words: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby

some have entertained angels unawares," (Heb. xiii. 2. And well does he say unawares, (e1laqon. For if they had knowingly received them with such good-will, they would have done no great or wonderful thing:

all the praise depends on the fact that not knowing who they were that passed by, and supposing them to be simply wayfaring men, they with such alacrity invited them to enter. If when you receive some noble and honourable man you display such zeal as this, you do nothing wonderful; for the nobility of the guest obliges even the inhospitable often to show all kindness. It is this that is great and admirable,----that when they are chance guests, wanderers, people of limited means, we receive them with great good-will. Thus also Christ, speaking of those who acted thus, said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me," (Matt. xxv. 45. And again, "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish," (Matt. xviii. 14. And again, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the sea," (Matt. xviii. 6. And at all times Christ said much on behalf of the poor and lowly.

Since Abraham also was wise in this respect, he did not inquire of travellers as to who they were, or from whence they came, as we do in these days; but he simply received all who passed by. It becomes him that is truly well-disposed not to require an account of a man's past life, but simply to relieve poverty and to satisfy want. The poor man has only one plea----his poverty, and his being in want. Demand from him nothing more; but if he be the most wicked of all, and be in need of necessary food, you ought to satisfy his hunger. Thus did Christ command us to do, when he said, "Be ye like your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," (Matt. v. 45. The merciful man is as a harbour to those who are in need; and the harbour receives all who are escaping shipwreck, and frees them from danger, whether they be evil or good; whatsoever kind of men they be that are in peril, it receives them into its shelter. You also, when you see a man suffering shipwreck on land through poverty, do not sit in judgment on him, nor require explanations, but relieve his distress. Why do you give yourself unnecessary trouble? God frees you from all such anxiety and labour.

How many things would many men have said, and how many difficulties would they have caused, if God had commanded us to inquire accurately into a man's life, his antecedents, the things which each man had previously done; and after this, to have pity on him! But now are we free from all this trouble. "Why, then, do we burden ourselves with superfluous cares? To be a judge is one thing, to be merciful is another. Mercy is called by that name for this reason, that it gives even to the unworthy. This again St Paul teaches, when he says, "Be not weary in doing good, indeed to all, but especially unto them that are of the household of faith," (Gal. vi.

10. If we are concerned and troubled about keeping the unworthy away, it will not be likely that the worthy come within our reach; but if we impart to the unworthy, also the worthy ----even those who are so worthy as to counterbalance all the rest----will assuredly come under our influence. In this way it befell Abraham, of blessed memory, who, not troubling himself nor being inquisitive about these wayfarers, was once privileged to entertain even angels. Him let us zealously imitate, and also his descendant Job. For even he imitated with all diligence the magnanimity of his progenitor, and therefore spoke thus: "My door was open to every traveller," (Job xxxi. 32, LXX. It was not open to one and. closed to another, but open to all alike.

6. Thus, I beseech you, let us also do, not making a more minute inquiry than is necessary. For the need of the poor man is a sufficient cause of itself; and whosoever with this qualification should at any time come to us, let us not trouble ourselves further; for we do not minister to the character, but to the man: we have pity on him, not on account of his virtue, but on account of his calamity, in order that we also may gain that great mercy from the Lord----that we also, though unworthy, may gain His favour. For if we seek for worthiness in our fellow-servants, and make diligent inquiry, the same also will God do to us; and if we demand explanations from our fellow-servants, we ourselves shall fail to gain favour from above. "With what judgment," it is said, "ye judge, ye shall be judged," (Matt. viii. 2.)

But let us again turn our discourse to the subject on hand. Seeing this poor man, therefore, in the bosom of Abraham, the rich man said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus." Why does he not address his words to Lazarus? It seems to me that he was ashamed and daunted, and that he thought that Lazarus would assuredly retain an angry remembrance of the things done to him. He would say within himself, "If I, while I enjoyed such abundance, and without any just complaint against him, neglected this man when he lived in such misery, and did not bestow upon him even the crumbs, much more will he who has been thus neglected, not yield to pity." We do not say this to disparage Lazarus; for he was not at all thus disposed----far from it; but the rich man, fearing such things as this, did not address him, but raised his voice to Abraham, whom he might suppose to be ignorant of what had happened. And now he strove to gain the service of that finger which he had often allowed to be licked by dogs.

What then did Abraham say to him? "Son! thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things," (Luke xvi. 25.) Mark the wisdom----mark the tenderness of the saint! He did not say, "Inhuman and cruel man! full of all wickedness! Having inflicted such evils on this man, dost thou now speak of benevolence, or pity, or compassion! Dost thou not blush! Art thou not ashamed!" But what does he say? "Son," he saith, "thou receivedst thy good things." For it is also written, "Thou shalt not add trouble to an afflicted soul," (Ecclus. iv. 3.) The trouble which he has brought upon

himself is sufficient. Besides this, and to the end that you may not suppose that he hinders Lazarus from going to the rich man because of any feeling of revenge for the past, Abraham addresses him as ”son,” as if he would by this mode of address apologise for himself. ”Whatever is in my power,” he implies, ”I grant to thee; but to leave this place is not now in my power. Thou didst receive thy good things.” Why also did he not say ”thou hadst” (ἔλαβες), but ”thou receivedst” (ἀπέαβες)? Here I perceive a vast sea of thought opening out before us.

Therefore, keeping in mind with all care the things which have been already said, as well those now said as those yesterday, let us safely store them in the mind. By means of that which has been said, make yourselves better prepared to hear that which will be spoken on another occasion, and, if possible, remember all that has been said; and if that be not possible, I beg that, chiefest of all, you will remember constantly that not to share our own riches with the poor is a robbery of the poor, and a depriving them of their livelihood; and that that which we possess is not only our own, but also theirs. If our minds are disposed in accordance with this truth, we shall freely use all our possessions; we shall feed Christ while hungering here, and we shall lay up great treasures there; we shall, be enabled to attain future blessedness, by the grace and favour of our Lord, with whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, honour, might, now and ever, even to all eternity. Amen.

[Footnotes moved to the end and numbered]

Discourse 3

DISCOURSE III.
CONCERNING LAZARUS---- CONCERNING READING THE SCRIPTURES ---- THE REASON WHY IT IS NOT SAID, ”THOU HADST,” BUT ”THOU RECEIVEDST ”---- WHY IS IT THAT THE JUST OFTEN FALL INTO TROUBLES, WHILE THE WICKED ESCAPE THEM?

1. The parable about Lazarus has benefited us not a little, both rich and poor, teaching the latter to bear poverty well, and not allowing the former to think highly of their riches; but showing, by the circumstances of the case, that he is of all men to be most pitied who lives in luxury without sharing his wealth with others. Allow me again to take up the same subject; since, also, those who work in mines, wherever they see many grains of gold, there they dig again, and do not cease until they have gathered out all that can be found. Let us, therefore, proceed, and, at the place where we left off yesterday, there again recommence the discourse. It might be possible, indeed, to unfold to you the whole parable in a single day; but we do not strive to be able to depart with the feeling that we have said a great deal, but that you, having received and retained the things spoken, may be able, through this carefulness, to gain a sense of real spiritual benefit. A tender mother about to change the food of her child from milk to more solid diet, if she were at once to give it unmixed wine would injure it, for the child would at once reject the new diet. She feeds it little by little, and thus the new nourishment is received without trouble. In order that you may not feel distaste for the offered food, we do not without preparation pour out to you from the cup of instruction; but distributing the portion over several days, we give an interval of repose from the toil of hearing, that both that which has been said may be firmly fixed in your understanding and in your heart, and that you may receive that which is about to be said with constant and increasing zeal.

Thus I often state several days beforehand the subject about to be considered, in order that, in the intervening time, you may take a book and go through the whole passage; and, noticing what has been stated and what reserved, you may be prepared to hear more intelligently that which is to be said.

This, also, I am ever urging, and shall not cease to urge, that you give attention, not only to the words spoken, but that also, when at home in your house, you exercise yourselves constantly in reading the Divine Scriptures. This, also, I have never ceased to press upon those who come to me privately. Let not any one say to me that these exhortations are vain and irrelevant, for ”I am constantly busy in the courts,” (suppose him to say; ”I am discharging public duties; I am engaged in some art or handiwork; I have a wife; I am bringing up my children; I have to manage a household; I am full of worldly business; it is not for me to read the Scriptures, but for those who have bid adieu to the world, for those who dwell on the summit of the hills; those who constantly lead a secluded life. What dost thou say, O man? Is it not for thee to attend to the Scriptures, because thou art involved in numerous cares? It is thy duty even more than theirs, for they do not so much need the aid to be derived from the Holy Scriptures as they do who are engaged in much business.

For those who lead a solitary life, who are free from business and from the anxiety arising from business, who have pitched their tent in the wilderness, and have no communion with any one, but who meditate at leisure on wisdom, in that peace that springs from repose----they, like those who lie in the harbour, enjoy abundant security. But ourselves, who, as it were, are tossed in the midst of the sea, cannot avoid many failings, we ever stand in need of the immediate and constant comfort of the Scriptures. They rest far from the strife, and, therefore, escape many wounds; but you stand perpetually in the array of battle, and constantly are liable to be wounded: on this account, you have more need of the healing remedies. For, suppose, a wife provokes, a son causes grief, a slave excites to anger, an enemy plots against us, a friend is envious, a neighbour is insolent, a fellow-soldier causes us to stumble----or often, perhaps, a judge threatens us, poverty pains us, or loss of property causes us trouble, or prosperity puffs us up, or misfortune overthrows us;----there are surrounding us on all sides many causes and occasions of anger, many of anxiety, many of dejection or grief, many of vanity or pride; from all quarters, weapons are pointed at us. Therefore it is that there is need continually of the whole armour of the Scriptures. For, ”understand,” it says, ”that thou passest through the midst of snares, and walkest on the battlements of a city,” (Ecclus. ix. 13.

