The Divine Institutes Book 7

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Chapter I.-Of the World, and Those Who are About to Believe, and Those Who are Not; And in This the Censure of the Faithless.

It is well: the foundations are laid, as the illustrious orator says. But we have not only laid the foundations, which might be firth and suitable for the support of the work; but we have raised the entire edifice, with great and strong buildings, almost to the summit. There remains, a matter which is much easier, either to cover or adorn it; without which, however, the former works are both useless and displeasing. For of what avail is it, either to be freed from false religions or to understand the true one? Of what avail, either to see the vanity of false wisdom, or to know what is true? Of what avail is it, I say, to defend that heavenly justice? Of what avail to hold the worship of God with great difficulties, which is the greatest virtue, unless the divine reward of everlasting blessedness attends it? Of which subject we must speak in this book, lest all that is gone before should appear vain and unprofitable: if. we should leave this, on account of which they were undertaken, in uncertainty, lest any one should by chance think that such great labours are undertaken in vain; while he distrusts their heavenly reward, which God has appointed for him who shall have despised the present sweet enjoyments of earth in comparison of solitary and unrewarded virtue. Let us satisfy this part of our subject also, both by the testimonies of the sacred writings and also by probable arguments, that it may be equally manifest that future things are to be preferred to those which are present; heavenly things to earthly: and eternal things to those which are temporal: since the rewards of vices are temporal, those of virtues are eternal.

I will therefore set forth the system of the world, that it may easily be understood both when and how it was made by God; which Plato, who discoursed about the making of the world, could neither know nor explain, inasmuch as he was ignorant of the heavenly mystery, which is not learned except by the teaching of prophets and God; and therefore he said that it was created for eternity. Whereas the case is far different, since whatever is of a solid

and heavy body, as it received a beginning at some time, so it must needs have an end. For Aristotle, when he did not see how so great a magnitude of things could perish, and wished to escape this objection, said that the world always had existed, and always would exist. He did not at all see, that whatever material thing exists must at some time have had a beginning, and that nothing can exist at all unless it bad a beginning. For when we see that earth, and water, and fire perish, are consumed, and extinguished, which are clearly parts of the world, it is understood that that is altogether mortal the members of which are mortal. Thus it comes to pass, that whatever is liable to destruction must have been produced. But everything which comes within the sight of the eyes must of necessity be material, and capable of dissolution.

Therefore Epicurus alone, following the authority of Democritus, spoke truly in this matter, who said that it had a beginning at some time, and that it would at some time perish. Nor, however, was he able to assign any reason, either through what causes or at what time this work of such magnitude should be destroyed. But since God has revealed this to us, and we do not arrive at it by conjectures, but by instruction from heaven, we will carefully teach it, that it may at length be evident to those who are desirous of the truth, that the philosophers did not see nor comprehend the truth; but that they had so slight a knowledge of it, that they by no means perceived from what source that fragrance of wisdom, which was so pleasant and agreeable, breathed upon them.

In the meantime, I think it necessary to admonish those who are about to read this, that depraved and vicious minds, since the acuteness of their mind is blunted by earthly passions, which weigh down all the perceptions and render them weak, will either altogether fail to understand these things which we relate, or, even if they shall understand them, they will dissemble and be unwilling for them to be true: because they are drawn away by vices, and they knowingly favour their own evils, by the pleasantness of which they are captivated, and they desert the way of virtue, by the bitterness of which they are offended. For they who are inflamed with avarice and a certain insatiable thirst for riches-because, when they have sold or squandered the things in which they delight, they are unable to live in a simple style-undoubtedly prefer that by which they are compelled to renounce their eager desires. Also, they who, urged on by the incitements of lusts, as the poet says,

"Rush into madness and fire," say that we bring forward things plainly incredible; because the precepts about self-restraint wound their ears, which restrain them from their pleasures, to which they have given up their soul, together with their body. But those who, swollen with ambition or inflamed with the love of power, have bestowed all their efforts on the acquisition of honours, will not, even if we should bear the sun himself in our hands, believe that teaching which commands them to despise all power and honour, and to live in humility, and in such humility that they may be able to receive an injury, and if they have received one, be unwilling to return it. These are the men who cry out in any way against the truth with closed eyes. But they who are or shall be of sound mind, that is, not so immersed in vices as to be incurable, will both believe these things, and will readily approach them; and

whatever things we say, they will appear to them open, and plain, and simple, and that which is chiefly necessary, true and unassailable.

No one favours virtue but he who is able to follow it; but it is not easy for all to follow it: they can do so whom poverty and want have exercised, and made capable of virtue. For if the endurance of evils is virtue, it follows that they are not capable of virtue who have always lived in the enjoyment of good things; because they have never experienced evils, nor can they endure them, through their long-continued use and desire of good things, which alone they know. Thus it comes to pass that the poor and humble, who are unencumbered, more readily believe God than the rich, who are entangled with many hindrances; yea, rather, in chains and fetters they are enslaved to the nod of desire, their mistress, which has ensnared them with inextricable bonds; nor are they able to look up to heaven, since their mind is bent down to the earth, and fixed on the ground. But the way of virtue does not admit those carrying great burthens. The path is very narrow by which justice leads man to heaven; no one can keep this unless he is unencumbered and lightly equipped. For those wealthy men, who are loaded with many and great burthens, proceed along the way of death, which is very broad, since destruction rules with extended sway. The precepts which God gives for justice, and the things which we bring forward under the teaching of God respecting virtue and the truth, are bitter and as poisons to these.

And if they shall dare to oppose these things, they must own themselves to be enemies of virtue and justice. I will now come to the remaining part of the subject, that an end may be put to the work. But this remains, that we should treat of the judgment of God, which will then be established when our Lord shall return to the earth to render to every one either a reward or punishment, according to his desert.Therefore, as we spoke in the fourth book concerning His first advent, so in this book we will relate His second advent, which the Jews also both confess and hope for; but in vain, since He must return to the confusion of those for whose call He had before come. For they who impiously treated Him with violence in His humiliation, will experience Him in His power as a conqueror; and, God requiting them, they will suffer all those things which they read and do not understand; inasmuch as, being polluted with all sins, and moreover sprinkled with the blood of the Holy One, they were devoted to eternal punishment by that very One on whom they laid wicked hands. But we shall have a separate subject against the Jews, in which we shall convict them of error and guilt.

Chapter II.-Of the Error of the Philosophers, and of the Divine Wisdom, and of the Golden Age.

