Homilies on Eutropius

John Chrysostom (c. AD 349–407)

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Homily 1

ON Eutropius, The Eunuch, Patrician And Consul.

1. ”Vanity of vanities, all is vanity”-it is always seasonable to utter this but more especially at the present time. Where are now the brilliant surroundings of thy consulship? where are the gleaming torches? Where is the dancing, and the noise of dancers’ feet, and the banquets and the festivals? where are the garlands and the curtains of the theatre? where is the applause which greeted thee in the city, where the acclamation in the hippodrome and the flatteries of spectators? They are gone-all gone: a wind has blown upon the tree shattering down all its leaves, and showing it to us quite bare, and shaken from its very root; for so great has been the violence of the blast, that it has given a shock to all these fibres of the tree and threatens to tear it up from the roots. Where now are your reigned friends? where are your drinking parties, and your suppers? where is the swarm of parasites, and the wine which used to be poured forth all day long, and the manifold dainties invented by your cooks? where are they who courted your power and did and said everything to win your favour? They were all mere visions of the night, and dreams which have vanished with the dawn of day: they were spring flowers, and when the spring was over they all withered: they were a shadow which has passed away-they were a smoke which has dispersed, bubbles which have burst, cobwebs which have been rent in pieces.

Therefore we chant continually this spiritual song-”Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. For this saying ought to be continually written on our walls, and garments, in the market place, and in the house, on the streets, and on the doors and entrances, and above all on the conscience of each one, and to be a perpetual theme for meditation. And inasmuch as deceitful things, and maskings and pretence seem to many to be realities it behoves each one every day both at supper and at breakfast, and in social assemblies to say to his neighhour and to hear his neighbour say in return ”vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Was I not continually telling thee that wealth was a runaway? But you would not heed me. Did I not tell thee that it was an unthankful servant? But you would not be persuaded. Behold actual experience has now proved that it is not only a runaway, and ungrateful servant, but also a murderous one, for it is this which has caused thee now to fear and tremble. Did I not say to thee when you continually rebuked me for speaking the truth, ”I love thee better than they do who flatter thee? ”I who reprove thee care more for thee than they who pay thee court? Did I not add

to these words by saying that the wounds of friends were more to be relied upon than the voluntary kisses of enemies. If you had submitted to my wounds their kisses would not have wrought thee this destruction:

for my wounds work health, but their kisses have produced an incurable disease. Where are now thy cup-bearers, where are they who cleared the way for thee in the market place, and sounded thy praises endlessly in the ears of all? They have fled, they have disowned thy friendship, they are providing for their own safety by means of thy distress. But I do not act thus, nay in thy misfortune I do not abandon thee, and now when thou art fallen I protect and tend thee. And the Church which you treated as an enemy has opened her bosom and received thee into it; whereas the theatres which you courted, and about which you were oftentimes indignant with me have betrayed and ruined thee. And yet I never ceased saying to thee "why doest thou these things? "thou art exasperating the Church, and casting thyself down headlong," yet thou didst hurry away from all my warnings. And now the hippodromes, having exhausted thy wealth, have whetted the sword against thee, but the Church which experienced thy untimely wrath is hurrying in every direction, in her desire to pluck thee out of the net.

2. And I say these things now not as trampling upon one who is prostrate, but from a desire to make those who are still standing more secure; not by way of irritating the sores of one who has been wounded, but rather to preserve those who have not yet been wounded in sound health; not by way of sinking one who is tossed by the waves, but as instructing those who are sailing with a favourable breeze, so that they may not become overwhelmed. And how may this be effected? by observing the vicissitudes of human affairs. For even this man had he stood in fear of vicissitude would not have experienced it; but whereas neither his own conscience, nor the counsels of others wrought any improvement in him, do ye at least who plume yourselves on your riches profit by his calamity: for nothing is weaker than human affairs. Whatever term therefore one may employ to express their insignificance it will fall short of the reality; whether he calls them smoke, or grass, or a dream or spring flowers, or by any other name; so perishable are they, and more naught than nonentities; but that together with their nothingness they have also a very perilous element we have a proof before us. For who was more exalted than this man? Did he not surpass the whole world in wealth? had he not climbed to the very pinnacle of distinction? did not all tremble and fear before him? Yet lo!

he has become more wretched than the prisoner, more pitiable than the menial slave, more indigent than the beggar wasting away with hunger, having every day a vision of sharpened swords and of the criminal's grave, and the public executioner leading him out to his death; and he does not even know if he once enjoyed past pleasure, nor is he sensible even of the sun's ray, but at mid day his sight is dimmed as if he were encompassed by the densest gloom. But even let me try my best I shall not be able to present to you in language the suffering which he must naturally undergo, in the hourly expectation of death. But indeed what need is there of any words from me, when he himself has clearly depicted this for us as

in a visible image? For yesterday when they came to him from the royal court intending to drag him away by force, and he ran for refuge to the holy furniture, his face was then, as it is now, no better than the countenance of one dead: and the chattering of his teeth, and the quaking and quivering of his whole body, and his faltering voice, and stammering tongue, and in fact his whole general appearance were suggestive of one whose soul was petrified.

3. Now I say these things not by way of reproaching him, or insulting his misfortune, but from a desire to soften your minds towards him, and to induce you to compassion, and to persuade you to be contented with the punishment which has already been inflicted. For since there are many inhuman persons amongst us who are inclined, perhaps, to find fault with me for having admitted him to the sanctuary, I parade his sufferings from a desire to soften their hardheartedness by my narrative.

For tell me, beloved brother, wherefore art thou indignant with me? You say it is because he who continually made war upon the Church has taken refuge within it. Yet surely we ought in the highest degree to glorify God, for permitting him to be placed in such a great strait as to experience both the power and the lovingkindness of the Church:-her power in that he has suffered this great-vicissitude in consequence of the attacks which he made upon her: her lovingkindness in that she whom he attacked now casts her shield in front of him and has received him under her wings, and placed him in all security not resenting any of her former injuries, but most lovingly opening her bosom to him. For this is more glorious than any kind of trophy, this is a brilliant victory, this puts both Gentiles and Jews to shame, this displays the bright aspect of the Church: in that having received her enemy as a captive, she spares him, and when all have despised him in his desolation, she alone like an affectionate mother has concealed him under her cloak, opposing both the wrath of the king, and the rage of the people, and their overwhelming hatred. This is an ornament for the altar. A strange kind of ornament, you say, when the accused sinner, the extortioner, the robber is permitted to lay hold of the altar. Nay! say not so:

for even the harlot took hold of the feet of Jesus, she who was stained with the most accursed and unclean sin: yet her deed was no reproach to Jesus, but rather redounded to His admiration and praise: for the impure woman did no injury to Him who was pure, but rather was the vile harlot rendered pure by the touch of Him who was the pure and spotless one. Grudge not then, O man. We are the servants of the crucified one who said ”Forgive them for they know not what they do. But, you say, he cut off the right of refuge here by his ordinances and divers kinds of laws. Yes! yet now he has learned by experience what it was he did, and he himself by his own deeds has been the first to break the law, and has become a spectacle to the whole world, and silent though he is, he utters from thence a warning voice to all, saying ”do not such things as I have done, that ye suffer not such things as I suffer. He appears as a teacher by means of his calamity, and the altar emits great lustre, inspiring now the greatest awe from the fact that it holds the lion in bondage;

for any figure of royalty might be very much set off if the king were not only to be seen seated on his throne arrayed in purple and wearing his crown, but if also prostrate at the feet

of the king barbarians with their hands bound behind their backs were bending low their heads. And that no persuasive arguments have been used, ye yourselves are witnesses of the enthusiasm, and the concourse of the people. For brilliant indeed is the scene before us to day, and magnificent the assembly, and I see as large a gathering here to-day as at the Holy Paschal Feast. Thus the man has summoned you here without speaking and yet uttering a voice through his actions clearer than the sound of a trumpet: and ye have all thronged hither to-day, maidens deserting their boudoirs, and matrons the women's chambers, and men the market place that ye may see human nature convicted, and the instability of worldly affairs exposed, and the harlot-face which a few days ago was radiant (such is the prosperity derived from extortion) looking uglier than any wrinkled old woman, this face I say you may see denuded of its enamel and pigments by the action of adversity as by a sponge