The lusts of the flesh also more grievously afflict those who are engaged in the midst of business. For a noble appearance and beautiful person gain power over us through the eyes; and wicked words, entering by the cars, trouble our thoughts. Often, also, a well-modulated song softens the constancy of the mind. But why do I say these things’? For that which seems to be weaker than all these, even the odour of sweet scents from the meretricious throng with whom we meet, falling upon the senses, entrances us, and, by this chance accident, we are made captive.

2. Many other such things there are that beset our soul; and we have need of the divine remedies that we may heal wounds inflicted, and ward off those which, though not inflicted, would else be received in time to come----thus quenching afar off the darts of Satan, and shielding ourselves by the constant reading of the Divine Scriptures. It is not possible----I say, it is not possible, for any one to be secure without constant supplies of this spiritual instruction. Indeed, we may congratulate ourselves, if, constantly using this remedy, we ever are able to attain salvation. But when, though each day receiving wounds, we make use of no remedies, what hope can there be of salvation?

Do you not notice that workmen in brass, or goldsmiths, or silversmiths, or those who engage in any art whatsoever, preserve carefully all the instruments of their art; and if hunger come, or poverty afflict them, they prefer to endure anything rather than sell for their maintenance any of the tools which they use. It is frequently the case that many thus choose rather to borrow money to maintain their house and family, than part with the least of the instruments of their art. This they do for the best reasons; for they know that when those are sold, all their skill is rendered of no avail, and the entire groundwork of their gain is gone. If those are left, they may be able, by persevering in the exercise of their skill, in time to pay off their debts; but if they, in the meantime, allow the tools to go to others, there is, for the future, no means by which they can contrive any alleviation of their poverty and hunger. We also ought to judge in the same way. As the instruments of their art are the hammer and anvil and pincers, so the instruments of our work are the apostolic and prophetic books, and all the inspired and profitable Scriptures. And as they, by their instruments, shape all the articles they take in hand, so also do we, by our instruments, arm our mind, and strengthen it when relaxed, and renew it when out of condition.

Again, artists display their skill in beautiful forms, being unable to change the material of their productions, or to transmute silver into gold, but only to make their figures symmetrical. But it is not so with thee, for thou hast a power beyond theirs----receiving a vessel of wood, thou canst make it gold. And to this St Paul testifies, speaking thus: ”In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work,” (2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. Let us then not neglect the possession of the sacred books, that we receive no fatal injuries. Let us not hoard gold, but lay up, as our treasures, these inspired books. For gold, whenever it becomes abundant, causes trouble to its possessors; but these books, when carefully preserved, afford great benefit to those who possess them. As also where royal arms are stored, though no one should use them, they afford great security to those who dwell there; since neither thieves nor burglars, nor any other evil-doers, dare attack that place. In the same way, where the inspired books are, from thence all satanical influence

is banished, and the great consolation of right principles comes to those who live there; yea, even the very sight of these books by itself makes us slower to commit iniquity.

Even if we attempt any forbidden thing, and make ourselves unclean, when we return home and see these books, our conscience accuses us more keenly, and we become less likely to fall again into the same sins. Again, if we have been steadfast in our integrity, we gain more benefit, (if we are acquainted with the word; for as soon as one comes to the gospel, he by a mere look both rectifies his understanding and ceases from all worldly cares. And if careful reading also follows, the soul, as if initiated in sacred mysteries, is thus purified and made better, while holding converse with God through the Scriptures.

"But what," say they, "if we do not understand the things we read?" Even if you do not understand the contents, your sanctification in a high degree results from it. However, it is impossible that all these things should alike be misunderstood; for it was for this reason that the grace of the Holy Spirit ordained that tax-gatherers, and fishermen, and tent-makers, and shepherds, and goatherds, and uninstructed and illiterate men, should compose these books, that no untaught man should be able to make this pretext; in order that the things delivered should be easily comprehended by all----in order that the handicraftsman, the domestic, the widow, yea, the most unlearned of all men, should profit and be benefited by the reading. For it is not for vain-glory, as men of the world, but for the salvation of the hearers, that they composed these writings, who, from the beginning, were endued with the gift of the Holy Ghost.

3. For those without----philosphers, rhetoricians, and annalists, not striving for the common good, but having in view their own renown----if they said anything useful, even this they involved in their usual obscurity, as in a cloud. But the apostles and prophets always did the very opposite; they, as the common instructors of the world, made all that they delivered plain to all men, in order that every one, even unaided, might be able to learn by the mere reading. Thus also the prophet spake before, when he said, "All shall be taught of God," (Isa. liv. 13.) "And they shall no more say, every one to his neighbour, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest," (Jer. xxxi. 34.) St Paul also says, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God," (1 Cor. ii. 1.) And again, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," (1 Cor. ii. 4.) And again, "We speak wisdom," it is said, "but not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought," (1 Cor. ii. 6.) For to whom is not the gospel plain? Who is it that hears, "Blessed are the meek; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart," and such things as these, and needs a teacher in order to understand any of the things spoken?

But (it is asked) are the parts containing the signs and wonders and histories also clear and plain to every one? This is a pretence, and an excuse, and a mere cloak of idleness. You do not understand the contents of the book? But how can you ever understand, while you are not even willing to look carefully? Take the book in your hand. Read the whole history; and, retaining in your mind the easy parts, peruse frequently the doubtful and obscure parts; and if you are unable, by frequent reading, to understand what is said, go to some one wiser; betake yourself to a teacher; confer with him about the things said. Show great eagerness to learn: then, when God sees that you are using such diligence, He will not disregard your perseverance and carefulness; but if no human being can teach you that which you seek to know, He himself will reveal the whole.

Remember the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia. Being a man of a barbarous nation, occupied with numerous cares, and surrounded on all sides by manifold business, he was unable to understand that which he read. Still, however, as he was seated in the chariot, he was reading. If he showed such diligence on a journey, think how diligent he must have been at home: if while on the road he did not let an opportunity pass without reading, much more must this have been the case when seated in his house; if when he did not fully understand the things he read, he did not cease from reading, much more would he not cease when able to understand. To show that he did not understand the things which he read, hear that which Philip said to him: ”Understandest thou what thou readest?” (Acts viii. 30.) Hearing this question he did not show provocation or shame: but confessed his ignorance, and said: ”How can I, except some man should guide me?” (ver. 31.) Since therefore, while he had no man to guide him, he was thus reading; for this reason, he quickly received an instructor. God knew his willingness, He acknowledged his zeal, and forthwith sent him a teacher.

But, you say, Philip is not present with us now. Still, the Spirit that moved Philip is present with us. Let us not, beloved, neglect our own salvation! ”All these things are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come,” (1 Cor. x. 11.) The reading of the Scriptures is a great safeguard against sin; ignorance of the Scriptures is a great precipice and a deep gulf; to know nothing of the Scriptures, is a great betrayal of our salvation. This ignorance is the cause of heresies; this it is that leads to dissolute living; this it is that makes all things confused. It is impossible----I say, it is impossible, that any one should remain unbenefited who engages in persevering and intelligent reading. For see how much one parable has profited us! how much spiritual good it has done us! For many I know well have departed, bearing away abiding profit from the hearing; and if there be some who have not reaped so much benefit, still for that day on which they heard these things, they were rendered in every way better. And it is not a small thing to spend one day in sorrow on account of sin, and in consideration of the higher wisdom, and in affording the soul a little breathing time from wordly

cares. If we can effect this at each assembly without intermission, the continued hearing would work for us a great and lasting benefit.

4. Let me then deliver to you the remainder of this parable. What is it that follows? The rich man having said, ”Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue,” let us listen to that which Abraham says in reply. ”Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us from thence,” (Luke xvi. 25, 26.) These words are heavy to bear and cause us grief. I know, indeed, that in proportion to the wounds inflicted by conscience, is the benefit received by the wounded mind. For if it were in the next world that these things were said to us, as they were to this rich man, truly should we have to lament, and mourn, and grieve, since time of repentance would no longer have been left us; but since we hear these things here, where it is possible to become wise, and to purge away our sins, and gain great confidence, and, fearing the evils that have befallen others, to repent,----let us give thanks to the good God, who, by the punishment of others, stirs up our sluggishness and wakes us from our slumber. For this reason it is that these things are foretold, in order that we may not suffer the same. If God wished to punish us, He would not have foretold these things; but since He does not wish that we should fall into punishment, for this reason He foretells the punishment, that being made wise by the warning, we may escape experience of such things.