Now let us instruct those who are ignorant of the truth. It has been so determined by the arrangement of the Most High God, that this unrighteous age, having run the course of its appointed times, should come to an end; and all wickedness being immediately extinguished, and the souls of the righteous being recalled to a happy life, a quiet, tranquil, peaceful, in short, golden age, as the poets call it, should flourish, under the rule of God Himself. This was especially the cause of all the errors of the philosophers, that they did not comprehend the system of the world, which comprises the whole of wisdom. But it cannot be comprehended by our own perception and innate intelligence, which they wished to do by themselves without a teacher. Therefore they fell into various and ofttimes contradictory opinions, out of which they had no way of escape, "And they remained fixed in the same mire."

as the comic writer says, since their conclusion does not correspond with their assumptions; inasmuch as they had assumed things to be true which could not be affirmed, and proved without the knowledge of the truth and of heavenly things. And this knowledge, as I have often said already, cannot exist in a man unless it is derived from the teaching of God. For if a man is able to understand divine things, he will be able also to perform them; for to understand is, as it were, to follow in their track. But he is not able to do the things which God does, because he is clothed with a mortal body; therefore he cannot even understand those things which God does. And whether this is possible is easy for every one to measure, from the immensity of the divine actions and works. For if you will contemplate the world, with all the things which it contains, you will assuredly understand how much the work of God surpasses the works of men. Thus, as great as is the difference between divine and human works, so great must be the distance between the wisdom of God and man. For because God is incorruptible and immortal, and therefore perfect because He is everlasting, His wisdom also is perfect, as He Himself is; nor can anything oppose it, because God Himself is subject to nothing.

CHAPTER II.-OF THE ERROR OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, AND OF THE DIVINE WISDOM, AND O

But because man is subject to passion, his wisdom also is subject to error; and as many things hinder the life of man, so that it cannot be perpetual, so also his wisdom must be hindered by many things: so that it is not perfect in entirely perceiving the truth. Therefore there is no human wisdom, if it strives by itself to attain to the conception and knowledge of the truth; inasmuch as the mind of man, being bound up with a frail body, and enclosed in a dark abode, is neither able to wander at large, nor clearly to perceive the truth, the knowledge of which belongs to the divine nature. For His works are known to God alone. But man cannot attain this knowledge by reflection or disputation, but by learning and hearing from Him who alone is able to know and to teach. Therefore Marcus Tullius, borrowing from Plato the sentiment of Socrates, who said that the time had come for himself to depart from life, but that they before whom he was pleading his cause were still alive, says: Which is better is known to the immortal gods; but I think that no man knows. Wherefore all the sects of philosophers must be far removed from the truth, because they who established them were men; nor can those things have any foundation or firmness which are unsupported by any utterances of divine voices.

Chapter III.-Of Nature, and of the World; And a Censure of the Stoics and Epicureans.

And since we are speaking of the errors of philosophers, the Stoics divide nature into two parts-the one which effects, the other which affords itself tractable for action. They say that in the former is contained all the power of perception, in the latter the material, and that the one cannot act without the other. How can that which handles and that which is handled be one and the same thing? If any one should say that the potter is the same as the clay, or that the clay is the same as the potter, would he not plainly appear to be mad? But these men comprehend under the one name of nature two things which are most widely different, God and the world, the Maker and the work; and say that the one can do nothing without the other, as though God were mixed up in nature with the world. For sometimes they so mix them together, that God Himself is the mind of the world, and that the world is the body of God; as though the world and God began to exist at the same time, and God did not Himself make the world. And they themselves also confess this at other times, when they say that it was made for the sake of men, and that God could, if He willed it, exist without the world, inasmuch as God is the divine and l eternal mind, separate and free from a body. And since they were unable to understand His power and majesty, they mixed Him with the world, that is, with His own work. Whence is that saying of Virgil: -

”A spirit whose celestial flame Glows in each member of the frame, And stirs the mighty whole.” What, then, becomes of their own saying, that the world was both made and is governed by the divine providence? For if He made the world, it follows that He existed without the world; if He governs it, it is plain that it is not as the mind governs the body, but as a master rules the house, as a pilot the ship, as a charioteer the chariot. Nor, however, are they mixed with those things which they govern. For if all these things which we see are members of God, then God is rendered insensible by them, since the members are without sensibility, and mortal, since we see that the members are mortal.

I can enumerate how often lands shaken by sudden motions have either opened or sunk down precipitously; how often cities and islands have been overwhelmed by waves, and gone

into the deep; marshes have inundated fruitful plains, rivers and pools have been dried up; mountains also have either fallen precipitously, or have been levelled with plains. Many districts, and the foundations of many mountains, are laid waste by latent and internal fire. And this is not enough, if God does not spare His own members, unless it is permitted man also to have some power over the body of God. Seas are built up, mountains are cut down, and the innermost bowels of the earth are dug out to draw forth riches. Why, should I say that we cannot even plough without lacerating the divine body? So that we are at once wicked and impious in doing violence to the members of God. Does God, then, suffer His body to be harassed, and endure to weaken Himself, or permit this to be done by man? Unless by chance that divine intelligence which is mixed with the world, and with all parts of the world, abandoned the first outer aspect of the earth, and plunged itself into the lowest depths, that it might be sensible of no pain from continual laceration.

But if this is trifling and absurd, then they themselves were as devoid of intelligence as those are who have not perceived that the divine spirit is everywhere diffused, and that all things are held together by it, not however in such a manner that God, who is incorruptible, should Himself be mixed with heavy and corruptible elements. Therefore that is more correct which they derived from Plato, that the world was made by God, and is also governed by His providence. It was therefore befitting that Plato, and those who held the same opinion, should teach and explain what was the cause, what the reason, for the contriving of so great a work; why or for the sake of whom He made it.

But the Stoics also say the world was made for the sake of men I hear But Epicurus is ignorant on what account or who made men themselves. For Lucretius, when he said that the world was not made by the gods, thus spoke: "To say, again, that for the sake of men they have willed to set in order the glorious nature of the world"- then he introduced:- "Is sheer folly. For what advantage can our gratitude bestow on immortal and blessed beings, that for our, sake they should take in hand to administer aught? " And with good reason. For they brought forward no reason why the human race was created or established by God. It is our business to set forth the mystery of the world and man, of which they, being destitute, were able neither to reach nor see the shrine of truth. Therefore, as I said a little before, when they had assumed that which was true, that is, that the world was made by God, and was made for the sake of men, yet, since their argument failed them in the consequences, they were unable to defend that which they had assumed. In fine, Plato, that he might not make the work of God weak and subject to ruin, said that it would remain for ever. If it was made for the sake of men, and so made as to be eternal, why then are not they on whose account it was made eternal? If they are mortal on account of whom it was made, it must also itself be mortal and subject to dissolution, for it is not of more value than those for whose sake it was made. But if his argument were consistent, he would understand that it must perish because it was made, and that nothing can remain for ever except that which cannot be touched.

But he who says that it was not made for the sake of men has no argument. For if he says that the Creator contrived these works of such magnitude on His own account, why then were we produced? Why do we enjoy the world itself? what means the creation of the human race, and of the other living creatures? why do we intercept the advantages of others? why, in short, do we grow, decrease, and perish? What reason is implied in our production itself? what in our perpetual succession? Doubtless God wished us to be seen, and to frame, as it were, impressions with various representations of Himself, with which He might delight Himself. Nevertheless, if it were so, He would esteem living creatures as His care, and especially man. to whose command He made all things subject.But with regard to those who say that the world always existed: I omit that point, that itself cannot exist without some beginning, from which they are unable to extricate themselves; but I say this, if the world always existed, it can have no systematic arrangement. For what could arrangement have effected in that which never had a beginning? For before anything is done or arranged, there is need of counsel that it may be determined how it should be done; nor can anything be done without the foresight of a settled plan. Therefore the plan precedes every work. Therefore that which has not been made has no plan. But the world has a plan by which it both exists and is governed; therefore also it was made: if it was made, it will also be destroyed. Let them therefore assign a reason, I if they can, why it was either made in the beginning or will hereafter be destroyed.