4. Such is the force of this calamity: it has made one who was illustrious and conspicuous appear the most insignificant of men. And if a rich man should enter the assembly he derives much profit from the sight: for when he beholds the man who was shaking the whole world, now dragged down from so high a pinnacle of power, cowering with fright, more terrified than a hare or a frog, nailed fast to yonder pillar, without bonds, his fear serving instead of a chain, panic-stricken and trembling, he abates his haughtiness, he puts down his pride, and having acquired the kind of wisdom concerning human affairs which it concerns him to have he departs instructed by example in the lesson which Holy Scripture teaches by precept:-"All flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth and the flower faileth" or "They shall wither away quickly as the grass, and as the green herb shall they quickly fail" or "like smoke are his days," and all passages of that kind. Again the poor man when he has entered and gazed at this spectacle does not think meanly of himself, nor bewail himself on account of his poverty, but feels grateful to his poverty, because it is a place of refuge to him, and a calm haven, and secure bulwark;

and when he sees these things he would many times rather remain where he is, than enjoy the possession of all men for a little time and afterwards be in jeopardy of his own life. Seest thou how the rich and poor, high and low, bond and free have derived no small profit from this man's taking refuge here? Seest thou how each man will depart hence with a remedy, being cured merely by this sight? Well! have I softened your passion, and expelled your wrath? have I extinguished your cruelty? have I induced you to be pitiful? Indeed I think I have; and your countenances and the streams of tears you shed are proofs of it. Since then your hard rock has turned into deep and fertile soil let us hasten to produce some fruit of mercy, and to display a luxuriant crop of pity by falling down before the Emperor or rather by imploring the merciful God so to soften the rage of the Emperor, and make his heart tender that he may grant the whole of the favour which we ask. For indeed already since that day when this man fled here for refuge no slight change has taken place;

for as soon as the Emperor knew that he had hurried to this asylum, although the army was present, and incensed on account of his misdeeds, and demanded him to be given up for

execution, the Emperor made a long speech endeavouring to allay the rage of the soldiers, maintaining that not only his offences, but any good deed which he might have done ought to be taken into account, declaring that he felt gratitude for the latter, and was prepared to forgive him as a fellow creature for deeds which were otherwise. And when they again urged him to avenge the insult done to the imperial majesty, shouting, leaping, and brandishing their spears, he shed streams of tears from his gentle eyes, and having reminded them of the Holy Table to which the man had fled for refuge he succeeded at last in appeasing their wrath.

5. Moreover let me add some arguments which concern ourselves. For what pardon could you deserve, if the Emperor bears no resentment when he has been insulted, but ye who have experienced nothing of this kind display so much wrath? and how after this assembly has been dissolved will ye handle the holy mysteries, and repeat that prayer by which we are commanded to say ”forgive us as we also forgive our debtors” when ye are demanding vengeance upon your debtor? Has he inflicted great wrongs and insults on you? I will not deny it. Yet this is the season not for judgment but for mercy; not for requiring an account, but for showing loving kindness: not for investigating claims but for conceding them; not for verdicts and vengeance, but for mercy and favour. Let no one then be irritated or vexed, but let us rather beseech the merciful God to grant him a respite from death, and to rescue him from this impending destruction, so that he may put off his transgression, and let us unite to approach the merciful Emperor beseeching him for the sake of the Church, for the sake of the altar, to concede the life of one man as an offering to the Holy Table. If we do this the Emperor himself will accept us, and even before his praise we shall have the approval of God, who will bestow a large recompense upon us for our mercy.

For as he rejects and hates the cruel and inhuman, so does He welcome and love the merciful and humane man; and if such a man be righteous, all the more glorious is the crown which is wreathed for him: and if he be a sinner, He passes over his sins granting this as the reward of compassion shown to his fellow-servant. ”For” He saith ”I will have mercy and not sacrifice,” and throughout the Scriptures you findHim always enquiring after this, and declaring it to be the means of release from sin. Thus then we shall dispose Him to be propitious to us, thus we shall release ourselves from our sins, thus we shall adorn the Church, thus also our merciful Emperor, as I have already said, will commend us, and all the people will applaud us, and the ends of the earth will admire the humanity and gentleness of our city, and all who hear of these deeds throughout the world will extol us. That we then may enjoy these good things, let us fall down in prayer and supplication, let us rescue the captive, the fugitive, the suppliant from danger that we ourselves may obtain the future blessings by the favour and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power, now and for ever, world without end. Amen.

Homily 2

Eutropius, and the Vanity of Riches.
After Eutropius Having Been Found Outside The Church Had Been Taken Captive.

1. Delectable indeed are the meadow, and the garden, but far more delectable the study of the divine writings. For there indeed are flowers which fade, but here are thoughts which abide in full bloom; there is the breeze of the zephyr, but here the breath of the Spirit: there is the hedge of thorns, but here is the guarding providence of God; there is the song of cicadae, but here the melody of the prophets: there is the pleasure which comes from sight, but here the profit which comes from study. The garden is confined to one place, but the Scriptures are in all parts of the world; the garden is subject to the necessities of the seasons, but the Scriptures are rich in foliage, and laden with fruit alike in winter and in summer. Let us then give diligent heed to the study of the Scriptures: for if thou doest this the Scripture will expel thy despondency, and engender pleasure, extirpate vice, and make virtue take root, and in the tumult of life it will save thee from suffering like those who are tossed by troubled waves. The sea rages but thou sailest on with calm. weather; for thou hast the study of the Scriptures for thy pilot; for this is the cable which the trials of life do not break asunder. Now that I lie not events themselves bear witness. A few days ago the Church was besieged: an army came, and fire issued from their eyes,yet it did not scorch the olive tree;

swordswere unsheathed, yet no one received a woundthe imperial gates were in distress, but the Church was in security. And yet the tide of war flowed hither; for here the refugee was sought, and we withstood them, not fearing their rage. And wherefore prithee? because we held as a sure pledge the saying "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And when I say the Church I mean not only a place but also a plan of life: I mean not the walls of the Church but the laws of the Church. When thou takest refuge in a Church, do notseek shelter merely in the place but in the spirit of the place. For the Church is not wall and roof but faith and life.

Do not tell me that the man having been surrendered was surrendered by the Church if he had not abandoned the Church he would not have been surrendered. Do not say that he fled here for refuge and then was given up: the Church did not abandon him but he abandoned the Church. He was not surrendered from within the Church but outside its walls. Where-

fore did he forsake the Church? Didst thou desire to save thyself? Thou shouldst have held fast to the altar. There were no walls here, but there was the guarding providence of God. Wast thou a sinner? God does not reject thee: for "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The harlot was saved when she clung to His feet. Have ye heard the passage read to-day? Now I say these things that thou mayest not hesitate to take refuge in the Church. Abide with the Church, and the Church does not hand thee over to the enemy: but if thou fliest from the Church, the Church is not the cause of thy capture. For if thou art inside the fold the wolf does not enter: but if thou goest outside, thou art liable to be the wild beast's prey: yet this is not the fault of the fold, but of thy own pusillanimity. The Church hath no feet. Talk not to me of walls and arms: for walls wax old with time, but the Church has no old age.