But why does Abraham not say, ”Thou hadst” (ἔλαβες) ”thy good things,” but ”thou receivedst” (ἀπέλαβες)? You remember, I dare say, that I said that here a vast and boundless sea of thought is opened before us. For the word (ἀπέλαβες) receivedst suggests and intimates the idea of debt; for any one receives (ἀπολάμβανει) that which is owing to him. If then this rich man was wicked, yea, most wicked, cruel, or inhuman, why is it not said to him,” Thou hadst” (ἔλαβες) ”thy good things,” but ”thou receivedst” (ἀπέλαβες), as if it implied things deserved by, or owed to him? What then do we learn from this? That some men, even wicked men, even those who have proceeded to the very extremity of wickedness, may often have done one, or two, or three good things. And that this statement is not mere conjecture is plain, from the following case. For what greater wickedness could exist than that of the unjust judge? What could be more inhuman, what more impious? This man neither feared God nor regarded men, (Luke xviii. 2.) Still, though living in such wickedness, he performed one good act, namely, the having pity on the widow who constantly troubled him; the yielding to grace, and granting her request, and proceeding against those who troubled her. Thus also it happens that a man may be intemperate, and at the same time often merciful; or he may be cruel, but also sober; and if he be both intemperate and cruel, still, often in the business of life, he may do some good deed. And similarly we ought to think of the good. For

as the most depraved of men often do some useful thing, so also the zealous and honourable often commit sin in some respect. ”For who,” it is said, ”can boast that he has a clean heart, or who can say that he is free from iniquity?” (Prov. xx. 9.)

Since, therefore, it was likely that the rich man, though he had proceeded to the extreme of iniquity, had done some good work; and that Lazarus, even though he had arrived at the summit of virtue, had committed some sin, mark how the patriarch intimates both these things, when he says, ”Thou, in thy lifetime, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things.” That which he says, implies this: ”If thou also hast done good, and reward was owing to thee for that, all this reward thou receivedst in that life when thou didst live in luxury and wealthy enjoying great prosperity and success. This man (Lazarus) also, if he did any wrong, has received all the equivalent in poverty and hunger, being oppressed with the most extreme ills. Each of you has arrived here free----this man from his sins, and thou from works of righteousness. Therefore, he has unmixed consolation----thou endurest unmitigated punishment.”

Thus when our righteousness is small and slender, and the burden of our sins great and incalculable, and still we enjoy success here, and suffer no ill, we shall depart hence entirely destitute and devoid of that reward of good actions, having ”received all our good things in this life.” Also, when our works of righteousness are great and numerous, and our transgressions few and slight, and we also suffer some kinds of ill, we are purged from the transgressions here, and we receive there an unmixed recompense of our good acts, prepared for us. Whenever, then, you see any one living in wickedness, and suffering no misfortune, do not think him blessed, but mourn for and bewail him, as being about to undergo his woes there, as did also this rich man. Again, when you see any one striving after virtue, and enduring innumerable trials, consider him blessed; envy him as paying the penalty for all his transgressions here, and about to receive the reward of his constancy prepared for him there; as also it happened in the case of Lazarus.

5. Some men are punished here only; others suffer here no ill, but receive the whole punishment hereafter; others are punished both here and hereafter. Which, then, of these three classes do you esteem fortunate? Without doubt, the first; those who are punished and purged from their sins here. But which class is second in order? You, perhaps, may say, those who suffer nothing in this life, but undergo the whole punishment hereafter. I, however, should say not those, but rather they who are punished in both worlds. For he who in this life pays the penalty, will hereafter feel lighter pains; but he who must undergo the whole infliction hereafter, will have an inexorable doom. Thus this rich man, not being cleansed here from any of his indwelling sins, was so severely punished in the next world as not to be able to procure even a drop of water. Also, with respect to those who sin in this world, but suffer no ill, I pity them by far the most who, together with freedom from

punishment, also enjoy here luxury and security. For as the freedom from penalty for sin in this world makes their future punishment more severe, so also when sinners enjoy here great repose and luxury and success, this prosperity becomes to them a means and cause of greater punishment and penalty. While in a state of sin, whenever we, in the course of divine providence, receive honours, these very honours may the more surely cast us into the fire.

If, for instance, any one should experience only long-suffering without making the right use of it, he will receive heavier punishment. When, besides long-suffering, he enjoys the highest honours, and, notwithstanding, remains in his wickedness, who can save him from punishment? For, to show that they who here experience long-suffering prepare for themselves unmitigated punishment hereafter, if they do not repent, hear what St Paul says: ”Thinkest thou, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” (Rom. ii. 3-5. Whenever, then, thou seest any men abounding in riches, living in luxury, using precious ointments, surfeiting day by day, having power and great honour and splendour, and, at the same time, living in sin, and suffering no ill; for this very reason chiefly it is that we weep and lament for them, that when sinning, they are not punished. Just as when you see any one afflicted with dropsy, or any other disease, or having sores or wounds in all parts of his body;

if, in addition to this, he indulges in drinking and eating, and thus aggravates his malady, you not only do not admire him, nor think him happy on account of his luxury, but, for this very reason, you think him wretched. In the same way, also, we should judge concerning the affairs of the soul. Whenever you see a man living in wickedness, and enjoying great prosperity, and suffering no calamity, on this account lament for him the more, because, being under the power of disease and grievous corruption, he increases his own weakness, becoming worse by luxury and indolence. For punishment is not in itself an evil, but the real evil is sin. The latter separates us from God; the former leads us to God, and mitigates His wrath. How is this shown? Hear the prophet saying, ”O priests, comfort ye, comfort ye my people. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and say that she has received of the Lord’s hand double for her sins,” (Isa. xl. 1,2, LXX. And again: ”O Lord our God, give us peace, for thou hast repaid all to us,” (Isa. xxvi. 12, LXX. And in order that you may understand that some are punished here, others hereafter, hear what St Paul saith, reproving those who partake of the mysteries unworthily. For having said, ”He who eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord,” (1 Cor. xi. 27,) he immediately adds, ”For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but now we are judged of the Lord and chastened, in order that we should not be condemned with the world," (1 Cor. xi. 30-32. Do you see how the punishment inflicted here frees from the punishment hereafter? Also with respect to him who had committed fornication, it is said, "Deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1 Cor. v. 5. Also from the case of Lazarus this is clear, that if he had committed any ill, having been purged from it here, he departed hence clean. And the same appears from the case of the paralytic man, who, having lived in weakness thirty and eight years, was freed from sin by the length of his affliction. And that it was sin for which he was thus afflicted, hear what Christ said, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," (John v. 14. That some are punished here and purified from sin, is therefore shown by these instances.

6. And. that some men, when they do not receive punishment here equivalent to the magnitude of their offences, are punished both here and hereafter, hear what Christ saith concerning the Sodomites. For having said, "Whosoever will not receive you, shake off the dust from your feet," (Luke ix. 5; x. 11,) He proceeds to say, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city," (Luke x. 12.) The expression more tolerable shows this, that they will be punished indeed, but more lightly, since also here they paid the penalty. And that there are some who, in this world suffer no ill, but in the next world endure the full punishment, the case of this rich man teaches us, who there underwent such unmitigated punishment, as not even to enjoy the consolation of a drop of water; for the whole infliction was to be meted out to him there. As therefore, of those who commit sin, they who suffer no ill here, undergo greater punishment hereafter; thus also, of those who live righteously, they who suffer many ills here, enjoy greater honour there. And if there be two sinners, the one punished here, the other not punished; the one who is punished is more fortunate than the one unpunished. Again, if there be two righteous men, of whom one endures more, and the other fewer trials; he that endures the most is the most fortunate, since to each will be rendered according to his work.

What then? Is it not possible, they say, to enjoy ease both here and hereafter? This, O man, is unattainable; it is one of the things impossible. It cannot, it cannot be, that he who here enjoys ease and plenty, and continually indulges in every luxury----who lives a vain and aimless life----can also enjoy honour hereafter. At the same time, if he be not troubled by poverty, he still is troubled by desire, and from this cause suffers restraint----a cause which gives rise to no small amount of trouble, Again, if disease do not afflict him, yet evil passion burns within, and it is no slight pain that springs from wrath; also, if trials be not laid upon him, yet wicked thoughts constantly arise to vex him. It is by no means a trivial matter to restrain lawless desire, to put a stop to vainglorious thoughts, to check insensate

pride, to refrain from excess, to live in self-denial. And he who does not accomplish these things, and such as these, can never attain salvation. For that they who live luxuriously are not saved, hear what St Paul says concerning widows, ”She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth,” (1 Tim. v. 6. And if this is said concerning a widow, much more is it true concerning a man.

Again, that it is not possible for one living a dissipated life to reach heaven, even Christ has made quite plain, when He declares, ”Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,” (Matt. vii. 4. How is it then that it is said, ”My yoke is easy, and my burden is light”? (Matt. xi. 30. For if the way be narrow and confined, how can it again be called light and easy? We answer: The former is true, because of the very nature of trial; the latter, because of the determination of him who endures trial. For it is possible that that which is by nature unendurable, may become light, when we bear it willingly. As, therefore, the apostles, being beaten, returned rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of the Lord, though the nature of such trial always causes tribulation and pain, still the previous determination of those who received the stripes, even overcame the nature of things. With respect to this same thing, St Paul says, ”All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” (2 Tim. iii. 12.