And because Epicurus or Democritus was unable to teach this, he said that it was produced of its own accord, the seeds coming together in all directions; and that when these are again resolved, discord and destruction will follow. Therefore he perverted that which he had correctly seen, and by his ignorance of system entirely overthrew the whole system, and reduced the world, and all things which are done in it, to the likeness of a most trifling dream, if no plan exists in human affairs. But since the world and all its parts, as we see, are governed by a wonderful plan; since the framing of the heaven, and the course of the stars and of the heavenly bodies, which is harmonious even in variety itself, the constant and wonderful arrangement of the seasons, the varied fruitfulness of the lands, the level plains, the defences and heapings up of mountains, the verdure and productiveness of the woods, the most salubrious bursting forth of fountains, the seasonable overflowings of rivers, the rich and abundant flowing in of the sea, the opposite and useful breathing of the winds, and all things, are fixed with the greatest regularity: who is so blind as to think that they were made without a cause, in which a wonderful disposition of most provident arrangement shines forth? If, therefore, nothing at all exists nor is done without a cause; if the providence of the Supreme God is manifest from the disposition of things, His excellency from their greatness, and His power from their government: therefore they are dull and mad who have said that there is no providence. I should not disapprove if they denied the existence of gods with this object, that they might affirm the existence of one; but when they did it with this intent, that they might say that there is none, he who does not think that they were senseless is himself senseless.

Chapter IV.-That All Things Were Created for Some Use, Even Those Things Which Appear Evil; On What Account Man Enjoys Reason in So Frail a Body.

But we have spoken sufficiently on the subject of providence in the first book. For if it has any existence, as appears from the wonderful nature of its works, it must be that the same providence created man and the other animals. Let us therefore see what reason there was for the creation of the human race, since it is evident, as the Stoics say, that the world was made for the sake of men, although they make no slight error in this very matter, in saying it was not made for the sake of man, but of men. For the naming of one individual comprehends the whole human race. But this arises from the fact that they are ignorant that one man only was made by God, and they think that men were produced in all lands and fields like mushrooms. But Hermes was not ignorant that man was both made by God and after the likeness of God. But I return to my subject. There is nothing, as I imagine, which was made on its own account; but whatever is made at all must necessarily be made for some purpose. For who is there either so senseless or so unconcerned as to attempt to do anything at random, from which he expects no utility, no advantage? He who builds a house does not build it merely for this purpose, that it may be a house, but that it may be inhabited. He who builds a ship does not bestow his labour on this account, only that the ship may be visible, but that men may sail in it. Likewise he who designs and forms any vessel does not do it on this account, that he may only appear to have done it, but that the vessel when made may contain something necessary for use. In like manner, other things, whatever are made, are plainly not made superfluously, but for some useful purposes.

It is plain, therefore, that the world was made by God, not on account of the world itself; for since it is without sensibility, it neither needs the warmth of the sun, or light, or the breath of the winds, or the moisture of showers, or the nourishment of fruits. But it cannot even

be said that God made the world for His own sake, since He can exist without the world, as He did before it was made; and God Himself does not make use of all those things which are contained in it, and which are produced. It is evident, therefore, that the world was constructed for the sake of living beings, since living beings enjoy those things of which it consists; and that these may live and exist, all things necessary for them are supplied at fixed times. Again, that the other living beings were made for the sake of man, is plain from this, that they are subservient to man, and were given for his protection and service; since, whether they are of the earth or of the water, they do not perceive the system of the world as man does. We must here reply to the philosophers, and especially to Cicero, who says: "Why should God, when He made all things on our account, make so large a quantity of snakes and vipers? why should He scatter so many pernicious things by land and by sea? "A very wide subject for discussion, but it must be briefly touched upon, as in passing.

Since man is formed of different and opposing elements, soul and body, that is, heaven and earth, that which is slight and that which is perceptible to the senses, that which is eternal and that which is temporal, that which has sensibility and that which is senseless, that which is endued with light and that which is dark, reason itself and necessity require that both good and evil things should be set before man-good things which he may use, and evil things which he may guard against and avoid.

For wisdom has been given to him on this account, that, knowing the nature of good and evil things, he may exercise the force of his reason in seeking the good and avoiding the evil. For because wisdom was not given to the other animals, they were both defended with natural clothing and were armed; but in the place of all these He gave to man that which was most excellent, reason only. Therefore He formed him naked and unarmed, that wisdom might be both his defence and covering. He placed his defence and ornament not without, but within not in the body, but in the heart Unless, therefore, there were evils which he might guard against, and which he might distinguish from good and useful things, wisdom was not necessary for him. Therefore let Marcus Tullius know that reason was either given to man that he might take fishes on account of his own use, and avoid snakes and vipers for the sake of his own safety; or that good and evil things were set before him on this account, because he had received wisdom, the whole force of which is occupied in distinguishing things good and evil. Great, therefore, and right, and admirable is the force, and reason, and power of man, for whose sake God made the world itself and all things, as many as exist, and gave him so much honour that He set him over all things, since he alone could admire the works of God.

Most excellently, therefore, does our Asclepiades, in discussing the providence of the Supreme God in that book which he wrote to me, say: "And on this account any one may with good reason think that the divine providence gave the place nearest to itself to him who was able to understand its arrangement. For that is the sun: who so beholds it as to understand why it is the sun, and what amount of influence it has upon the other parts of the system? this is the heaven, who looks up to it? this is the earth, who inhabits it? this

is the sea, who sails upon it? this is fire, who makes use of it? "Therefore the Supreme God did not arrange these things on account of Himself, because He stands in need of nothing, but on account of man, who might fitly make use of them.

Chapter V.-Of the Creation of Man, and of the Arrangement of the World, and of the Chief Good.

Let us now assign the reason why He made man himself. For if the philosophers bad known this, they would either have maintained those things which they had found to be true, or would not have fallen into the greatest errors. For this is the chief thing; this is the point on which everything turns. And if any one does not possess this, the truth altogether glides away from him. It is this, in short, which causes them to be inconsistent with reason; for if this had shone upon them, if they had known all the mystery of man, the Academy would never have been in entire opposition to their disputations, and to all philosophy. As, therefore, God did not make the world for His own sake, because He does not stand in need of its advantages, but for the sake of man, who has the use of it, so also He made man himself for His own sake. What advantage is there to God in man, says Epicurus, that He should make him for His own sake? Truly, that there might be one who might understand His works; who might be able both to admire with his understanding, and to express with his voice, the foresight displayed in their arrangement, the order of their creation, the power exerted in their completion. And the sum of all these things is, that he should worship God. For he who understands these things worships Him;

he follows Him with due veneration as the Maker of all things, He as his true Father, who measures the excellence of His majesty according to the invention, the commencement, and completion of His works. What more evident argument can be brought forward that God both made the world for the sake of man, and man for His own sake, than that he alone of all living creatures has been so formed that his eyes are directed towards heaven, his face looking towards God, his countenance is in fellowship with his Parent, so that God appears, as it were, with outstretched hand to have raised man from the ground, and to have elevated him to the contemplation of Himself. ”What, then,” he says, ”does the worship paid by man confer on God, who is blessed, and in want of nothing? Or if He gave such honour to man as to create the world for his sake, to furnish him with wisdom, to make him lord of all things living, and to love him as a son, why did He make him subject to death and decay? why

did He expose the object of His love to all evils? when it was befitting that man should be happy, as though closely connected with God, and everlasting as He is, to the worship and contemplation of whom he was formed."