Walls are shattered by barbarians, but over the Church even demons do not prevail. And that my words are no mere vaunt there is the evidence of facts. How many have assailed the Church, and yet the assailants have perished while the Church herself has soared beyond the sky? Such might hath the Church: when she is assailed she conquers: when snares are laid for her she prevails: when she is insulted her prosperity increases: she is wounded yet sinks not under her wounds; tossed by waves yet not submerged; vexed by storms yet suffers no shipwreck; she wrestles and is not worsted, fights but is not vanquished. Wherefore then did she suffer this war to be? That she might make more manifest the splendour of her triumph. Ye were present on that day, and ye saw what weapons were set in motion against her, and how the rage of the soldiers burned more fiercely than fire, and I was hurried away to the imperial palace. But what of that? By the grace of God none of those things dismayed me.

2. Now I say these things in order that ye too may follow my example. But wherefore was I not dismayed? Because I do not fear any present terrors. For what is terrible? Death? nay this is not terrible: for we speedily reach the unruffled haven. Or spoliation of goods? "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I depart; or exile? "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; or false accusation? "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for great is your reward in Heaven. I saw the swords and I meditated on Heaven; I expected death, and I bethought me of the resurrection; I beheld the sufferings of this lower world, and I took account of the heavenly prizes; I observed the devices of the enemy, and I meditated on the heavenly crown: for the occasion of the contest was sufficient for encouragement and consolation. True! I was being forcibly dragged away, but I suffered no insult from the act; for there is only one real insult, namely sin: and should the whole world insult thee, yet if thou dost not insult thyself thou art not insulted. The only real betrayal is the betrayal of the conscience: betray not thy own conscience, and no one can betray thee.

I was being dragged away and I saw the events-or rather I saw my words turned into events, I saw my discourse which I had uttered in words being preached in the market-place through the medium of actual events. What kind of discourse? the same which I was always repeat-

ing. The wind has blown and the leaves have fallen "The grass has withered and the flower has faded. The night has departed and the day has dawned; the shadow has been proved vain and the truth has appeared. They mounted up to the sky, and they came down to the level of earth: for the waves which were swelling high have been laid low by means of merely human events. How12 The things which were taking place were a lesson. And I said to myself will posterity learn self-control? or before two days have passed by will these events have been abandoned to oblivion? The warnings were sounding in their ears. Again let me utter, yet again I will speak. What profit will there be? Certainly there will be profit. For if all do not hearken, the half will hearken; and if not the half, the third part: and if not the third the fourth: and if not the fourth, perhaps ten: and if not ten, perhaps five: and if not five perhaps one: and if not one, I myself have the reward prepared for me. "The grass withereth and the flower fadeth; but the word of God abideth for ever."

3. Have ye seen the insignificance of human affairs? have ye seen the frailty of power? Have ye seen the wealth which I always called a runaway and not a runaway only, but also a murderer. For it not only deserts those who possess it, but also slaughters them; for when any one pays court to it then most of all does it betray him. Why dost thou pay court to wealth which to-day is for thee, and to-morrow for another? Why dost thou court wealth which can never be held fast? Dost thou desire to court it? dost thou desire to hold it fast? Do not bury it but give it into the hands of the poor. For wealth is a wild beast: if it be tightly held it runs away: if it be let loose it remains where it is; "For," it is said, "he hath dispersed abroad and given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth forever. Disperse it then that it may remain with thee; bury it not lest it run away. Where is wealth? I would gladly enquire of those who have departed. Now I say these things not by way of reproach, God forbid, nor by way of irritating old sores, but as endeavouring to secure a haven for you out of the shipwreck of others. When soldiers and swords were threatening, when the city was in a blaze of fury, when the imperial majesty was powerless, and the purple was insulted, when all places were full of frenzy, where was wealth then?

where was your silver plate? where were your silver couches? where your household slaves? they had all betaken themselves to flight; where were the eunuchs? they all ran away; where were your friends? they changed their masks. Where were your houses? they were shut up. Where was your money? the owner of it fled: and the money itself, where was that? it was buried. Where was it all hidden? Am I oppressive and irksome to you in constantly declaring that wealth betrays those who use it badly? The occasion has now come which proves the truth of my words. Why dost thou hold it so tightly, when in the time of trial it profiteth thee nothing? If it has power when thou fallest into a strait, let it come to thy aid, but if it then runs away what need hast thou of it? events themselves bear witness. What profit was there in it? The sword was whetted death was impending, an army raging: there was apprehension of imminent peril; and yet wealth was nowhere to be seen. Where did the runaway flee? It was itself the cause which brought about all these evils, and yet in the hours of necessity it runs away. Nevertheless many reproach me saying continually thou

fasteneth upon the rich: while they on the other hand fasten upon the poor. Well I do fasten upon the rich: or rather not the rich, but those who make a bad use of their riches.

For I am continually saying that I do not attack the character of the rich man, but of the rapacious. A rich man is one thing, a rapacious man is another: an affluent man is one thing, a covetous man is another. Make clear distinctions, and do not confuse things which are diverse. Art thou a rich man? I forbid thee not. Art thou a rapacious man? I denounce thee. Hast thou property of thy own? enjoy it. Dost thou take the property of others? I will not hold my peace. Wouldest thou stone me for this? I am ready to shed my blood: only I forbid thy sin. I heed not hatred, I heed not war: one thing only do I heed, the advancement of my hearers. The rich are my children, and the poor also are my children: the same womb has travailed with both, both are the offspring of the same travail-pangs. If then thou fastenest reproaches on the poor man, I denounce thee: for the poor man does not suffer so much loss as the rich. For no great wrong is inflicted on the poor man, seeing that in his case the injury is confined to money; but in thy case the injury touches the soul. Let him who wills cast me off, let him who wills stone me, let him who wills hate me: for the plots of enemies are the pledges to me of crowns of victory, and the number of my rewards will be as the number of my wounds.

4. So then I fear not an enemy's plots: one thing. only do I fear, which is sin. If no one convicts me of sin, then let the whole world make war upon me. For this kind of war only renders me more prosperous. Thus also do I wish to teach you a lesson. Fear not the devices of a potentate, but fear the power of sin. No man will do thee harm, if thou dost not deal a blow to thyself. If thou hast not sin, ten thousand swords may threaten thee, but God will snatch thee away out of their reach: but if thou hast sin, even shouldest thou be in paradise thou wilt be cast out.Adam was in paradise yet he fell; Job was ona dung hill, yet he was crowned victorious. What profit was paradise to the one? or what injury was the dung hill to the other? No man laid snares for the one, yet was he overthrown: the devil laid snares for the other, and yet he was crowned. Did not the devil take his property? Yes, but he did not rob him of his godliness. Did he not lay violent handsupon his sons? yes: but he did not shake his faith. Did he not tear his body to pieces? yes but he did not find his treasure. Did he not arm his wife against him? yes but he did not overthrow the soldier. Did he not hurl arrows and darts at him? yes but he received no wounds.

He advanced his engines but could not shake the tower; he conducted his billows against him, but did not sink the ship. Observe this law I beseech you, yea I clasp your knees, if not with the bodily hand, yet in spirit, and pour forth tears of supplication. Observe this law I pray you, and no one can do you harm. Never call the rich man happy; never call any man miserable save him who is living in sin: and call him happy who lives in righteousness. For it is not the nature of their circumstances, but the disposition of the men which makes both the one and the other. Never be afraid of the sword if thy conscience does not accuse thee: never be afraid in war if thy conscience is clear. Where are they who have departed? tell me. Did not all men once bow down to them? did not those who were in authority

tremble greatly before them? did they not pay court to them? But sin has come, and all things are manifested in their true lights; they who were attendants have become judges, the flatterers are turned into executioners; they who once kissed his hands, dragged him themselves from the church, and he who yesterday kissed his hand is to-day his enemy. Wherefore? Because neither did he yesterday love him with sincerity. For the opportunity came and the actors were unmasked. Didst thou not yesterday kiss his hands, and call him saviour, and guardian, and benefactor? Didst thou not compose panegyrics without end?

wherefore to-day dost thou accuse him? Why yesterday a praiser, and to-day an accuser? why yesterday utter panegyrics, and to-day reproaches? What means this change? what means this revolution?