So that if man do not persecute, the devil fights against us, and we have need of much philosophy and great perseverance, in order that, with the aid of prayer, we may be sober and watchful,----that we may not covet the possessions of others,----that we may be willing to distribute of our substance to those who are in need,----that we may bid farewell to all self-indulgence, both with respect to dress and with respect to food,----that we may avoid covetousness,----that we may flee drunkenness, and evil-speaking,----that we may have the tongue in subjection,----that we may not utter any unbecoming word, (for ”let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you,” Eph. iv. 31,)----that we may not speak base or deceitful words. There is no small labour requisite to exhibit perfect observance of all these things. And in order that you may learn how great a thing it is to live wisely, and that it is a work which admits no repose, hear what St Paul saith, ”I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection,” (1 Cor. ix. 27. By these words he intimates the force and great effort which it is needful to put forth in order to render the body obedient in all things. Christ also said to His disciples, ”In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,” (John xvii. 33. This very tribulation, it is said, procures for you rest.

The present life is an arena, and he that is to be crowned can have no rest while in the arena, and engaged in contest. Thus also, if any one be desirous to be crowned,

he must adopt a hard and laborious mode of life, in order that having toiled here for a short period, he may hereafter enjoy perpetual repose.

7. How many troubles arise each day! How great must that soul be that is not annoyed----that is not vexed, but gives thanks and praise,----that adores Him who ordains that these trials should be endured! How many unexpected things there are,----how many difficulties! And we must restrain evil thoughts, and not suffer the tongue to speak any improper word, as did the blessed Job, who praised God while he endured a multitude of ills.

There are some who, if they meet with any reverse, or are slandered by any one, or if they fall into any bodily malady, any pain in the foot or head, or any other disease, immediately blaspheme. In this way they endure the affliction, but are deprived of the benefit. What doest thou, O man, blaspheming against thy benefactor and Saviour! Dost thou not perceive that thou art on the brink of a precipice, and art casting thyself into an abyss of utter destruction? Nor dost thou, by blaspheming, make thy suffering lighter; but thou dost increase it, and makest thy pain more severe. It is with this intent that the tempter brings against thee a multitude of ills,----that he may lead thee into that abyss; and if he see thee blaspheming, how easily does he increase the anguish and make it greater, that, being afflicted, thou mayest rebel again. But if he see thee bearing it nobly, and in proportion to the increase of the suffering, the more giving thanks to God, he at once desists; since for the future he would attack thee fruitlessly and in vain. Thus also the tempter, as a dog waiting at table, if he see the man who is eating, continually throwing to him some morsel or other from the dishes on the table he waits patiently; but if, having waited once or twice, he should go away without anything, he desists for the future, because he has waited fruitlessly and in vain.

Thus also does the evil one constantly attend us with open mouth; and if you should throw to him, as to a dog, a wicked word, snatching it up, he again prepares himself for more; but if you continue thankful, you as it were starve him, and quickly drive him away and make him flee. But, you say, you are not able to be silent when goaded by. pain. Nor do I hinder you from speaking: but instead of blasphemy, give utterance to praise----instead of discontent, to thankfulness.

Make confession to your Master; cry aloud in prayer: thus your suffering will be alleviated, the tempter will be put to flight by thanksgiving, and the aid of God will be brought nigh. Besides, if you blaspheme, you avert the help of God, and cause the tempter to be more powerful against you, and you involve yourself the more in pains; but if you give thanks, you repel the assaults of the evil spirit, and gain for yourself the care of a gracious God. But, it is said, the tongue often by force of habit lapses into the utterance of some evil word. Whenever, then, you are failing, before the word can gain utterance, close your teeth against it firmly. Better for the tongue to shed a drop of blood now, than that hereafter craving a drop of water

it should be unable to gain that comfort: better to endure pain in season, than to undergo ceaseless punishment hereafter. For the tongue of the rich man, when consumed with heat, found no relief.

God has enjoined that you should love your enemies: do you turn away from the God who loves you? He has commanded that you should bless them that despitefully use you, that you should speak well of those that slander you: do you, when in no respect injured, speak evil of your benefactor and patron? Was He not able, you say, to free you from this temptation? Yes, but He permitted it that you might be the more approved. ”But, alas!” you say, ”I fall! I perish!” Then this is not because of the temptation, but because of your slothfulness. For, tell me, which is the easier, blasphemy or praise? Does not the former cause those who hear it to be your enemies and opponents, and cause yourself to feel dejection, and produce afterward great pain? Does not the latter gain for you the manifold reward of wisdom, and the admiration of all, and procure great reward from God? Why, then, leaving that which is useful, and easy, and agreeable, do you instead follow that which is injurious, and painful, and corrupting? Beside this, if the pressure of trial and poverty caused you to utter blasphemy, it would follow that those who live in poverty would always be blasphemers. But in fact, those who live in poverty----many of them in extreme poverty----are constantly thankful; while others who enjoy wealth and luxury are constantly blasphemers. Thus, it is not the nature of the things, but rather our own state of mind, that causes the one line of conduct or the other.

For this reason, therefore, let us read this parable, in order that we may learn that neither does wealth benefit the slothful man, nor does poverty in any way injure the upright. Yea, what do I say?----poverty!----rather not all the ills that afflict mankind, should they together assail him, can ever overthrow the soul of the godly and wise man, or persuade him to forsake virtue; and of this, Lazarus is an example. So also wealth can never benefit the idle and dissolute man, nor can health, nor continual prosperity, nor any other thing. 8. Let us, therefore, not say that sickness, or poverty, or the presence of danger, obliges us to blaspheme. It is not poverty, but folly,----not sickness, but arrogance,----not the presence of danger, but the absence of piety,----that leads the negligent to blasphemy and every other evil habit.

But for what reason, it is said, are some punished here, and others there, and not all here? For what reason?----because if it were so, we all should perish; for all of us are worthy of punishment. Again, if no one were punished here, the mass of mankind would become more negligent; many would deny the existence of a Providence. For if men say such things even now, when we see many of the wicked enduring punishment, what would they say if this were not so? What bounds would there be to evil? For this reason God punishes some men here, and some He does not punish. He punishes some, removing their wickedness, and making their pun-

ishment in the next world lighter, or completely renewing them, and making those who live in wickedness wiser by the punishment of others. Again, some He does not punish, in order that if they should take heed to themselves,----if being touched by the manifestation of God's long-suffering they should repent----that then they may escape both punishment here and the penalty hereafter; but if they should remain hardened and not profit by the forbearance of God, that then they may endure greater inflictions hereafter because of this their exceeding neglect. And if any of those who know these things should say that they who are thus punished are wronged, (being unable to repent,) we might reply thus:----that if God had foreseen that they would repent, He would not have punished them.

For if He passes over those whom He knows to be incorrigible, much more would He tolerate in the present life those whom He knows to be benefited by His long-suffering, in order that they may profit by the opportunity of repentance. Since He now deals with them beforehand, He causes their future punishment to be lighter, and by these His dealings,----by the punishment of these, He makes other men more prudent and wise. But wherefore does He not act thus towards all sinners alike? It is in order that by fear arising from the punishment of others, they may be confirmed in wisdom; and giving glory to God, on account of His long-suffering, and feeling shame on account of His clemency, they may depart from iniquity. But, it is said, they do not act so? Notwithstanding after this, God is not the cause of their woe, but their own negligence, since they are careless about using these remedies to ensure their own salvation. And that you may be assured that God acts thus for this reason, mark this:----Pilate on one occasion mingled the blood of some Galileans with the sacrifices, Certain men having hastened to tell this to Christ, He said, "Suppose ye that only these Galileans were sinners? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," (Luke xiii. 2, 3. Again, on another occasion, eighteen men were buried under a fallen tower, and concerning them He said the same. The words, "Think ye that they only were sinners?

I say unto you, Nay," teach us that those who escaped alive were worthy of the same fate. The words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," teach us that it was allotted to those men to suffer, in order that those who remained alive, made afraid by the calamities happening to others, might repent and become heirs of the kingdom. "What then? say they; "is another punished that I may become better? Not so; but another is punished for his own individual iniquity; and this event also becomes a cause of salvation to those who pay heed to it, making them more zealous because of the very fear arising from those calamities. In this same way masters act; when they chastise one slave, they cause the rest to be more careful through fear. Thus, whenever you see any shipwrecked, or buried under a fallen house, or ruined by fire, or drowned in a river, or losing life in any other violent way,----when you also see others who have committed the same things, or even worse, suffering none of these things, do not say in your perplexity, "Why then

is it that those who have sinned alike do not suffer the same ills? but think thus, ”One man was permitted to be destroyed or drowned, that his future punishment should be more tolerable to him, or even to make him quite pure; while another was ordained to suffer no such calamity, in order that being taught by another’s punishment he might become more submissive;

but should he still remain unchanged, that he, by his own negligence might heap up for himself unmitigated penalties; still of this unendurable punishment God is not the cause.

Again, when you see a just man afflicted, or suffering all the afore-mentioned woes, do not stumble at it; for even to himself the woes are the cause of a brighter reward. In a word, with respect to all punishment, if it be inflicted on sinners, it lessens the burden of sin; if on the just, it makes the soul more glorious;----and the greatest gain accrues to each of us from affliction, if only we bear it thankfully. For this is the design of punishment. 9. For this reason the history contained in the sacred Scriptures is filled with innumerable examples of this kind. Both just men and unjust are shown to us suffering ills, in order that, whether a man be just or whether he be a sinner, having these examples, he may bear ills well. And wicked men are shown to us not only suffering ills, but also prospering; so that you may not be troubled at their prosperity, since you learn from that which befell this rich man that the tormenting fire awaits them if they repent not. And the Scripture tells us that it is not possible to enjoy repose both here and hereafter; it cannot be.