Although we have taught these things for the most part in a scattered manner in the former books, nevertheless, since the subject now specially requires it, because we have undertaken to discuss the subject of a happy life, these things are to be explained by us more carefully and fully, that the arrangement made by God, and His work and will, may be known. Though He was always able by His own immortal Spirit to produce innumerable souls, as He produced the angels, to whom there exists immortality without any danger and fear of evils, yet He devised an unspeakable work, in what manner He might create an infinite multitude of souls, which being at first united with frail and feeble bodies, He might place in the midst between good and evil, that He might set virtue before them composed as they were of both natures; that they might not attain to immortality by a delicate and easy course of life, but might arrive at that unspeakable reward of eternal life with the utmost difficulty and great labours. Therefore, that He might clothe them with limbs which were heavy and liable to injury, since they were unable to exist in the middle void, the weight and gravity of the body sinking downwards, He determined that an abode and dwelling-place should first be built for them. And thus with unspeakable energy and power He contrived the surpassing works of the world; and having suspended the light elements on high, and depressed the heavy ones to the depths below, He strengthened the heavenly things, and established the earthly. It is not necessary at present to follow out each point separately, since we discussed them all together in the second book.

Therefore He placed in the heaven lights, whose regularity, and brightness, and motion, were most suitably proportioned to the advantage of living beings. Moreover, He gave to the earth, which He designed as their dwelling-place, fruitfulness for bringing forth and producing various things, that by the abundance of fruits and green herbs it might supply nourishment according to the nature and requirements of each kind. Then, when He had completed all things which belonged to the condition of the world, He formed man from the earth itself, which He prepared for him from the beginning as a habitation; that is, He clothed and covered his spirit with an earthly body, that, being compacted of different and opposing materials, he might be susceptible of good and evil; and as the earth itself is fruitful for the bringing forth of grain, so the body of man, which was taken from the earth, received the power of producing offspring, that, inasmuch as he was formed of a fragile substance, and could not exist for ever, when tim space of his temporal life was past, he might depart, and by a perpetual succession renew that which he bore, which was frail and feeble. Why, then, did He make him frail and mortal, when He had built the world for his sake? First of all, that an infinite number of living beings might be produced, and that He might fill all the earth with a multitude;

in the next place, that He might set before man virtue, that is, endurance of evils and labours, by which he might be able to gain the reward of immortality. For since man con-

sists of two parts, body and soul, of which the one is earthly, the other heavenly, two lives have been assigned to man: the one temporal, which is appointed for the body; the other everlasting, which belongs to the soul. We received the former at our birth we attain to the latter by striving, that immortality might not exist to man without any difficulty. That earthly one is as the body, and therefore has an end; but this heavenly one is as the soul, and therefore has no limit. We received the first when we were ignorant of it, this second knowingly; for it is given to virtue, not to nature, because God wished that we should procure life for ourselves in life.

For this reason He has given us this present life, that we may either lose that true and eternal life by our vices, or win it by virtue. The chief good is not contained in this bodily life, since, as it was given to us by divine necessity, so it will again be destroyed by divine necessity. Thus that which has an end does not contain the chief good. But the chief good is contained in that spiritual life which we acquire by ourselves, because it cannot contain evil, or have an end; to which subject nature and the system of the body afford an argument. For other animals incline towards the ground, because they are earthly, and are incapable of immortality, which is from heaven; but man is upright and looks towards heaven, because immortality is proposed to him; which, however, does not come, unless it is given to man by God. For otherwise there would be no difference between the just and the unjust, since every man who is born would become immortal. Immortality, then, is not the consequence of nature, but the reward and recompense of virtue. Lastly, man does not immediately upon his birth walk upright, but at first on all fours, because the nature of his body and of this present life is common to us with the dumb animals; afterwards, when his strength is confirmed, he raises himself, and his tongue is loosened so that he speaks plainly, and he ceases to be a dumb animal.

And this argument teaches that man is born mortal; but that he afterwards becomes immortal, when he begins to live in conformity with the will of God, that is, to follow righteousness, which is comprised in the worship of God, since God raised man to a view of the heaven and of Himself. And this takes place when man, purified in the heavenly laver, lays aside his infancy together with all the pollution of his past life, and having received an increase of divine vigour, becomes a perfect and complete man.

Therefore, because God has set forth virtue before man, although the soul and the body are connected together, yet they are contrary, and oppose one another. The things which are good for the soul are evil to the body, that is, the avoiding of riches, the prohibiting of pleasures, the contempt of pain and death. In like manner, the things which are good for the body are evil to the soul, that is, desire and lust, by which riches are desired, and the enjoyments of various pleasures, by which the soul is weakened and destroyed. Therefore it is necessary, that the just and wise man should be engaged in all evils, since fortitude is victorious over evils; but the unjust in riches, in honours, in power. For these goods relate to the body, and are earthly; and these men also lead an earthly life, nor are they able to attain to immortality. because they have given themselves up to pleasures which are the

enemies of virtue. Therefore this temporal life ought to be subject to that eternal life, as the body is to the soul. Whoever, then, prefers the life of the soul must despise the life of the body; nor will he in any other way be able to strive after that which is highest, unless he shall have despised the things which are lowest. But he who shall have embraced the life of the body, and shall have turned his desires downwards to the earth, is unable to attain to that higher life.

But he who prefers to live well for eternity, will live badly for a time, and will be subjected to all troubles and labours as long as he shall be on earth, that he may have divine and heavenly consolation. And he who shall prefer to live well for a time, will live ill to eternity; for he will be condemned by the sentence of God to eternal punishment, be cause he has preferred earthly to heavenly goods. On this account, therefore, God seeks to be worshipped, and to be honoured by man as a Father, that he may have virtue and wisdom, which alone produce' immortality. For because no other but Himself is able to confer that immortality, since He alone possesses it, He will grant to the piety of the man, with which he has honoured God, this reward, to be blessed to all eternity, and to be for ever in the presence of God and in the society of God.

N.B.-The following paragraphs to the end of the chapter are wanting many mss., and it is very doubtful whether they were written by Lactantius.