5. But I am not like this: I was the subject of his plots, yet I became his protector. I suffered countless troubles at his hands, yet I did not retaliate. For I copy the example of my Master, who said on the cross, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Now I say these things that you may not be perverted by the suspicion of wicked men. Now many changes have taken place, since I had the oversight of the city, and yet no one learns I self-control? But when I say no one, I donot condemn all, God forbid. For it is impossible that this rich soil when it hasreceived seed, should not produce one eat; of corn: but I am insatiable, I do not wish many to be saved but all. And if but one be left in a perishing condition, I perish also, and deem that the Shepherd should be imitated who had ninety-nine sheep, and yet hastened after the one which had gone astray. How long will money last? how long this silver and gold? how long these draughts of wine? how long the flatteries of slaves? how long these goblets wreathed with garlands? how long these satanic drinking feasts, full of diabolical activity?

Dost thou not know that the present life is a sojourn in a far country? for art thou a citizen? Nay thou art a wayfarer. Understandest thou what I say? Thou art not a citizen, but thou art a wayfarer, and a traveller. Say not: I have this city and that. No one has a city. The city is above. Present life is but a journey. We are journeying on every day, while nature is running its course. Some there are who store up goods on the way: some who bury jewellery on the road. Now when you enter an inn do you beautify the inn? not so, but you eat and drink and hasten to depart. The present life is an inn: we have entered it, and we bring present life to a close: let us be eager to depart with a good hope, let us leave nothing here, that we may not lose it there. When you enter the inn, what do you say to the servant? Take care where you put away our things, that you do not leave anything behind here, that nothing may be lost, not even what is small and trifling, in order that we may carry everything back to our home. Thou art a wayfarer and traveller, and indeed more insignificant than the wayfarer. How so? I will tell you. The wayfarer knows when he is going into the inn, and when he is going out; for the egress as well as the regress is in his own power:

but when I enter the inn, that is to say this present life, I know not when I shall go out: and it may be that I am providing myself with sustenance for a long time when the Master suddenly summons me saying "Thou fool, for whom shall those things be which thou hast

prepared? for on this very night thy soul is being taken from thee. The time of thy departure is uncertain, the tenure of thy possessions insecure, there are innumerable precipices, and billows on every side of thee. Why dost thou rave about shadows? why desert the reality and run after shadows?

6. I say these things, and shall not cease saying them, causing continual pain, and dressing the wounds; and this not for the sake of the fallen, but of those who are still standing. For they have departed, and their career is ended, but those who are yet standing have gained a more secure position through their calamities. "What then," you say, "shall we do? Do one thing only, hate riches, and love thy life-cast away thy goods; I do not say all of them, but cut off the superfluities. Be not covetous of other men's goods, strip not the widow, plunder not the orphan, seize not his house: I do not address myself to persons but to facts. But if any one's conscience attacks him, he himself is responsible for it, not my words. Why art thou grasping where thou bringest ill-will upon thyself? Grasp where there is a crown to be gained. Strive to lay hold not of earth but of heaven. "The kingdom of Heaven belongs to violent men and men of violence take it by force. Why dost thou lay hold of the poor man who reproaches thee? Lay hold of Christ who praises thee for it. Dost thou see thy senselessness and madness? Dost thou lay hold of the poor man who has little? Christ says "lay hold of me; I thank thee for it, lay hold of my kingdom and take it by violence.

If thou art minded to lay hold of an earthly kingdom, or rather if thou art minded to have designs upon it thou art punished; but in the case of the heavenly kingdom thou art punished if thou dost not lay hold of it. Where worldly things are concerned there is ill-will, but where spiritual there is love. Meditate daily on these things, and if two days hence thou seest another riding in a chariot, arrayed in raiment of silk, and elated with pride, be not again dismayed and troubled. Praise not a rich man, but only him who lives in righteousness. Revile not a poor man, but learn to have an upright and accurate judgment in all things.

Do not hold aloof from the Church; for nothing is stronger than the Church. The Church is thy hope, thy salvation, thy refuge. It is higher than the heaven, it is wider than the earth. It never waxes old, but is always in full vigour. Wherefore as significant of its solidity and stability Holy Scripture calls it a mountain: or of its purity a virgin, or of its magnificence a queen; or of its relationship to God a daughter; and to express its productiveness it calls her barren who has borne seven: in fact it employs countless names to represent its nobleness. For asthe master of the Church has many names: being called the Father, and the way, and the life, and the light, and the arm, and the propitiation, and the foundation, and the door, and the sinless one, and the treasure, and Lord, and God, and Son, and the only begotten, and the form of God, and the image of God so is it with the Church itself: does one name suffice to present the whole truth? by no means. But for this reason there are countless names, that we may learn something concerning God, though it be but a small part. Even so the Church also is called by many names. She is called a virgin, albeit formerly she was an harlot: for this is the miracle wrought by the Bridegroom, that He took her who

was an harlot and hath made her a virgin. Oh! what a new and strange event? With us marriage destroys virginity, but with God marriage hath restored it. With us she who is a virgin, when married, is a virgin no longer: with Christ she who is an harlot, when married, becomes a virgin.

7. Let the heretic who inquires curiously into the nature of heavenly generation saying "how did the Father beget the Son? interpret this single fact, ask him how did the Church, being an harlot, become a virgin? and how did she having brought forth children remain a virgin? "For I am jealous over you," saith Paul, "with a godly jealousy, for I espoused you to one husband that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ. What wisdom and understanding! "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. What means this? "I am jealous," he says: art thou jealous seeing thou art a spiritual man? I am jealous he says as God is. And hath God jealousy? yea the jealousy not of passion, but of love, and earnest zeal. I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God. Shall I tell thee how He manifests His jealousy? He saw the world corrupted by devils, and He delivered His own Son to save it. For words spoken in reference to God have not the same force as when spoken in reference to ourselves: for instance we say God is jealous, God is wroth, God repents, God hates. These words are human, but they have a meaning which becomes the nature of God. How is God jealous? "I am jealous over you with the jealousy of God. Is God wroth? "O Lord reproach me not in thine indignation. Doth God slumber? "Awake, wherefore sleepest thou, O Lord? Doth God repent? "I repent that I have made man.

Doth God hate? "My soul hateth your feasts and your new moons. Well do not consider the poverty of the expressions: but grasp their divine meaning. God is jealous, for He loves, God is wroth, not as yielding to passion, but for the purpose of chastising, and punishing. God sleeps, not as really slumbering, but as being long-suffering. Choose out the expression. Thus when thou hearest that God begets the Son, think not of division but of the unity of substance. For God has taken many of these words from us as we also have borrowed others from Him, that we may receive honour thereby.