Therefore it is that just men in this world live a laborious life. But ”what,” say they, ”do you say with respect to Abraham? Yet who suffered so many ills as he? Was he not obliged to leave his fatherland? Was he not separated from all his relatives? Did he not suffer want in a strange land? Did he not, like a pilgrim, continually change his abode----from Babylon to Mesopotamia, from thence to Palestine, from thence again to Egypt? How can one relate his trouble about his wife, the deadly strife with the barbarians, the carrying captive of the household of his kinsman, the many other troubles like these? And when at length he had the son, did he not suffer the hardest trial of all, being commanded to slay his cherished and beloved one with his own hand? And what shall we say of Isaac, the sacrifice? Was he not vexed perpetually by his neighbours, deprived of his wife, (as his father had been,) and for so long a time bereaved of his child? What, again, shall we say concerning Jacob, who was brought up in his father’s house? Did he not endure greater ills than his grandfather? And not to make the discourse too long by going through all these things, hear what he himself says concerning his whole life: ”Few and evil have been my days, and I have not attained to the days of my fathers,” (Gen. xlvii. 9.

Although he saw his son sitting on a royal throne and possessed of such glory, he did not forget the ills of the past; he had been so afflicted that even in such prosperity

he could not be unmindful of the misfortunes that had befallen him. What shall we say about David? How many tragical events happened to him? Did he not also exclaim like Jacob: ”The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength but labour and sorrow”? (Ps. xc. 10. What with respect to Jeremiah? Did he not, because of overwhelming evils, curse the day of his birth? What shall we say of Moses? Did he not in despair exclaim, ”Kill me, if thou thus deal with me”? (Numb. xi. 15. Elijah also, that heavenly soul----he that shut heaven ----did he not, after working so many wonders, lament before God thus: ”Take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers ”? (1 Kings xix. 4. And what need is there to go through each instance? St Paul, taking them [the just] all together, proceeds to speak of them thus: ”They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy,” (Heb. xi. 37, 38. And, in a word, it is ever necessary that he who would please God and become approved and holy should not lead an easy, free, and dissolute life, but a laborious life, full of hardship and toil.

For ”no man,” it is said, ”is crowned except he strive lawfully,” (2 Tim. ii. 5; and in another place, ”Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things,” (1 Cor. ix. 25. He abstains from evil words and looks, from base conversation and slander, and from blasphemy and evil speaking. Prom this we learn that, though trial may not come upon us from any external source, it is our duty to exercise ourselves each day in fasting, self-denial, moderate diet, and a plain table, avoiding extravagance in any way. Otherwise we cannot please God. Let not any one repeat the foolish saying, that such and such a one has both the good things of this world and also of the next. It is impossible in the case of rich and luxurious sinners that the saying can be true; but if it be right to say it at all, it should be said of those who are afflicted,----of those who are in distress,----that they have the good of this world and also of the next. For they have good things in the next world as their reward; good things also they have here, being sustained by the hope of the future, and not feeling acutely present ills, because of the anticipation of future good.

But let us hear the following words of the parable: ”Besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.” Well, therefore, spake David, ”None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him,” (Ps. xlix. 7.) No one can redeem even a brother, or a father, or a son. For mark, Abraham addressed the rich man as son; yet had he no power to perform the part of a father. The rich man addressed Abraham as father; * but the paternal aid which a son commonly receives he was unable to gain;----in order that you may learn that neither relationship, nor friendship, nor kind feeling, nor any other existing thing, can procure release for him who is delivered to destruction by his own evil life. 10. I have said these things because it frequently happens that many, when we urge them to take heed to themselves and practise self-denial, are indolent, and turn the

warning into ridicule. They say, ”Do thou befriend me at that day, and then I shall be confident and have no fear.” Another says, ”I have a father who was a martyr;” and another, ”I have a friend who is a bishop.” Others bring forward their whole household. But all these excuses are idle words; for the goodness of others will not help us then. Remember ”that the wise virgins did not bestow any oil on the other five virgins; but they themselves went in to the bridal feast, while the others were shut out! It is a great blessing to found our hopes of safety on our own condition; for there no friend will ever stand in our stead. If even here it is said to Jeremiah, ”Pray not thou for this people,” (Jer. vii. 16,) while it was still possible for them to repent, much more will the difficulty be increased hereafter.

What dost thou say?----that thou hadst a father who was a martyr? This very thing will then add to thy condemnation; since having had an example of goodness in thy own household, thou didst prove thyself an unworthy child of a righteous father. But thou hast a friend who is noble and admirable? Neither will he profit thee then. Why then is it said, ”Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations”? (Luke xvi. 9. It is not the friendship that will then avail thee, but the charity. For if the friendship alone could avail, it would be necessary to say only, ”Make to yourself friends; but now, showing that not friendship alone avails, it is added, ”of the mammon of unrighteousness. As if perhaps some one might say, ”I am able to make friends without the mammon, and much more zealous ones than those made by means of it. But that you may know that it is charity that avails us,-----that it is our work and righteous act,----he persuades us to confide, not simply in the friendship of the saints, but in the friendship caused by the right use of mammon. Knowing all these things, beloved, let us give heed to ourselves with all diligence; when we are afflicted, let us give thanks; when we live in prosperity, let us be on our guard, becoming wise by the misfortunes of others; let us, by repentance and compunction and continual confession, offer praise;

and if in any way we transgress in this present life, putting away the sin, and with the utmost zeal cleansing away every stain from our soul, let us beseech God to make us all fit when we die, thus to depart that we may not be with the rich man, but that, enjoying with Lazarus a place in the patriarch’s bosom, we may be filled with undying blessedness; which may it be the lot of us all to attain, through the grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be praise for ever and ever. Amen.

[Footnotes moved to the end and (re)numbered]

Discourse 4

DISCOURSE IV.

CONCERNING THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS----CONCERNING CONSCIENCE AND CONFESSION----JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN. 1. To-day it is requisite that we should explain the rest of the parable concerning Lazarus. Perhaps you may suppose that we have explained the whole of it; but I would not avail myself of any want of knowledge on your part, in order to deceive; nor would I give up the task, before I can go away with the assurance that I have explored all, as far as light is given me: as the husbandman, when he gathers the fruit of the vine, ceases not until he has cut off every little bunch. Since, therefore, I now perceive, as if beneath the leaves, some thoughts still hidden in these words, permit me to gather up also these, using the mind as a sickle. A vine being entirely stripped of fruit stands for the present barren, having leaves only. With respect to the spiritual vine of the sacred Scriptures it is not so; but when we have gathered all the fruit that is to be seen, more still remains. Thus many also before us have spoken on this subject; many perhaps after us will speak on it; but no one will be able to exhaust the whole store of wealth. For such is the nature of this abundance, that the more deeply you dig down, the more plentifully divine instruction wells forth: it is a fountain never failing.

In the last assembly we ought to have discharged this debt owing to you, but we did not think it right to pass by the memory of the good deeds of Saint Babylas, and the two holy martyrs who followed him. Therefore, we put off the remainder of this subject, reserving the completion of the parable till to-day. Since, then, we have rendered to the fathers their praise, not according to their worth, but according to our ability; permit us now to deliver the remainder of this subject. And be not weary until we have arrived at the end, talcing up our discourse from the point at which we lately left off. Where then did we leave the narrative? It was at the point where we came to the great chasm between the just and the unjust. For, when the rich man said, ”Send Lazarus,” Abraham answered him, ”A great gulf is fixed between us and you: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence,” (Luke xvi. 26. We also showed by many arguments that it is necessary to place our hope of safety, according to the

grace of God, in our own right condition, and not trust in fathers or grandfathers, or great-grandfathers, or in relations, and friends, and associates, and neighbours; for ”no man can by any means redeem his brother,” (Ps. xlviii. 8.

But how much soever they who depart this life in company with sinners, beseech and supplicate on their behalf, all that they say will be vain and useless. For again, the five virgins begged from their companions a supply of oil, and did not obtain it; he also who hid his talent in the earth, though he made many excuses, still was condemned. They, too, who fed not the Lord when He was hungry, nor gave Him drink when thirsting ----they, hoping to find refuge in the plea of ignorance, did not gain any pardon or excuse. Others there are who are unable to say a word, as he who appeared at the feast clad in vile garments, being charged with the fault, was speechless. And not this man only, but also another who was unforgiving to his neighbour, of whom he demanded the hundred pence, who afterwards, when charged by his lord with cruelty and inhumanity, had nothing to reply. From these instances it is plain that nothing can help us there, if we have not the good deeds; but whether we use prayers and entreaties, or whether we be silent, the sentence of punishment and penalty will equally be uttered against us. Hear then how this man, having made request to Abraham for two things, failed to gain either of them. For, first he made supplication for himself, when he said, ”Send Lazarus; next, not for himself, but for his brethren, but he obtained neither request.

If the first request was impossible, much more was the second----that on behalf of his brethren. However, if it seem good, let us carefully mark the very words themselves. For if when the magistrate causes an offender to be brought into the public court, summons officers of justice, and proceeds with the trial, all hasten with eagerness to hear what questions the judge may put, and what replies the accused may make,----much more ought we to give attention in this case to what this criminal,----I mean, the rich man, requests, and what the righteous judge, by the mouth of Abraham, replies. For it was not the patriarch that was judging the case, even though he uttered the words; but, as in our earthly courts, when robbers or murderers are under accusation, the law requires that they should stand at a distance and out of sight of the judge; it enjoins that they should not hear the sound of the judge’s voice, in this manner also marking their dishonour; but a messenger conveys the questions of the judge and the replies of the accused. The same thing took place then. The condemned man heard not the voice of God himself speaking to him; but Abraham acted as a deputy, conveying the words of the judge to the criminal. For he did not speak that which he said on his own authority, but he stated the divine laws to the rich man, and uttered the decisions given him from on high. And for this reason the rich man had nothing to reply.