Nor can any one shelter himself under the pretext that the fault belongs to Him who made both good and evil. For why did He will that evil should exist if He hated it? Why did He not make good only, that no one might sin, no one commit evil? Although I have explained this in almost all the former books, and have touched upon it, though slightly, above, yet it must be mentioned repeatedly, because the whole matter turns on this point. For there could be no virtue unless He had made contrary things; nor can the power of good be at all manifest, except from a comparison with evil. Thus evil is nothing else but the explanation of good. Therefore if evil is taken away, good must also be taken away. If you shall cut off your left hand or foot, your body will not be entire, nor will life itself remain the same. Thus, for the due adjustment of the framework of the body, the left members are most suitably joined with the right. In like manner, if you make chessmen all alike, no one will play. If you shall give one colour only to the circus, no one will think it worth while to be a spectator, all the pleasure of the Circensian games being taken away. For he who first instituted the games was a favourer of one colour; but he introduced another as a rival, that there might be a contest, and some partisanship in the spectacle.

Thus God, when He was fixing that which was good, and giving virtue, appointed also their contraries, with which they might contend. If an enemy and a fight be wanting, there is no victory. Take away a contest, and even virtue is nothing. How many are the mutual contests of men, and with what various arts are they carried on! No one, however, would be regarded as surpassing in bravery, swiftness, or excellence, if he bad no adversary with whom he might contend. And where victory is wanting, there also glory and the reward of victory must be absent together with it. Therefore, that he might strengthen virtue itself

by continual exercise, and might make it perfect from its conflict with evils, He gave both together, because each of the two without the other is unable to retain its force. Therefore there is diversity, on which the whole system of truth depends.

It does not escape my notice what may here be urged in opposition by more skilful persons. If good cannot exist without evil, how do you say that, before he had offended God, the first man lived in the exercise of good only, or that be will hereafter live in the exercise of good only? This question is to be examined by us, for in the former books I omitted it, that I might here fill up the subject. We have said above that the nature of man is made up of opposing elements; for the body, because it is earth, is capable of being grasped, of temporary duration, senseless, and dark. But the soul, because it is from heaven, is unsubstantial, everlasting, endued with sensibility, and full of lustre; and because these qualities are opposed to one another, it follows of necessity that man is subject to good and evil. Good is ascribed to the soul, because it is incapable of dissolution; evil to the body, because it is frail. Since, therefore, the body and the soul are connected and united together, the good and the evil must necessarily hold together; nor can they be separated from one another, unless when they (the body and soul) are separated. Finally, the knowledge of good and of evil was given at the same time to the first man; and when he understood this, he was immediately driven from the holy place in which there is no evil;

for when he was conversant with that which was good only, he was ignorant that this itself was good. But after that he had received the knowledge of good and evil, it was now unlawful for him to remain in that place of happiness, and he was banished to this common world, that he might at once experience both of those things with the nature of which he had at once become acquainted. It is plain, therefore, that wisdom has been given to man that he may distinguish good from evil-that he may discriminate between things advantageous and things disadvantageous, between things useful and things useless-that he may have judgment and consideration as to what he ought to guard against, what to desire, what to avoid, and what to follow. Wisdom therefore cannot exist without evil; and that first author of the human race, as long as he was conversant with good only, lived as an infant, ignorant of good and evil. But, indeed, hereafter man must be both wise and happy without any evil; but this cannot take place as long as the soul is clothed with the abode of the body.

But when a separation shall have been made between the body and the soul, then evil will be disunited from good; and as the body perishes and the soul remains, so evil will perish and good be permanent. Then man, having received the garment of immortality, will be wise and free from evil, as God is. He, therefore, who wishes that we should be conversant with good only, especially desires this, that we should live without the body, in which evil is. But if evil is taken away, either wisdom, as I have said, or the body, will be taken from man; wisdom, that he may be ignorant of evil; the body, that he may not be sensible of it. But now, since man is furnished with wisdom to know, and a body to perceive, God willed that both should exist alike in this life, that virtue and wisdom may be in agreement. Therefore He placed man in the midst, between both, that he might have liberty to follow either good

or evil. But He mingled with evil some things which appear good, that is, various and delightful enjoyments, that by the enticements of these He might lead men to the concealed evil. And He likewise mingled with good some things which appear evil-that is, hardships, and miseries, and labours-by the harshness and unpleasantness of which the soul, being offended, might shrink back from the concealed good.

But here the office of wisdom is needed, that we may see more with the mind than with the body, which very few are able to do; because while virtue is difficult and rarely to be found, pleasure is common and public. Thus it necessarily happens that the wise man is accounted as a fool, who, while he seeks good things which are not seen, permits those which are seen to slip from his hands; and while he avoids evils which are not seen, runs into evils which are before the eyes; which happens to us when we refuse neither torture nor death in behalf of the faith, since we are driven to the greatest wickedness, so as to betray the faith and deny the true God, and to sacrifice to dead and death-bearing gods. This is the cause why God made man mortal, and made him subject to evils, although he had framed the world for his sake, namely, that he might be capable of virtue, and that his virtue might reward him with immortality. Now virtue, as we have shown, is the worship of the true God.

Chapter VI.-Why the World and Man Were Created. How Unprofitable is the Worship of False Gods.

Now let us mark the whole argument by a brief definition. The world has been created for this purpose, that we may be born; we are born for this end, that we may acknowledge the Maker of the world and of ourselves-God; we acknowledge Him for this end, that we may worship Him; we worship Him for this end that we may receive immortality as the reward of our labours, since the worship of God consists of the greatest labours; for this end we are rewarded with immortality, that being made like to the angels, we may serve the Supreme Father and Lord for ever, and may be to all eternity a kingdom to God. This is the sum of all things, this the secret of God, this the mystery of the world, from which they are estranged, who, following present gratification, have devoted themselves to the pursuit of earthly and frail goods, and by means of deadly enjoyments have sunk as it were in mire and mud their souls, which were born for heavenly pursuits.

Let us now, in the next place, inquire whether there is anything reasonable in the worship of these gods; for if they are many, if they are worshipped only on this account by men, that they may afford them riches, victories, honours, and all things, which are of no avail except for the present; if we are produced without cause-if no providence is employed in the production of men-if we are brought forth by chance for ourselves, and for the sake of our own pleasure-if we are nothing after death,-what can be so superfluous, so empty, so vain, as the affairs of man, and the world itself? which, though it is of incredible magnitude, and constructed with such wonderful arrangement, is nevertheless occupied with trifling subjects. For why should the breathings of the winds put the clouds in motion? Why should lightnings shine forth, thunders roar, or showers fall, that the earth may bring forth its increase, and nourish its various productions? Why, in short, should all nature labour that nothing may be wanting of those things by which the life of man is sustained, if it is vain, if we utterly perish, if there is in us nothing of greater advantage to God?