8. Dost thou understand what I have said? Attend carefully my beloved. There are divine names, and there are human names. God has received from me, and He Himself hath given to me. Give me thine, and take mine He says. Thou hast need of mine: I have no need of thine, but thou hast of mine inasmuch as my nature is unmixed, but thou art a human being encompassed with a body, seeking also corporeal terms in order that, by borrowing expressions which are familiar to thee, thou who art thus encompassed with a body, mayest be able to think on thoughts which transcend thy understanding. What kind of names hath He received from me, and what kind hath He given to me? He Himself is God, and He hath called me God; with Him is the essential nature as an actual fact, with me only the honour of the name: "I have said ye are gods, and ye are all children of the most highest. Here are words, but in the other case there is the actual reality. He hath called me god, for by that name I have received honour. He Himself was called man, he was called Son of man, he was called the Way, the Door, the Rock. These words He borrowed from me; the others He gave

from Himself to me. Wherefore was He called the Way? That thou mightest understand that by Him we have access to the Father. Wherefore was He called the Rock?

that thou mightest understand the secure and unshaken character of the faith. Wherefore was He called the Foundation? That thou mightest understand that He upholdeth all things. Wherefore was He called the Root? That thou mightest understand that in Him we have our power of growth. Wherefore was He called the Shepherd? Because He feeds us. Wherefore was He called a sheep? Because He was sacrificed for us and became a propitiatory offering. Wherefore was He called the Life? Because He raised us up when we were dead. Wherefore was He called the Light? Because He delivered us from darkness. Why was He called an Arm? Because He is of one substance with the Father. Why was He called the Word? Because He was begotten of the Father. For as my word is the offspring of my spirit, even so was the Son begotten of the Father. Wherefore is He called our raiment? Because I was clothed with Him when I was baptized. Why is He called a table? Because I feed upon Him when I partake of the mysteries. Why is He called a house? Because I dwell in Him. Why is He called an inmate of the house? Because we become His Temple. Wherefore is He called the Head? Because I have been made a member of His. Why is He called a Bridegroom? Because He hath taken me as His bride. Wherefore is He called undefiled? Because He took me as a virgin. Wherefore is He called Master? Because I am His bondmaid.

9. For observe the Church, how, as I was saying, she is sometimes a bride, sometimes a daughter, sometimes a virgin, sometimes a bondmaid, sometimes a queen, sometimes a barren woman, sometimes a mountain, sometimes a garden, sometimes fruitful in children, sometimes a lily, sometimes a fountain: She is all things. Therefore having heard these things, think not I pray you that they are corporeal; but stretch thy thought further: for such things cannot be corporeal. For example: the mountain is not the maid: the maid is not the bride: the queen is not the bond-maid: yet the Church is all these things. Wherefore? because the element in which they exist is not corporeal but spiritual. For in a corporeal sphere these things are confined within narrow limits: but in a spiritual sphere they have a wide field of operation. "The queen stood on thy right hand. The queen? How did she who was down-trodden and poor become a queen? and where did she ascend? the queen herself stood on high by the side of the king. How? because the king became a servant; He was not that by nature, but He became so. Understand therefore the things which belong to the Godhead, and discern those which belong to the Dispensation. Understand what He was, and what He became for thy sake, and do not confuse things which are distinct, nor make the argument of his lovingkindness an occasion for blasphemy. He was lofty, and she was lowly: lofty not by position but by nature.

His essence was pure, and imperishable: His nature was incorruptble, unintelligible, invisible, incomprehensible, eternal, unchangeable, transcending the nature of angels, higher than the powers above, overpowering reason, surpassing thought, apprehended not by sight but by faith alone. Angels beheld Him and trembled, the Cherubim veiled themselves with their wings, in awe. He looked upon the earth, and caused it to tremble: He threatened

the sea and dried it up: he brought rivers out of the desert: He weighed the mountains in scales, and the valleys in a balance. How shah I express myself? how shall I present the truth? His greatness hath no bounds, His wisdom is beyond reckoning, His judgments are untraceable, His ways unsearchable. Such is His greatness and His power, if indeed it is safe even to use such expressions. But what am I to do? I am a human being and I speak in human language: my tongue is of earth and I crave forgiveness from my Lord. For I do not use these expressions in a spirit of presumption, but on account of the poverty of my resources arising from my feebleness and the nature of our human tongue. Be mercyful to me, O Lord, for I utter these words not in presumption but because I have no others: nevertheless I do not rest content with the meanness of my speech, but soar upwards on the wings of my understanding. Such is His greatness and power.

I say this, that without dwelling on the words, or on the poverty of the expressions, thou mayest also thyself learn to act in the same way. Why dost thou marvel if I do this, inasmuch as He also does the same, when He wishes to present something to our minds which transcends human powers? Since He addresses human beings He uses also human illustration, which are indeed insufficient to represent the thing spoken of, and cannot exhibit the full proportions of the matter, yet suffice for the infirmity of the hearers.

10. Make an effort, and do not grow weary of my prolonged discourse. For as when He manifests Himself, He is not manifested as He really is, nor is His bare essence manifested (for no man hath seen God in His real nature; for when He is but partially revealed the Cherubim tremble-the mountains smoke, the sea is dried up, the heaven is shaken, and if the revelation were not partial who could endure it? as then, I say, He does not manifest Himself as He really is, but only as the beholder is able to see Him, therefore doth He appear sometimes in the form of old age, sometimes of youth, sometimes in fire, sometimes in air, sometimes in water, sometimes in armour, not altering his essential nature, but fashioning His appearance to suit the various condition of those who are affected by it. In like manner also when any one wishes to say anything concerning Him he employs human illustrations. For instance I say: He went up into the mountain and He was transfigured before them, and His countenance shone as the sun, and His raiment became white as snow. He disclosed, it is said, a little of the Godhead, He manifested to them the God dwelling amongst them ”and He was trans-figured before them. Attend carefully to the statement. The writer says and He was trans-figured before them, and His raiment shone as the light, and His countenance was as the sun.

When I said ”such is His greatness and power” and added ”be merciful to ’me O Lord,” (for I do not rest satisfied with the expression but am perplexed„ having no other framed for the purpose) I wish you to understand, that I learned this lesson from Holy Scripture. The evangelist then wished to describe His splendour and he says ”He shone” How did He shine? tell me. Exceedingly. And how do you express this? He shone ”as the sun. As the sun sayest thou? Yea. Wherefore? Because I know not any other luminary more brilliant. And He was white sayest thou as snow? wherefore as snow? Because I know not any other substance

which is whiter. For that He did not really shine thus is proved by what follows: the disciples fell to the ground. If he had shone as the sun the disciples would not have fallen; for they saw the sun every day, and did not fall: but inasmuch as he shone more brilliantly than the sun or snow, they, being unable to bear the splendour, fell to the earth.

11. Tell me then, O evangelist, did He shine more brightly than the sun, and yet dost thou say, "as the sun?" Yea: wishing to make that light known to thee, I know not any other greater luminary, I have no other comparison which holds a royal place amongst luminaries. I have said these things that thou mayest not rest contentedly in the poverty of the language used: I have pointed out to thee the fall of the disciples: they fell to the earth, and were stupified and overwhelmed with slumber. "Arise" He said, and lifted them up, and yet they were oppressed. For they could not endure the excessive brightness of that shining, but heavy sleep took possession of their eyes: so far did the light which was manifested exceed the light of the sun. Yet the evangelist said "as the sun," because that luminary is familiar to us and surpasses all the rest.

But as I was saying, He who was thus great and powerful desired an harlot. I speak of our human nature under that name. If a man indeed desire an harlot he is condemned, and doth God desire one? Yea verily. Again a man desireth an harlot that he may become a fornicator: but God that He may convert the harlot into a virgin: so that the desire of the man is the destruction of her who is desired: but the desire of God is salvation to her who is desired. And why did He who is so great and powerful desire an harlot? that He might become the husband thereof. How doth He act? He doth not send to her any of His servants, He sendeth not angel, archangel, Cherubim, or Seraphim; but He himself draws nigh Who loves her. Again when thou hearest of love, deem it not sensous. Cull out the thoughts which are contained in the words, even as an excellent bee settles on the flowers, and takes the honey comb, but leaves the herbs God desired an harlot, and how doth He act? He does not conduct her on high; for He would not bring an harlot into Heaven, but He Himself comes down. Since she could not ascend on high, He descends to earth. He cometh to the harlot, and is not ashamed: He cometh to her secret dwelling place. He beholds her in her drunkenness. And how doth He come?