2. Let us, therefore, carefully attend to that which is said. For I am purposely proceeding slowly through this parable: though this be the fourth day, I do not

leave the subject; for I see great benefit arising from this examination, both to the rich and to the poor, and to those who are troubled because of the prosperity of the wicked and the poverty and tribulation of the just. For, in general, nothing is so great a stumbling-block and causes so much religious doubt to many people, as the fact that the rich who live in sin may enjoy great prosperity, while the just, who live virtuously, are reduced to extreme poverty, and endure numberless other things even worse than poverty.

But this parable is sufficient to afford a remedy to make the wealthy more wise, to console the poor; it teaches the former not to be high-minded; it comforts the poor with respect to their present condition; it forbids the former to boast if, while living wickedly, they pay no penalty in this life, since a severe examination awaits them in the next world; it persuades the latter not to be troubled on account of the prosperity of others, and not to imagine that our affairs are not under the control of Providence, even if the just suffer ills here, while the wicked and depraved enjoy continual prosperity. For both will hereafter receive their desert; the former the crown which is the reward of patience and endurance, the latter the punishments and penalties which belong to sin. Let both rich and poor inscribe this parable,----the rich on the walls of their houses, the poor on the walls of their mind; and should it ever by the growth of forgetfulness be obscured, renew it completely by means of fresh recollection. Or rather, let the rich also, instead of in their houses, write it in their mind, and constantly bear it about; and let it be their instructor and the groundwork of all their philosophy. For if we have this lastingly written in our mind, neither the delights of the present life will be able to elate us, nor its sorrows to humiliate or overthrow us;

but we shall be affected by both these kinds of experience, only as we are by pictures painted on the wall. For when looking at a wall we see portrayed a rich man or a poor, we neither envy the one nor despise the other; because that which we look at is an image only and not reality. Thus, also, if we learn the real nature of riches and poverty, of honour and dishonour; and of all other things both gloomy and bright, we shall be freed from the trouble which arises from each of these classes of things. For they all are more deceptive than a shadow; and neither will a brilliant and honourable position puff- up a lofty and noble soul, nor a lowly and despised position be able to trouble him.

However, it is time now for us to consider the words of the rich man: ”I ask thee, father”----that is, I beseech, I beg, I supplicate thee----”that thou wouldest send Lazarus to my father’s house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment,” (Luke xvi. 27, 28.) Since he failed to gain that which he sought for himself, he made supplication for others. Mark how benevolent and mild he becomes when under punishment. He who despised Lazarus when present, now has regard for others who are absent: he who passed by

one who was placed before his eyes, is mindful of those whom he does not see, and he entreats with great earnestness and zeal that warning should be given to them, that they might escape the evils about to overtake them. And he begs that Lazarus should be sent to his father's house,----to the place which had been to Lazarus as an arena, the place where his virtue had been tested. Let them see him crowned, he says, who have seen him contending; let the witnesses of his poverty and hunger, of his innumerable woes, be also witnesses of his honour, his transfiguration, his complete glory; that, being taught by both sights, they may learn that our interests are not bounded by this present life; that they may be prepared beforehand, so as to be able to escape this punishment and ruin. What does Abraham reply? "They have Moses and the prophets," he saith; "let them hear,them." Thou hast not, he implies, so much care for thy brethren as God has, who made them: He has given them many teachers, advisers, and counsellors. What, then, does the rich man say? "Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they would be persuaded."

The same thing is often said now. Where are now those who say, "Who has come from thence? Who ever rose from the dead? Who can tell us what is in Hades?" How many things of this kind the rich man used to say within himself when he was living luxuriously! He did not simply request that some one should rise from the dead; but since when he heard the Scriptures he had been accustomed to despise them, to deride, to regard the things said as myths; from that which he himself had felt, he supposed that the same would be felt by his brothers. "They," he would say, "are sceptical in the same way; but if one should arise from the dead, him they will not disbelieve nor deride, but will rather give heed to his words." What, then, does Abraham reply? "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they hear though one rose from the dead," (Luke xvi. 31.) And that this is true----that he who listens not to the Scriptures, will not listen even to those who rise from the dead----of this the Jews afford an instance, who, since they did not listen to Moses and their own prophets, did not believe even when they saw the dead arise; but at the very time of the event, tried to kill the risen Lazarus; and on another occasion, at the crucifixion, vehemently opposed the apostles even while many dead were rising.

3. But that you may be assured for another reason that the teaching of the apostles is more convincing than that of the restored to life, consider this----that a dead man is altogether a servant, but the things which the Scriptures declare are uttered by the Lord himself; so that though one should rise from the dead, though an angel should descend from heaven, the Scriptures would still be the surest testimony. For the Ruler of angels and the Lord of the dead and of the living has Himself given the written law. Again, that they who wish for dead men to come back, wish for a superfluous thing, is proved, in addition to that which has been said, by comparing the case of our own courts. Gehenna does not seem to exist to those who believe

not. To the faithful it is plain and manifest, but still to the unbelieving it does not seem to exist. There is a court of judgment in which we hear each day that such a one is punished, another is mulcted of property, another is condemned to the mines, another to be burnt, another to be put to death in some other way. Notwithstanding that they hear all this, the evil, the wicked and abandoned are not made wise; often, indeed, many such having been captured, and escaping punishment, break out of prison, and running away, again return to the same courses, and commit even greater crimes than before.

Let us not, therefore, wish to hear those things from the dead which the Scriptures each day teach us, and much more clearly. For if God knew this; namely, that if certain should rise from the dead, they would benefit the living, He would not have overlooked it; He who has formed all things for our good would not have neglected this benefit. Again, if the dead arose continually to declare to us all that takes place there, even this phenomenon would in time also be disregarded; for the tempter could, with the greatest ease, adapt his wicked teaching to such a state of affairs. He would be able often to feign appearances, or by preparing his ministers to feign death and burial, and exhibiting them as having: risen from the dead, by these means he would introduce into the minds of those whom he misleads everything that he wished them to believe. For even now, when nothing of that kind takes place, the forms of the departed often have appeared in dreams, and have deceived and ruined many. Much more if such a state of things, namely, that many returned from the dead, existed, that subtle spirit would involve many in his wiles, and introduce great deception into our life. Therefore God has closed the portals, and does not permit any of those who have departed to return to tell us the things that take place there; so that the tempter cannot take advantage of such a state of things, and introduce all his deceit.

For, also, when there were prophets Satan raised up false prophets, and when apostles, he raised up false apostles; even when Christ appeared, he raised up false Christs; and whenever sound doctrine has been delivered, he has introduced corrupt doctrine, sowing tares among the wheat. So also, if this state of things had existed, he would have contrived to cause deception by his own instruments---not really raising the dead, but by sorceries and guile misleading the senses of beholders, or even, as I said before, preparing those who should simulate death, thus turning upside down and confusing all things. But God, foreseeing all these things, has prevented such an attempt, and out of regard for us, has not permitted any one at any time to come from thence to relate to living men the things that take place there. He has taught us to regard the Holy Scriptures as more worthy of trust than everything else. For He has made certain things more clear to us than they would have been made by the resurrection of the dead; He has instructed the whole world; He has driven away error, and brought in the truth; He has, by the instrumentality of fishermen and men of no reputation, procured all these benefits,

and afforded to us on all sides sufficient proofs of His own providence. Therefore let us not imagine that our affairs are bounded by the present life; but let us be assured that there will be a scrutiny, and a recompense or a retribution for all that has happened here.

This fact is so clear and plain to all, that both Jews and Greeks, even heretics, agree concerning it; yea, all men of every class. For if also all men do not act as wisely as they ought, with regard to the resurrection, still all agree with respect to the judgment, and future punishment and trial. All agree that there is a recompense hereafter for all the things that have happened here. For if this were not the case, why did God stretch out such a heaven and spread the earth beneath, and make the expanse of the sea, and diffuse the air? Why did He display such foresight, if He did not intend to be concerned in our affairs even to the end?

4. Do you not see many who, after living a virtuous life, having suffered innumerable ills, have departed hence without receiving any good? Others, again, who have displayed every kind of evil disposition, who have plundered the possessions of others, have robbed and oppressed widows and orphans, these have departed this life after enjoying wealth and luxury and endless other good things, and have suffered no misfortune whatever. When, therefore, do the former receive the reward of their virtue,----when do the latter pay the penalty of their wickedness, if our affairs are limited by the present life? For that, if there be a God----as there assuredly is----He is a just God, every one will allow; and that, if He is just, He will reward these two classes according to their deserts----this also will be granted. But if He intends to render to each class their desert, whereas in this life neither class received it ----neither the one, the punishment of their sin, nor the other, the reward of their virtue----it is manifest that an opportunity is reserved when each will receive their appropriate recompense.