CHAPTER VI.-WHY THE WORLD AND MAN WERE CREATED. HOW UNPROFITABLE IS THE WO

But if it is unlawful to be spoken, and is not to be thought possible, that that which you see to be most in accordance with reason was not established on account of some reason of importance, what reason can there be in these errors of depraved religions, and in this persuasion of philosophers, by which they imagine that souls perish? Assuredly there is none; for what have they to say why the gods so regularly supply to men everything in its season? Is it that we may present to them corn and wine, and the odour of incense, and the blood of cattle? Which things cannot be acceptable to the immortals, because they are perishable; nor can they be of use to beings destitute of bodies, because these things have been given for the use of those possessed of bodies; and yet if they required these things, they could bestow them upon themselves when they wished. Whether, therefore, souls perish or exist for ever, what principle is involved in the worship of the gods, or by whom was the world established? Why, or when, or how long, or how far were men produced, or on what account? Why do they arise, die, succeed one another, are renewed? What do the gods obtain from the worship of those who after death are about to have no existence? What do they perform, what do they promise, What do they threaten, which is worthy of men or of gods?

Or if souls remain after death, what do they do or are they about to do respecting them? What need is there to them of a treasure-house of souls? From what source do they themselves arise? How, or why, or whence are they so many? Thus it comes to pass, that if yon depart from that sum of things which we comprised above, all system is destroyed, and all things return to nothing.

Chapter VII.-Of the Variety of Philosophers, and Their Truth.

And because the philosophers did not comprehend this main point, they were neither able to comprehend truth, although they for the most part both saw and explained those things of which the main point itself consists. But different persons brought forward all these things, and in different ways, not connecting the causes of things, nor the consequences, nor the reasons, so that they might join together and complete that main point which comprises the whole. But it is easy to show that almost the whole truth has been divided by philosophers and sects. For we do not overthrow philosophy, as the Academics are accustomed to do, whose plan was to reply to everything, which is rather to calumniate and mock; but we show that no sect was so much out of the way, and no philosopher so vain, as not to see something of the truth. But while they are mad with the desire of contradicting, while they defend their own arguments even though false, and overthrow those of others even though true, not only has the truth escaped from them, which they pretended that they were seeking, but they themselves lost it chiefly through their own fault. But if there had been any one to collect together the truth which was dispersed amongst individuals and scattered amongst sects, and to reduce it to a body, he assuredly would not disagree with us. But no one is able to do this, unless he has experience and knowledge of the truth.

But to know the truth belongs to him only who has been taught by God. For he cannot in any other way reject the things which are false, or choose and approve of those which are true; but if even by chance he should effect this, he would most surely act the part of the philosopher; and though he could not defend those things by divine testimonies, yet the truth would explain itself by its own light. Wherefore the error of those is incredible, who, when they have approved of any sect, and have devoted themselves to it, condemn all others as false and vain, and arm themselves for battle, neither knowing what they ought to defend nor what to refute; and make attacks everywhere, without distinction, upon all things which are brought forward by those who disagree with them.

On account of these most obstinate contentions of theirs, no philosophy existed which made a nearer approach to the truth, for the whole truth has been comprised by these in separate portions. Plato said that the world was made by God: the prophets speak the same; and the

same is apparent from the verses of the Sibyl. They therefore are in error, who have said either that all things were produced of their own accord or from an assemblage of atoms; since so great a world, so adorned and of such magnitude, could neither have been made nor arranged and set in order without some most skilful author, and that very arrangement by which all things are perceived to be kept together and to be governed bespeaks an artificer with a most skilful mind. The Stoics say that the world, and all things which are in it, were made for the sake of men: the sacred writings teach us the same thing. Therefore Democritus was in error, who thought that they were poured forth from the earth like worms, without any author or plan. For the reason of man's creation belongs to a divine mystery; and because he was unable to know this, he drew down man's life to nothing. Aristo asserted that men were born to the exercise of virtue; we are also reminded of and learn the same from the prophets. Therefore Aristippus is deceived, who made man subject to pleasure, that is, to evil, as though he were a beast.

Pherecydes and Plato contended that souls were immortal; but this is a peculiar doctrine in our religion. Therefore Dicae archus was mistaken, together with Democritus, who argued that souls perished with the body and were dissolved, Zeno the Stoic taught that there were infernal regions, and that the abodes of the good were separated from the wicked; and that the former enjoyed peaceful and delightful regions, but that the latter suffered punishment in dark places, and in dreadful abysses of mire: the prophets show the same thing. Therefore Epicurus was mistaken, who thought that that was an invention of the poets, and explained those punishments of the infernal regions, which are spoken of, as happening in this life. Therefore the philosophers touched upon the whole truth, and every secret of our holy religion; but when others denied it, they were unable to defend that which they had found, because the system did not agree with the particulars; nor were they able to reduce to a summary those things which they had perceived to be true, as we have done above.

Chapter VIII.-Of the Immortality of the Soul.

The one chief good, therefore, is immortality, for the reception of which we were originally formed and born. To this we direct our course; human nature regards this; to this virtue exalts us. And because we have discovered this good, it remains that we should also speak of immortality itself. The arguments of Plato, although they contribute much to the subject, have little strength to prove and fill up the truth, since he had neither summed up and collected into one the plan of the whole of this great mystery, nor had he comprehended the chief good. For although he perceived the truth respecting the immortality of the soul, yet he did not speak respecting it as though it were the chief good. We, therefore, are able to elicit the truth by more certain signs; for we have not collected it by doubtful surmise, but have known it by divine instruction. Now Plato thus reasoned, that whatever has perception by itself, and always moves, is immortal; for that that which has no beginning of motion is not about to have an end, because it cannot be deserted by itself. But this argument would give eternal existence even to dumb animals, unless he had made a distinction by the addition of wisdom.

He added, therefore, that he might escape this common linking together, that the soul of man could not be otherwise than immortal, since its wonderful skill in invention, its quickness in reflection, and its readiness in perceiving and learning, its memory of the past, and its foresight of the future, and its knowledge of innumerable arts and subjects, which other living creatures do not possess, appear divine and heavenly; because of the soul, which conceives such great things, and contains such great things, no origin can be found on earth, since it has nothing of earthly admixture united with it. But that which is ponderous in man, and liable to dissolution, must be resolved into earth; whereas that which is slight and subtle is incapable of division, and when freed from the abode of the body, as from prison, it flies to the heaven, and to its own nature. This is a brief summary of the tenets of Plato, which are widely and copiously explained in his own writings.

Pythagoras also was previously of the same sentiments, and his teacher Pherecydes, whom Cicero reported to have been the first who discoursed respecting the immortality of the soul. And although all these excelled in eloquence, nevertheless in this contest at least, those

who argued against this opinion had no less authority; Dicae archus first, then Democritus, and lastly Epicurus: so that the matter itself, respecting which they were contending, was called into doubt. Finally, Tullius also having set forth the opinions of all these respecting immortality and death, declared that he did not know what was the truth. "Which of these opinions is true," he said, "some God may see." And again he says in another place: "Since each of these opinions had most learned defenders, it cannot be divined what is certainty." But we have no need of divination, since the divinity itself has laid open to us the truth.

Chapter IX.-Of the Immortality of the Soul, and of Virtue.