not in the bare essence of His original nature, but He becomes that which the harlot was, not in intention but in reality does He become this, in order that she may not be scared when she sees Him, that she may not rush away, and escape. He cometh to the harlot, and becomes man. And how does He become this? He is conceived in the womb, he increases little by little and follows like me the course of human growth. Who is it who does this? the Deity as manifested, not the Godhead; the form of the servant not that of the Master; the flesh which belongs to me, not the essential nature which belongs to Him: He increases little by little, and has intercourse with mankind. Although He finds the harlot, human nature, full of sores, brutalised, and oppressed by devils, how does He act? He draws nigh to her. She sees Him and tees away. He calleth the wise men saying "Why are ye afraid? I am not a judge, but a physician. "I came not to judge the world but to save the world. Straightway He

calleth the wise men. Oh! new and strange event. The immediate first-fruits of His coming are wise men. He who upholds the world lieth in a manger, and He who careth for all things is a nursling in swaddling bands The temple is founded and the God dwelleth therein. And wise men come and straightway worship Him: the publican comes and is turned into an evangelist:

the harlot comes and is turned into a maiden: the Canaanitish woman comes and partakes of his lovingkindness. This is the mark of one who loves, to forbear demanding an account of sins, and to forgive transgressions and offences. And how does He act? He takes the sinner and espouses her to himself. And what doth He give her? a signet ring. Of what nature? the Holy Spirit. Paul saith "now He who establishment us with you is God who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit. The Spirit then He giveth her. Next He saith "Did not I plant thee in a garden? She saith "yea? And how didst thou fall from thence? "The devil came and cast me out of the garden. Thou wast planted in the garden and he cast thee out: behold I plant thee in myself, I uphold thee. How12 The devil dares not approach me. Neither do I take thee up into Heaven; but something greater than Heaven is here: I carry thee in myself who am the Lord of Heaven. The shepherd carries thee and the wolf no longer comes: or rather I permit him to approach. And so the Lord carrieth our nature: and the devil approaches and is worsted. "I have planted thee in myself: therefore He saith "I am the root, ye are the branches: so He planted her in Himself. "But," she saith, "I am a sinner and unclean. "Let not this trouble thee, I am a physician.

I know my vessel, I know how it was perverted. It was formerly a vessel of clay, and it was perverted. I remodel it by means of the layer of regeneration and I submit it to the action of fire. For observe: He took dust from the earth and made the man; He formed him. The devil came, and perverted him. Then the Lord came, took him again, and remoulded, and recast him in baptism, and He suffered not his body to be of day, but made it of a harder ware. He subjected the soft day to the fire of the Holy Spirit. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: He was baptized with water that he might be remodelled, with fire that he might be hardened. Therefore the Prophet speaking beforehand under divine guidance declared "Thou shalt dash them in pieces like vessels of the potter. He did not say like vessels of earthenware which every one possesses: for by a potter's vessels are meant those which the potter is fashioning on the wheel: now the potter's vessels are of clay, but ours are of harder ware. Speaking beforehand therefore of the remoulding which is wrought by means of baptism he saith, "thou shalt dash them in pieces like vessels of a potter"-He means that He remodels and recasts them. I descend into the wate of baptism, and the fashion of my nature is remoulded, and the fire of the Spirit recasts it, and it is turned into a harder ware.

And that my words are no empty vaunt hear what Job says, "He hath made us as clay," and Paul, "but we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But consider the strength of the earthen vessel: for it has been hardened not by fire, but by the Spirit. How was it proved to be an earthen vessel? "Five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with

rods, once was I stoned," and yet the earthen vessel was not shattered. "A dayand a night have I been in the deep. He hath been in the deep, and the earthen vessel was not dissolved: he suffered shipwreck and the treasure was not lost; the ship was submerged and yet the freight floated. "But we have this treasure" he says. What kind of treasure? a supply of the Spirit, righteousness, sanctification, redemption. Of what nature, tell me? "in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk. "Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole" I say unto thee thou evil spirit, go out of him.

12. Hast thou seen a treasure more brilliant than royal treasures? For what can the pearl of a king do like that which the words of an Apostle effected? Set crowns innumerable upon dead men, and they will not be raised: but one word went forth from an Apostle, and it brought back revoked nature, and restored it to its ancient condition. "But we have this treasure. O treasure which not only is preserved, but also preserves the house where it is stored up. Dost thou understand what I have said? The kings of the earth, and rulers when they have treasures, prepare large houses, having strong walls, bars, doors, guards, and bolts in order that the treasure may be preserved: but Christ did the contrary: He placed the treasure not in a stone vessel but in an earthen one. If the treasure is great wherefore is the vessel weak? But the reason why the vessel is weak is not because the treasure is great; for this is not preserved by the vessel, but itself preserves the vessel. I deposit the treasure: who is able henceforth to steal it? The devil has come, the world has come, multitudes have come, and yet they have not stolen the treasure: the vessel has been scourged, yet the treasure was not betrayed; it has been drowned in the sea, yet the treasure was not shipwrecked: it has died yet the treasure survives. He gave therefore the earnest of the Spirit. Where are they who blaspheme the Spirit's majesty? Give ye heed.

"He that establisheth us with you in Christ is God who also hath given the earnest of the Spirit. You all know that the earnest is a small part of the whole; let me tell you how. Some one goes to buy a house at a great price; and he says "give me an earnest that I may have confidence: or one goes to take a wife for himself, he arranges about dowry and property, and he says "give me an earnest. Observe: in the purchase of a slave and in all covenants there is an earnest. Since then Christ made a covenant with us (for He was about to take me as a bride) he also assigned a dowry to me not of money, but of blood. But this dowry which He assigns is the bestowal of good things "such as eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man. He assigned them for the dowry:- immortality, praise with the angels, release from death, freedom from sin, the inheritance of a kingdom (so great are his riches), righteousness, sanctification, deliverance from present evils, discovery of future blessings. Great was my dowry. Now attend carefully: mark what He does. He came to take the harlot, for so I call her, unclean as she was, that thou mightest understand the love of the bridegroom. He came; He took me: He assigns me a dowry: He saith "I give thee my wealth. How12 "Hast thou lost," He saith, "paradise? take it back.

Hast thou lost thy beauty? take it back; take all these things. But yet the dowry was not given to me here.

13. Observe, this is the reason why He speaks beforehand with reference to this dowry; He warranted to me in the dowry the resurrection of the body,-immortality. For immortality does not always follow resurrection, but the two are distinct. For many have risen, and been again laid low, like Lazarus and the bodies of the saints. But in this case it is not so, but the promise is of resurrection, immortality, a place in the joyful company of angels, the meeting of the Son of Man in the clouds, and the fulfilment of the saying "so shall we ever be with the Lord," the release from death, the freedom from sin, the complete overthrow of destruction. Of what kind is that? "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Dost thou give me good things which I know not? He saith "yea; only be espoused to me here, love me in this world. "Wherefore dost thou not give me the dowry here? "It will be given when thou hast come to my Father, when thou hast entered the royal palace. Didst thou come to me! nay I came to thee. I came not that thou shouldst abide here but that I might take thee and return. Seek not the dowry here: all depends on hope, and faith. "And dost thou give me nothing in this world? He answers "Receive an earnest that thou mayest trust me concerning that which is to come:

receive pledges and betrothal gifts. Therefore Paul saith "I have espoused you. As gifts of betrothal God has given us present blessings: they are an earnest of the future; but the full dowry abides in the other world. How so? I will tell you. Here I grow old, there I grow not old; here I die, there I die not, here I sorrow, there I sorrow not; here is poverty, and disease, and intrigue, there nothing of that kind exits: here is darkness and light, there is light alone: here is intrigue, there is liberty; here is disease, there is health; here is life which has an end, there is life which hath no end; here is sin, there is righteousness, and sin is banished; here is envy, there nothing of the kind exists "Give me these things" one says; "Nay! wait in order that thy fellow-servants also may be saved; wait I say. He who establisheth us and hath given us the earnest"-what kind of earnest? the Holy Spirit, the supply of the Spirit. Let me speak concerning the Spirit. He gave the signet ring to the Apostles, saying "take this and give it to all. Is the ring then portioned out, and yet not divided? It is so. Let me teach you the meaning of the supply of the Spirit: Peter received, and Paul also received the Holy Spirit.