And for what purpose has God put within our mind a judge so ever-watchful and vigilant,----I mean conscience? It is impossible that any judge among men should be so indefatigable as our conscience is. For judges in worldly affairs are sometimes corrupted by money, or weakened by flattery, or dissemble because of fear; and many other things there are that destroy the rectitude of their decision; but the judgment-seat of conscience never yields to any of these influences; but whether you offer money, or flatter, or threaten, or do any other such thing, it utters still an impartial sentence against the schemes of sinners; and whosoever commits iniquity, himself condemns himself, even though no one else should accuse him. And not once, nor twice, but even frequently, and through one’s whole life, it continues to do the same; though much time may have intervened, it never forgets what has happened. At the moment when sin is committed, and before its commission, and after its commission, conscience constitutes itself our accuser; but chiefly after the commission. For at the time of committing the sin, being intoxicated by the

pleasure, we are not so sensitive; but when the affair is passed, and has reached its conclusion, then, especially when all the pleasure is exhausted, the sharp sting of repentance is felt.

And contrary to that which happens to women in travail, who before the birth have great and unbearable suffering, who feel the pangs of labour causing intense pain, but afterwards have relief, since the pain ceases with the birth of the infant; in the case we are considering, it is not so. For as long as we conceive and have in our mind corrupt designs, we are glad and rejoice; but when we have brought forth this evil offspring, sin, then we see the baseness of that which is produced and are pained; then are we in greater misery than women in travail. Wherefore do not, I beseech you, entertain any corrupt desire, especially the beginning of such a desire. But if we have admitted any such desire, let us quench the beginnings of it; and, even if we have been negligent beyond this, let us destroy the sin which has proceeded to deeds, by confession, and tears, and self-condemnation. Nothing is so great an antidote to sin as condemnation and repudiation of it with penitence and tears. Condemning thy own sin, thou dost put off its yoke. Who is it that speaks thus? God, the Judge himself. ”Acknowledge first thy sin, that thou mayest be justified,” (Isa. xliii. 26, LXX. Why are you ashamed and blush to confess your sin? Why speak of it to man, who may blame you? Why confess it to your fellow-servant, who may cause you shame? Rather show it to the Master, to Him who cares for you, who is kindly-disposed;

show the wound to the Physician.

And even if you do not confess, He is not ignorant of the deed, who knew it before it was committed. Why then do you not speak of it? Does the transgression become heavier by the confession?----nay, it becomes lighter and less troublesome. And it is for this reason that He would have you confess, not that you should be punished, but that you should be forgiven; not that He may learn thy sin, (how could this be, since He has seen it,) but that you may learn what favour He bestows. He wishes you to learn the greatness of His grace, that you may praise Him perfectly, that you may be slower to sin, that you may be quicker to virtue. And if you do not confess the greatness of the need, you will not understand the exceeding magnitude of His grace. I do not oblige you, He saith, to come into the midst of the assembly before a throng of witnesses; declare the sin in secret to Me only, that I may heal the sore and remove the pain. Therefore it is that He has placed within us a conscience more faithful than a father. For a father having warned his son once, or twice, or three times, or perhaps, ten times, when he sees him remaining uncorrected, publicly renounces him and dismisses him from the house, and severs the tie of relationship; but not so does conscience act. For if once, or twice, or thrice, or a thousand times it speaks, and you obey not, it will speak again, and will not cease until the latest breath; and both in the house and in the street, at table and in the

market, and on the road, often even in dreams, it places before us the image and appearance of our sins.

5. Behold the wisdom of God! He has caused the reproof of conscience not to be unceasing, (for had we been constantly accused, we could not have endured the burden,) nor has He made it so weak as to cease after a first or second warning. For if we felt self-condemnation every day and every hour, we should have been overcome by sorrow. If, again, conscience having warned us once or twice, then ceased to rebuke, we should not have reaped much benefit. Therefore He has caused the warning to be lasting, but not unceasing: it is lasting, that we may not fall into negligence, but that always to the end of our life, being warned, we may be watchful. Again, the warning is not unceasing, nor made cumulative, in order that we may not sink under it, but that we may be refreshed by seasons of repose and other consolations. Thus complete freedom from mental pain would be ruinous to sinners; it would produce in us utter insensibility; while, on the other hand, to feel this pain unceasingly and without measure would be even more injurious. For excess of sorrow, being often strong enough to overthrow man's natural powers of mind, overwhelms the soul, and causes our good qualities to be wholly unserviceable. For this reason God has caused the convictions of conscience to be imposed on us only at intervals, these convictions being exceedingly severe, and often piercing the sinner more sharply than a goad.

Not only at the time when we ourselves have sinned, but also when others have committed the same acts, conscience is roused, and with great vehemence accuses us. The fornicator, the adulterer, or the thief, not only when he himself is accused, but when he hears that others are accused of having dared the same sins, he feels as if he himself were punished; he is reminded of his own sin by the blame thrown upon others; and though it is another that is accused, he himself, without being blamed feels the charge, since he has dared to do the same things. In the same way, also, with regard to good deeds, when others are praised and honoured, those who have accomplished the same things rejoice with them, as though they were praised no less than the others. What, therefore, can be more miserable than the case of the sinner who, as often as others are accused, himself feels abashed? What, also, is more blessed than the lot of him who, living virtuously, whenever others are praised, himself feels joy and gladness, being reminded of his own good deeds by the praise bestowed upon others? These things are the work of God's wisdom; they are instances of His exceeding providence. The warning of conscience is a divine anchor, not permitting us to be altogether wrecked in the abyss of iniquity.

Not only at the time of committing the sin, but after long periods of years can conscience remind us of old faults. Of this I shall bring clear proof from the Scriptures themselves.

The brethren of Joseph one day sold him, without having any charge to bring against him, except that he foresaw in dreams his coming honour foreshadowed to him: for "I saw," said he, "your sheaves making obeisance to my sheaf," (Gen. xxxvii. 6. Indeed, for this very thing they ought to have the more cared for him, for he was to be the crown of the whole family, and the glory of all his race. Such, however, is envy; it makes war against its own honour; and an envious man would rather suffer a thousand ills than see his neighbour renowned, even though a share of the renown were to fall to himself. Than this what can be more wretched? This kind of feeling possessed the brethren of Joseph. Seeing him at a distance, coming to bring them provisions, they said one to another, "Come, let us kill him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams," (Gen. xxxvii. 20. If they had no regard for him as a brother, nor felt the bond of nature, they ought to have had regard to the very aid that he brought, and to the manner of his service, in coming to supply them with sustenance. But mark how they unwittingly uttered a prophecy: "Come," said they, "let us kill him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams. If they had not plotted against him and concocted treachery, and planned that shameless scheme, they would not have experienced the full intent of those dreams.

For it was not likely that he, though meeting with no ill-fortune, would rise as high as the throne of Egypt; yet, by means of these difficulties and hindrances, he attained such a height of splendour. For if they had not conspired against him, they would not have sold him into Egypt; if they had not sold him into Egypt, the mistress would not have been enamoured of him; if the mistress had not been enamoured of him, he would not have been cast into prison, he would not have interpreted the dreams, he would not have been made ruler; if he had not been made ruler, the brethren would not have come to buy corn, nor have bowed down before him. Thus, since they were ready to kill him, for this very cause chiefly did they feel the full meaning of the dreams. What then? Were they the procurers of all his future good, and the cause of his glory? By no means; they were ready to expose him to death, or to sorrow, or to slavery----to the uttermost ills. But the overruling God used the wickedness of the conspirators for the trial and approval of him who was sold and betrayed.

6. In order that this result may not be thought to arise from any casual coincidence or accidental revolution of things, God, by means of the very men who opposed it, brought to pass the very result which they opposed, using His enemies for the approval of His servants, in order that you may learn, that what God has willed no one will hinder, and that none will turn aside His high hand; in order that whenever you are plotted against, you may not stumble or be downcast, but be enabled to know that the plot will result in good in the end, if only you bear your lot well. Behold, therefore, in this instance, how envy produced a royal possession; how jealousy procured for its victim a crown, and gained him a throne; those who plotted against him, themselves bore him forward to the greatness of his power. He who

was plotted against governed, they who plotted served; he received homage, they paid homage. Whensoever, therefore, ills, frequent and accumulated, come upon you, be not troubled nor downcast, but abide till the end. The end will turn out in every way worthy of the beneficence of God, if only you bear thankfully the things that in the meantime befall you.

He who had these visions, being in extreme danger, who was sold by his brethren, injured by his mistress, and again thrown into prison,----he did not say within himself, ”What is all this? The visions then are all delusion! I am an exile from my country and deprived of freedom; because of my God, I have not yielded to the seductions of my mistress; because of temperance and virtue, I am punished, and He has not even in this pass defended me, nor stretched forth. His hand, but has suffered me to be delivered to constant and increasing bondage. After the pit, slavery befell me; after slavery, treachery; after treachery, calumny; after calumny, a prison.” But none of these things moved him; he remained steadfast in his hope, being confident that none of the things that had been promised would ever fail. God was, indeed, able to fulfil everything on the very same day; but in order to display His own might and the faith of His servants, he permitted a long time to intervene, and many hindrances to arise, so that you may understand His power, by His fulfilling the promises at the very time when you would give way to despair, and that you may see the patience and faith of His servants, by their not falling away from their expectation of good in the very midst of calamities.