By these arguments, therefore, which neither Plato nor any other invented, the immorality of souls can be proved and perceived: which arguments we will briefly collect, since my discourse hastens on to relate the great judgment of God, which will be celebrated on the earth at the approaching end of the world. Before all things, since God cannot be seen by man, lest any one should imagine from this circumstance that God does not exist, because He was not seen by mortal eyes, among other wonderful arrangements He also made many things the power of which is manifest, but the substance is not seen, as the voice, smell, the wind, that by the token and example of these things we might perceive God from His power and operation and works, although He did not fall under the notice of our eyes. What is clearer than the voice, or stronger than the wind, or more forcible than smell? Yet these, when they are borne through the air and come to our senses, and impel them by their efficacy, are not distinguished by the eyesight, but are perceived by other parts of the body. In like manner, God is not to be perceived by us through the sight or other frail sense; but He is to be beheld by the eyes of the mind, since we see His illustrious and wonderful works.

For as to those who have altogether denied the existence of God, I should not only refuse to call them philosophers, but even deny them the name of men, who, with a close resemblance to dumb animals, consisted of body only, discerning nothing with their mind, and referring all things to the bodily senses, who thought that nothing existed but that which they beheld with their eyes. And because they saw that adversity befell the wicked, or prosperity happened to the good, they believed that all things were carried on by fortune, and that the world was established by nature, and not by providence.

Hence they at once fell into the absurdities which necessarily followed such a sentiment. But if there is a God who is incorporeal, invisible, and eternal, therefore it is credible that the soul, since it is not seen, does not perish after its departure from the body; for it is manifest that something exists which perceives and is vigorous, and yet does not come into sight. But, it is said, it is difficult to comprehend with the mind how the soul can retain its perception without those parts of the body in which the office of perception is contained. What about God? Is it easy to comprehend how He is vigorous without a body? But if they

believe in the existence of gods who, if they exist, are plainly destitute of bodies, it must be that human souls exist in the same way, since it is perceived from reason itself, and discernment, that there is a certain resemblance in man and God. Finally, that proof which even Marcus Tullius saw is of sufficient strength: that the immortality of the soul may be discerned from the fact that there is no other animal which has any knowledge of God; and religion is almost the only thing which distinguishes man from the dumb creation. And since this falls to man alone, it assuredly testifies that we may aim at, desire, and cultivate that which is about to be familiar and very near.

Can any one, when he has considered the nature of other animals, which the providence of the Supreme God has made abject, with bodies bending down and prostrated to the earth, so that it may be understood from this that they have no intercourse with heaven, fail to understand that man alone of all animals is heavenly and divine, whose body raised from the ground, elevated countenance, and upright position, goes in quest of its origin, and despising, as it were, the lowliness of the earth, reaches forth to that which is on high, because he perceives that the highest good is to be sought by him in the highest place, and mindful of his condition in which God made him illustrious, looks towards his Maker? And Trismegistus most rightly called this looking a contemplation of God, which has no existence in the dumb animals. Since therefore wisdom, which is given to man alone, is nothing else but the knowledge of God, it is evident that the soul does not perish, nor undergo dissolution, but that it remains for ever, because it seeks after and loves God, who is everlasting, by the impulse of its very nature perceiving either from what source it has sprung, or to what it is about to return. Moreover, it is no slight proof of immortality that man alone makes use of the heavenly element.

For, since the nature of the world consists of two elements which are opposed to one another-fire and water-of which the one is assigned to the heaven, the other to the earth, the other living creatures, because they are of the earth and mortal, make use of the element which is earthly and heavy: man alone makes use of fire, which is an element light, rising upward, and heavenly. But those things which are weighty depress to death, and those which are light elevate to life; because life is on high, and death below. And as there cannot be light without fire, so there cannot be life without light. Therefore fire is the element of light and life; from which it is evident that man who uses it is a partaker of an immortal condition, because that which causes life is familiar to him.

The gift of virtue also to man alone is a great proof that souls are immortal. For this will not be in accordance with nature if the soul is extinguished; for it is injurious to this present life. For that earthly life, which we lead in common with dumb animals, both seeks pleasure, by the varied and agreeable fruits of which it is delighted, and avoids pain, the harshness of which, by its unpleasant sensations, injures the nature of living beings, and endeavours to lead them to death, which dissolves the living being. If, therefore, virtue both prohibits man from those goods which are naturally desired, and impels him to endure evils which are naturally avoided, it follows that virtue is an evil, and opposed to nature; and he must nec-

essarily be judged foolish who pursues it, since he injures himself both by avoiding present goods, and by seeking equally evils, without hope of greater advantage. For when it is permitted us to enjoy the sweetest pleasures, should we not appear to be without sense if we should not prefer to live in lowliness, in want, in contempt and ignominy, or not to live at all, but to be tormented with pain, and to die, when from these evils we should gain nothing to compensate us for the pleasure which we have given up? But if virtue is not an evil, and acts honourably, inasmuch as it despises vicious and shameful pleasures, and bravely, inasmuch as it neither fears pain nor death, that it may discharge its duty, therefore it must obtain some greater good than those things are which it despises. But when death has been undergone, what further good can be hoped for except immortality?

Chapter X.-Of Vices and Virtues, and of Life and Death.

Let us now in turn pass on to those things which are opposed to virtue, that from these also the immortality of the soul may be inferred. All vices are for a time; for they are excited for the present. The impetuosity of anger is appeased when vengeance has been taken; the pleasure of the body puts an end to lust; desire is destroyed either by the full enjoyment of the objects which it seeks, or by the excitement of other affections; ambition, when it has gained the honours which it wished for, loses its strength; likewise the other vices are unable to stand their ground and remain, but they are ended by the very enjoyment which they desire. Therefore they withdraw and return. But virtue is perpetual, without any intermission; nor can he who has once taken it up depart from it. or if it should have any interruption if we can at any time do without it, vices, which always oppose virtue, will return. Therefore it has not been grasped, if it deserts its post, if at any time it withdraws itself. But when it has established for itself a firm abode, it must necessarily be engaged in every act; nor can it faithfully drive away and put to flight vices, unless it shall fortify with a perpetual guard the breast which it inhabits. Therefore the uninterrupted duration of virtue itself shows that the soul of man, if it has received virtue, remains permanent, because virtue is perpetual, and it is the human mind alone which receives virtue.

Since, therefore, vices are contrary to virtue, the whole systems must of necessity differ from and be contrary to each other. Because vices are commotions and perturbations of the soul; virtue, on the contrary, is mildness and tranquillity of mind. Because vices are temporary, and of short duration; virtue is perpetual and constant, and always consistent with itself. Because the fruits of vices, that is, pleasures, equally with themselves, are short and temporary, therefore the fruit and reward of virtue are everlasting. Because the advantage of vices is immediate, therefore that of virtue is future.