He went about the world, he released sinners from their sins, he restored the lame, he clothed the naked, he raised the dead, he cleansed the lepers, he bridled the devil, he strangled the demons, he held converse with God, he planted a Church, levelled temples to the earth, overturned altars, destroyed vice, established virtue, made angels of men.

14. All these things we were. But "the earnest" filled the whole world. And when I say the whole I mean all which the sun shines upon, sea, islands, mountains, valleys, and hills. Paul went hither and thither, like some winged creature, with one mouth only contending against the enemy, he the tentmaker, who handled the workman's knife and sewed skins together: and yet this his craft was no hindrance to his virtue, but the tentmaker was stronger than demons, the uneloquent man was wiser than the wise. Whence was this? He

received the earnest, he bore the signet ring and carried it about. All men saw that the King had espoused our nature: the demon saw it and retreated, he saw the earnest, and trembled and withdrew: he saw but the Apostle's garments and fled. O the power of the Holy Spirit. He bestowed authority not on the soul, nor on the body, but even on raiment; nor on raiment only but even on a shadow. Peter went about and his shadow put diseases to flight, and expelled demons, and raised the dead to life. Paul went about the world, cutting away the thorns of ungodliness, sowing broadcast the seeds of godliness, like an excellent ploughman handling the ploughshare of doctrine. And to whom did he go? To Thracians, to Scythians, to Indians, to Maurians to Sardinians, to Goths, to wild savages, and he changed them all. By what means? By means of "the earnest. How was he sufficient for these things? By the grace of the Spirit.

Unskilled, ill-clothed, ill-shod he was upheld by Him "who also hath given the earnest of the Spirit" Therefore he saith "and who is sufficient for these things? But our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us sufficient as ministers of the new Testament, not of the letter but of the Spirit. Behold what the Spirit hath wrought: He found the earth filled with demons and He has made it heaven. For meditate not on present things but review the past in your thought. Formerly there was lamentation, there were altars everywhere, everywhere the smoke and fumes of sacrifice, everywhere unclean rites and mysteries, and sacrifices, everywhere demons holding their orgies, everywhere a citadel of the devil, everywhere fornication decked with wreaths of honour; and Paul stood alone. How did he escape being overwhelmed, or torn in pieces? How could he open his mouth? He entered the Thebaid, and made captives of men, He entered the royal palace, and made a disciple of the king. He entered the hall of judgment, and the judge saith to him "almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian," and the judge became a disciple. He entered the prison, and took the jailor captive. He visited an island of barbarians, and made a viper the instrument of his teaching. He visited the Romans, and attracted the senate to his doctrine. He visited rivers, and desert places in all parts of the world. There is no land or sea which has not shared in the benefits of his labours;

for God has given human nature the earnest of His signet, and when He gives it He saith: some things I give thee now, and others I promise. Therefore the prophet saith concerning her "The queen did stand upon thy right hand in a vesture woven with gold. He does not mean a real vesture, but virtue. Therefore the Scripture elsewhere saith "How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? so that here he does not mean a garment, but fornication, and foul and unclean living. As then foul raiment signifies sin, so does golden raiment signify virtue. But this raiment belonged to the king. He Himself bestowed the raiment upon her: for she was naked, naked and disfigured. "The queen stood on thy right hand in a vesture woven with gold. He is speaking not of raiment but of virtue. Observe: the expression itself has great nobility of meaning. He does not say "in a vesture of gold" but "in a vesture woven with gold. Listen intelligently. A vesture of gold is one which is gold throughout: but a vesture woven with gold is one which is partly of gold, partly of silk. Why

then did he say that the bride wore not a vesture of gold, but one woven with gold? Attend carefully. He means the constitution of the Church in its varied manifestations.

For since we do not all belong to one condition of life, but one is a virgin, another a widow, a third lives a life of devotion-so the robe of the Church signifies the constitution of the Church.

15. Inasmuch then as our Master knew that if He carved out only one road for us, many must shrink from it, He carved out divers roads. Thou canst not enter the kingdom it may be by the way of virginity. Enter it then by the way of single marriage. Canst thou not enter it by one marriage? Perchance thou mayest by means of a second marriage. Thou canst not enter by the way of continence: enter then by the way of almsgiving: or thou canst not enter by the way of almsgiving? then try the way of fasting. If thou canst not use this way, take that-or if not that, then take this. Therefore the prophet spoke not of a garment of gold, but of one woven with gold. It is of silk, or purple, or gold. Thou canst not be a golden part? then be a silken one. I accept thee, if only thou art clothed in my raiment. Therefore also Paul saith "If any man builds upon this foundation, gold, silver, previous stones. Thou canst not be the precious stone? then be the gold. Thou canst not be the gold? then be the silver, if only thou art resting upon the foundation. And again elsewhere, "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. Thou canst not be a sun? then be a moon. Thou canst not be a moon? then be a star. Thou canst not be a large star?

be content to be a tittle one if only thou art in the Heaven. Thou canst not be a virgin? then live continently in the married state, only abiding in the Church. Thou canst not be without possessions? then give alms, only abiding in the Church, only wearing the proper raiment, only submitting to the queen. The raiment is woven with gold, it is manifold in texture. I do not bar the way against thee: for the abundance of virtues has rendered the dispensation of the king easy in operation. "Clothed in a vesture woven with gold, manifold in texture. Her vesture is manifold: unfold, if you please, the deep meaning of the expression here used, and fix your eyes upon this garment woven with gold. For here indeed some five celibate, others live in an honourable estate of matrimony being not much inferior to them: some have married once, others are widows in the flower of their age. For what purpose is a paradise? and wherefore its variety? having divers flowers, and trees, and many pearls. There are many stars, but only one sun: there are many ways of living, but only one paradise; there are many temples, but only one mother of them all. There is the body, the eye, the finger. but all these make up but one man. There is the same distinction between the small, the great, and the less. The virgin hath need of the married woman; for the virgin also is the product of marriage, that marriage may not be despised by her.

The virgin is the root of marriage: thus all things have been linked together, the small with the great, and the great with the small. "The queen did stand on thy right hand clothed in a vesture wrought with gold, manifold in texture" Then follows "Hearken! O daughter" The conductor of the bride says that thou art about to go forth from thy home to the home

of the bridegroom who in his essential nature far surpasses thee. I am the conductor of the bride. ”Hearken O daughter” Did she immediately become the wife? Yea: for here there is nothing corporeal. For He espoused her as a wife, He loves her as a daughter, He provides for her as a handmaid, He guards her as a virgin, He fences her round like a garden, and cherishes her like a member: as a head He provides for her, as a root he causes her to grow, as a shepherd He feeds her, as a bridegroom He weds her, as a propitiation He pardons her, as a sheep He is sacrificed, as a bridegroom He preserves her in beauty, as a husband He provides for her support. Many are the meanings in order that we may enjoy a part if it be but a small part of the divine economy of grace. ”Hearken O daughter” and behold, and look upon things which are bridal and yet spiritual. Hearken O daughter.

She was at first a daughter of demons, a daughter of the earth, unworthy of the earth and now she has become a daughter of the king. And this He wished who loved her. For he who loves does not investigate character: love does not regard uncomeliness: on this account indeed is it called love because it oftentimes hath affection for an uncomely person. Thus also did Christ. He saw one who was uncomely (for comely I could not call her) and He loved her, and He makes her young, not having spot or wrinkle. Oh what a bridegroom! adorning with grace the ungracefulness of his bride! Hearken O daughter! hearken and behold! Two things He sixth ”Hearken” and ”Behold,” two which depend on thyself, one on thy eyes, the other on thy hearing. Now since her dowry depended on hearing(and although some of you have been acute enough to perceive this already, let them tarry for those who are feebler: I commend those who have anticipated the truth, and make allowances for those who only follow in their track) since the dowry then depended on hearing-(and what is meant by hearing? faith: for ”faith cometh by hearing” faith as opposed to fruition, and actual experience) I said before that He divided the dowry into two, and gave some portion to the bride for an earnest, whilst He promised others in the future. What did He give her?