However, as I said, the patriarchs came again, famine as an armed soldier driving them by force, and urging them to the presence of Joseph, the governor; and they wished to buy corn. What, then, did he say to them? ”Ye are spies.” They then said within themselves, ”What is this! we came to get food, and we have endangered our life!” Yes, justly!----since he also came to you bringing food, and ye put him in danger of his life. And he then endured it beeause of his integrity; ye now are suffering because of hypocrisy. He was not, however, their enemy; he put on the appearance of hostility, that he might learn accurately the condition of the family. For since they had been wicked and heartless in his own case, not seeing Benjamin with them, he feared for the child, lest he had been also a brother in suffering. He commands that some one of them should be bound and left there; and that all the rest taking their corn should depart, threatening them with death if they should not bring back their other brother.

Since, then, this had happened and he had said, ”Leave one here, and bring back the other brother, or ye shall die,” what did they say one to another? ”Verily we were guilty concerning our brother when he besought us.” Do you observe after how long time they remember that crime? They then said to their father, ”An evil beast hath devoured him,” (Gen. xxxvii. 33.) Now, when Joseph himself is present and listening, they bewail their crime. What can be more extraordinary than this?

Without a tribunal, there is conviction; without accusation, an apology; a proof without testimony; the very men who wrought the deed condemn themselves, and publish abroad that which was done in secret! Who had persuaded them, or obliged them, to expose in public the things dared so long before? Is it not plain that conscience, the inexorable judge, had been constantly disturbing their thoughts and troubling their soul? He also who had been murderously treated, sat there silently judging them; and while no one brought any charge against them, they themselves passed sentence upon themselves.

They spake thus among themselves: another also said in excuse: ”Spake I not to you saying, Do not sin against the child, nor do him any harm, for he is our brother? and, behold, now his blood is required at our hands,” (Gen. xlii. 22, loosely quoted.) Though there was no one who spoke thus, or said anything concerning the crime, or of murder; though the victim himself, sitting in their presence, inquired about no such thing, but rather was asking about the other brother; their conscience, taking advantage of the opportunity, arose and took possession of their mind, and when no person accused them, obliged them to confess their deeds. Such things we ourselves often suffer, when the sins are long gone by. When we are searched by woe or misfortune, we call to mind our former ill-doings.

7. Knowing, therefore, all these things, whenever we have done any wrong, let us not wait for calamity or difficulty, for danger and chains; but let us each hour of the day set up for ourselves this tribunal, and let us pass judgment against ourselves, and endeavour in every way to make our peace with God. Let us not doubt about the resurrection and future judgment, nor be hindered by what others say; but by all means, according to the truths we have learnt, let us refute them. For if we were not to render account of all we have done, God would not have set up such a tribunal within us. But this also is a proof of His kindness. For since He will hereafter require from us an account of our sins, He has placed this incorruptible judge within us, that by condemning us for our sins now and making us wiser, He may rescue us from the future judgment. This also St Paul saith: ”For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged by the Lord,” (1 Cor. xi. 31. In order, therefore, that we may not be punished then, nor pay the penalty then, let each of us betake himself to conscience; and unrolling his past life, and examining with care all his faults, let him condemn the soul that wrought such deeds; let him chastise his thoughts; let him be afflicted; let him be straitened in his own mind;

let him require a penalty from himself for his sins, by self-condemnation, by thorough penitence, by tears, by confession, by fasting and alms-giving, by temperance and love. Let us do this that by all means in our power we may be able, with all confidence, to attain the future kingdom, which may it be the lot of us all to gain by the grace and goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father be glory, and also to the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END. [Footnotes moved to the end and numbered]

Translator’s introduction

FOUR DISCOURSES OF CHRYSOSTOM.
CHIEFLY ON THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. TRANSLATED BY F. ALLEN, B.A. LONDON: LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER. 1869. EDINBURGH : PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY, PAUL’S WORK.

PREFACE.
Of the Christian Fathers, none have gained such fame, and few have left remains so voluminous as Chrysostom. In the melancholy narrative of Gibbon, two Christian champions are presented as men of real power and vigour of mind. The historian pauses to detail their acts and estimate their influence, but his admiration seems rather spontaneously and involuntarily shown, than formally expressed. These two men are Athanasius and John Chrysostom. The one is the man of unyielding polemical skill, of undaunted courage and astounding energy. The latter possesses in a remarkable degree, that which the former lacked or repressed, imaginative genius. As an orator, Chrysostom must have been as pre-eminent as Athanasius was as a polemical champion. ”They [the critics of succeeding times] unanimously attribute to the Christian orator the free command of an elegant and copious language, the judgment to conceal the advantages which he derived from the knowledge of rhetoric and philosophy, an inexhaustible fund of metaphors and similitudes, of ideas and images to vary and illustrate the most familiar topics, the happy art of engaging the passions in the service of virtue, and of exposing the folly as well as the turpitude of vice, almost with the truth and spirit of a dramatic representation.” As a writer, too, the same historian, though speaking of the Letters only, which are of far less value than his Essays and Commentaries, (speaking of his last days in exile) says, ”The respectful attention of the Christian world was fixed on a desert spot among the mountains of Taurus. From that solitude the Archbishop, whose active mind was invigorated by misfortunes, maintained a strict and frequent correspondence with the most distant provinces.” And, in a footnote, ”Two hundred and forty two of the epistles of Chrysostom are still extant. They are addressed to a variety of persons, and show a firmness of mind much superior to that of Cicero in his exile.”

The orator must always fail to leave any worthy memorial of his genius. As might have been expected, the best remains of Chrysostom are those of his works which were not orally delivered, or which may be supposed to have been at least committed to writing by himself. The Sermons must of necessity be inadequately represented. And since the genius of Chrysostom worked chiefly by these oral discourses, it follows that his remains are weakest in that point in which the man himself was strongest. There are, however, traces even in the Sermons of the power that originated them. The name of scarcely any other writer of antiquity has, after his death, been attached to so many spurious compositions as this great name. The Benedictine editor (Montfaucon) appends some of these. The reason for their rejection is usually founded, not on external evidence, but on the inferiority of the matter contained in them, (Multa peregrinitatem olent. Peregrinitatis notas deprehendimus, &c.) Writings by hands more able, but not more scrupulous, may have retained the borrowed name by means of their vigour.

There are, however, as has been remarked, many traces, even in the oral Discourses, of their original power. Those now submitted to the reader contain many things which the translator ventures to hope may be deemed worth attention or even remembering. The series in the Paris edition consists of seven Discourses. Of these, the first four only are here translated. The fifth is an integral part of the series, but contains different subjects, the parable having been completed in the fourth. The sixth and seventh, though partly on the parable, were delivered at another period, and repeat in some degree the earlier ones. It would not be difficult to call up in imagination the crowded cathedral at Antioch, with the audience in rapt attention to the already most famous orator of the time, and the voice and manner of a man absolutely on fire with emotion. The "Send Lazarus," (Πέμψον Λάζαρον) repeated after measured intervals of thundering denunciation, would pierce the ear like a real cry of despair; or would seem like the monotonous recurring toll at the execution of some criminal.

No attempt can be made here to estimate worthily the character of Chrysostom, or to give an account of his life and times. It should, however, be suggested that he was an Oriental. Consideration should be taken of the state of society in his day, and of the open and vigorous and mutual hostility of Christians, Jews, and Pagans, in immediate juxtaposition in a magnificent city like Antioch or Constantinople. Allusions occur in these Discourses to customs belonging to the past. In Discourses ii. and iv. (pp. 45 and 93) it is implied that a criminal tried for capital offences was not permitted to see his judge. Poverty then was dependent absolutely on direct charity. This fact (and the well-known customs of the East about stranger guests) adds force to the remarks about hospitality in Discourse ii. Applause in religious assemblies was then commonly and loudly uttered. In his Sermons on Genesis (see No. vii.) this custom is alluded to : "Yesterday ye shouted aloud and testified

your pleasure," (χθὲς μέγα ἀνακεκράγετε, δηλοῦντες τὴν ἡδονήν.) In the second of these Discourses, (3,) the silence of the assembly is remarked upon as unusual.

Chrysostom was himself strongly imbued with the ascetic notions of his age, and with the prevalent ideas about the superior sanctity of unmarried life. He lived before the prominent development of the doctrine of Justification by Faith. Though speaking freely about the benefit of good works, he, nevertheless, manifests the Christian inner consciousness of the inefficacy of these or of mere penitence as a means of salvation. "If thou art grieved and humbly penitent, thy penitence is in a manner accompanied by salvation, (ἔχει τινὰ σωτηρίαν)----not through the essential nature of penitence, but through the kindness of the Lord." (Discourse vi. in the Paris edition.) These considerations may be useful in estimating the extant works of Chrysostom. It is believed that the Discourses now translated have not hitherto been rendered into English. Our countryman Savile, in the beginning of the 17th century, published a splendid edition of the complete works of Chrysostom, in Greek. His notes (in Latin) are declared by Montfaucon to be of those then written the best. The able translation in the "Library of the Fathers" gives other works of Chrysostom. The fact, however, that those volumes form part of a large series renders the diffusion of even those of Chrysostom's writings less extensive than might otherwise be.

It is hoped that this separate publication of another work of Chrysostom may increase the tendency now existing to read more generally the remains of Christian Antiquity, and the writings of the great instructors of the Church, of which Christ is the Head. "Μεθ' οὗ τῷ Πατρὶ ἅμα τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, δόξα, τιμὴ, κράτος, νῦν καὶ ἀὲι, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν." F. A. DERBY, November 1868. [Footnotes moved to the end and numbered]

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.