He gave her forgiveness of sins, remission of punishment, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, the body of the Lord, the divine, spiritual Table, the resurrection of the dead. For all these things the Apostles had. Therefore He gave some parts and promised others. Of some there was experience and fruition, others depended upon hope and faith. Now listen. What did He below12 Baptism and the Sacrifice. Of these there is experience. What did He promise? Resurrection, immortality of the body, union with angels, a place in the joyful company of archangels, and as a citizen in His kingdom, immaculate life, the good things ”which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard nor have entered into the heart of man, things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

16. Understand what is said, lest ye lose it: I am labouring to enable you to perceive it. The dowry of the bride then was divided into two portions consisting of things present and things to come; things seen and things heard, things given and things taken on trust, things experienced, and things to be enjoyed hereafter; things belonging to present life, and things to come after the resurrection. The former things you see, the latter you hear. Observe then what He says to her that you may not suppose that she received the former things

only, though they be great and ineffable, and surpassing all understanding. "Hearken O daughter and behold; hear the latter things and behold the former that thou mayest not say "am I again to depend on hope, again on faith, again on the future? See now: I give some things, and I promise others: the latter indeed depend on hope, but do thou receive the others as pledges, as an earnest, as a proof of the remainder. I promise thee a kingdom: and let present things be the ground of thy trust, thy trust in me. Dost thou promise me a kingdom? Yea. I have given thee the greater part, even the Lord of the kingdom, for "he who spared not his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Dost thou give me the resurrection of the body? Yea; I have given thee the greater part.

What is the nature of it? Release from sins. How is that the greater part? Because sin brought forth death. I have destroyed the parent, and shall I not destroy the offspring? I have dried up the root, and shall I not destroy the produce. Hearken O daughter and behold. What am I to behold? Dead men raised to life, lepers cleansed, the sea restrained, the paralytic braced up into vigour, paradise opened, loaves poured forth in abundance, sins remitted, the lame man leaping, the robber made a citizen of paradise, the publican turned into an evangelist, the harlot become more modest than the maid. Hear and behold. Hear of the former things and behold these. Accept from present things a proof of the others; concerning those I have given thee pledges, things which are better than they are. "What is the meaning of this thy saying? These things are mine. "Hearken O daughter and behold. These things are my dower to thee. And what doth the bride contribute? Let us see. What I pray thee dost thou bring that thou mayest not be portionless? What can I, she answers, bring to thee from heathen altars, and the steam of sacrifices and from devils? What have I to contribute? what? sayest thou? Thy will and thy faith. "Hearken O daughter and behold. And what wilt thou have me do? "Forget thy own people. What kind of people? the devils the idols, the sacrificial smoke, and steam and blood. "Forget thy own people, and thy father's house.

Leave thy father and come after me. I left my Father, and came to thee, and wilt thou not leave thy father? But when the word leave is used in reference to the Son do not understand by it an actual leaving. What He means is "I condescended, I accommodated myself to thee, I assumed human flesh. This is the duty of the bridegroom, and of the bride, that thou shouldest abandon thy parents, and that we should be wedded to one another. "Hearken O daughter and behold, and forget thy own people, and thy father's house. And what dost thou give me if I do forget them? "and the king shall desire thy beauty. Thou hast the Lord for thy, lover. If thou hast Him for thy lover, thou hast also the things which are his. I trust ye may be able to understand what is said: for the thought is a subtle one, and I wish to stop the mouth of the Jews.

Now exert your minds I pray: for whether one hears, or forbears to hear I shall dig and till the soil. "Hearken O daughter, and behold, forget also thy own people, and thy fathers

house, and the king shah desire thy beauty." By beauty in this passage the Jew understands sensible beauty; not spiritual but corporeal.

17. Attend, and let us learn what corporeal, and what spiritual beauty are. There is soul and body: they are two substances: there is a beauty of body, and there is a beauty of soul. What is beauty of body? an extended eyebrow, a merry glance, a blushing cheek, ruddy lips, a straight neck, long wavy hair tapering fingers, upright stature, a fair blooming complexion. Does this bodily beauty come from nature, or from choice? Confessedly it comes from nature. Attend that thou mayest learn the conception of philosophers. This beauty whether of the countenance, of the eye, of the hair, of the brow, does it come from nature, or from choice? It is obvious that it comes from nature. For the ungraceful woman, even if she cultivate beauty in countless ways, cannot become graceful in body: for natural conditions are fixed, and confined by limits which they cannot pass over. Therefore the beautiful woman is always beautiful, even if she has no taste for beauty: and the ungraceful cannot make herself graceful, nor the graceful ungraceful. Wherefore? because these things come from nature. Well! thou hast seen corporeal beauty. Now let us turn inwards to the soul: let the handmaid approach the mistress! let us turn I say to the soul. Look upon that beauty, or rather listen to it: for thou canst not see it since it is invisible-Listen to that beauty. What then is beauty of soul? Temperance, mildness, almsgiving, love, brotherly kindness, tender affection, obedience to God, the fulfilment of the law, righteousness, contrition of heart.

These things are the beauty of the soul. These things then are not the results of nature, but of moral disposition. And he who does not possess these things is able to receive them, and he who has them, if he becomes careless, loses them. For as in the case of the body I was saying that she who is ungraceful cannot become graceful; so in the case of the soul I say the contrary that the graceless soul can become full of grace. For what was more graceless than the soul of Paul when he was a blashphemer and insulter: what more full of grace when he said "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. What was more graceless than the soul of the robber? what more full of grace when he heard the words "Verily I say unto thee to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise? What was more graceless than the publican when he practised extortion? but what more full of grace when he declared his resolution. Seest thou that thou canst not alter grace of body, for it is the result not of moral disposition, but of nature. But grace of soul is supplied out of our own moral choice. Thou hast now received the definition. Of what kind are they? that the beauty of the soul proceeds from obedience to God. For if the graceless soul obeys God it puts off its ungracefulness, and becomes full of grace. "Saul! Saul!

it was said, "why persecutest thou me? and he replied "and who art Thou Lord? "I am Jesus. And he obeyed, and his obedience made the graceless soul full of grace. Again, He saith to the publican "come follow me" and the publican rose up and became an apostle: and the graceless soul became full of grace. Whence? by obedience. Again He saith to the fishermen "Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men: and by their obedience their minds became full of grace. Let us see then what kind of beauty He is speaking of

here. ”Hearken O daughter and behold, and forget thy own people and thy fathers house, and the king shall desire thy beauty” What kind of beauty will he desire? the spiritual kind. How so? because she is to ”forget” He saith ”hearken and forget. These are acts of moral choice. ”Hearken! he said: ”an ungraceful one hears and her ungracefulness being that of the body is not removed. To the sinful woman He has said ”Hearken,” and if she will obey she sees what manner of beauty is bestowed upon her. Since then the ungracefulness of the bride was not physical, but moral (for she did not obey God but transgressed) therefore he leads her to another remedy. Thou didst become ungraceful then, not by nature, but by moral choice: and thou didst become full of grace by obedience.

”Hearken O daughter and behold and forget thy own people, and thy father’s house, and the king shall desire thy beauty. Then that thou mayest learn that he does not mean anything visible to sense, when thou hearest the word beauty, think not of eye, or nose, or mouth, or neck, but of piety, faith, love, things which are within-”for all the glory of the king’s daughter is from within. Now for all these things let us offer thanks to God, the giver, for to Him alone belongeth glory, honour, might, for ever and ever. Amen.

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