Thus it happens that in this life there is no reward of virtue, because virtue itself still exists. For as, when vices are completed in their performance, pleasure and their rewards follow; so, when virtue has been ended, its reward follows. But virtue is never ended except by death, since its highest office is in the undergoing of death: therefore the reward of virtue is after death. In fine, Cicero, in his Tusculan Disputations, perceived, though with doubt,

that the chief good does not happen to man except after death. "A man will go," he says, "with confident spirit, if circumstances shall so happen, to death in which we have ascertained that there is either the chief good or no evil." Death, therefore, does not extinguish man, but admits him to the reward of virtue. But he who has contaminated himself, as the same writer says, with vices and crimes, and has been the slave of pleasure, he truly, being condemned, shall suffer eternal punishment, which the sacred writings call the second death, which is both eternal and full of the severest torments. For as two lives are proposed to man, of which the one belongs to the soul, the other to the body; so also two deaths are proposed,-one relating to the body, which all must undergo according to nature, the other relating to the soul, which is acquired by wickedness and avoided by virtue. As this life is temporary and has fixed limits, because it belongs to the body; so also death is in like manner temporary and has a fixed end, because it affects the body.

Chapter XI.-Of the Last Times, and of the Soul and Body.

Therefore, when the times which God has appointed for death shall be completed, death itself shall be ended. And because temporal death follows temporal life, it follows that souls rise again to everlasting life, because temporal death has received an end. Again, as the life of the soul is everlasting, in which it receives the divine and unspeakable fruits of its immortality; also its death must be eternal, in which it suffers perpetual punishments and infinite torments for its faults. Therefore things are in this position, that they who are happy in this life, pertaining to the body and the earth, are about to be miserable for ever, because they have already enjoyed the good things which they preferred, which happens to those who adore false gods and neglect the true God. In the next place, they who, following righteousness, have been miserable, and despised, and poor in this life, and have often been harassed with insults and injuries on account of righteousness itself, because virtue cannot otherwise be attained, are about to be always happy, that since they have already endured evils, they may also enjoy goods. Which plainly happens to those who, having despised gods of the earth and frail goods, follow the heavenly religion of God, whose goods are everlasting, as He Himself who gave them. What shall I say of the works of the body and soul? Do not they show that the soul is not subject to death? For, as to the body, since it is itself frail and mortal, whatever works it contrives are equally perishable. For Tullius says that there is nothing which is wrought by the hands of man which is not at some time reduced to destruction, either through injury caused by men, or through length of time, which is the destroyer of all things.

But truly we see that the productions of the mind are immortal. For as many as, devoting themselves to the contempt of present things, have handed down to memory the monuments of their genius and great deeds, have plainly gained by these an imperishable name for their mind and virtue. Therefore, if the deeds of the body are mortal for this reason, because the body itself is mortal, it follows that the soul is shown to be immortal from this, because we see that its productions are not mortal. In the same manner also, the desires of the body and of the soul declare that the one is mortal, the other everlasting. For the body desires nothing except what is temporal, that is, food, drink, clothing, rest, and pleasure; and it cannot desire or attain to these very things without the assent and assistance of the soul.

But the soul of itself desires many things which do not extend to the duty or enjoyment of the body; and those are not frail, but eternal, as the fame of virtue, as the remembrance of the name. For the soul even in opposition to the body desires the worship of God, which consists in abstinence from desires and lusts, in the enduring of pain, in the contempt of death. From which it is credible that the soul does not perish, but is separated from the body, because the body can do nothing without the soul, but the soul can do many and great things without the body.

Why should I mention that those things which are visible to the eyes, and capable of being touched by the hand, cannot be eternal, because they admit of external violence; but those things which neither come under the touch nor tinder the sight, but are apparent only in their force and method and effect, are eternal because they suffer no violence from without? But if the body is mortal on this account, because it is equally open to the sight and to the touch, therefore the soul is immortal for this reason, because it can be neither touched nor seen.

Chapter XII.-Of the Soul and the Body, and of Their Union and Separation and Return.

Now let us refute the arguments of those who maintain the opposite opinions, which Lucretius has related in his third book. Since, he says, the soul is born together with the body, it must necessarily die with the body. But the two cases are not similar. For the body is solid, and capable of being grasped both by the eyes and the hand; but the soul is slight, and eluding the touch and sight. The body is formed from the earth, and made firm; the soul has in it nothing concrete, nothing of earthly weight, as Plato maintained. For it could not have such great force, such great skill, such great rapidity, unless it derived its origin from heaven. The body, therefore, since it is made up of a ponderous and corruptible element, and is tangible and visible, is corrupted and dies; nor is it able to repel violence, because it comes under the sight and under the touch; but the soul, which by its slightness avoids all touch, can be dissolved by no attack. Therefore, although they are joined and connected together from birth, and the one which is formed of earthly material is, as it were, the vessel of the other, which is drawn out from heavenly fineness, when any violence has separated the two, which separation is called death, then each returns into its own nature; that which was of earth is resolved into earth; that which is of heavenly breath remains fixed, and flourishes always, since the divine spirit is everlasting. In fine, the same Lucretius, forgetting what he asserted, and what dogma he defended, wrote these verses: -

"That also which before was from the earth passes back into the earth, and that which was sent from the borders of ether is carried again by the quarters of heaven."

But this language was not for him to employ, who contended that souls perished with the bodies; but he was overcome by the truth, and the true system stole upon him unawares. Moreover, that very inference which he draws, that the soul suffers dissolution, that is, that it perishes together with the body, since they are produced together, is both false, and is capable of being turned to the opposite direction. For the body does not perish together with the soul; but when the soul departs it remains entire for many days. and frequently by medical preparations it remains entire for a very long time. For if they both perished

together, as they are produced together, the soul would not hastily depart and desert the body, but both would be dispersed alike at one point of time; and the body also, while the breath still remained in it, would dissolve and perish as quickly as the soul departs: yes, truly, the body, being dissolved, the soul would vanish, as moisture poured forth from a broken vessel. For if the earthly and frail body after the departure of the soul does not immediately flow away and waste into earth, from which it has its origin, therefore the soul, which is not frail, endures to eternity, since its origin is eternal. He says, since the understanding increases in boys, and is vigorous in young men, and is lessened in the aged, it is evident that it is mortal. First, the soul is not the same thing as the mind;

for it is one thing that we live, another that we reflect. For it is the mind of those who are asleep which is at rest, not the soul; and in those who are mad, the mind is extinguished, the soul remains; and therefore they are not said to be without a soul, but to be deprived of their mind. Therefore the mind, that is, the understanding, is either increased or lessened according to age. The soul is always in its own condition; and from the time when it receives the power of breathing, it remains the same even to the end, until, being sent forth from the confinement of the body, it flies back to its own abode. In the next place, the soul, although inspired by God, yet, because it is shut up in a dark abode of earthly flesh, does not possess knowledge, which belongs to divinity. Therefore it hears and learns all things, and receives wisdom by learning and hearing; and old age does not lessen wisdom, but increases it, if the age of youth has been passed in virtue; and if excessive old age shall have enfeebled the limbs, it is not the fault of the mind if the sight has vanished, if the tongue has become benumbed, if the hearing has grown deaf, but it is the fault of the body. But, it is said, the memory fails.

What wonder, if the mind is oppressed by the ruin of the falling house, and forgets the past, not about to be divine on any other condition than if it shall have escaped the prison in which it is confined?

But the soul, be says, is also subject to pain and grief, and loses its senses through drunkenness, whence it is evidently frail and mortal. On this account, therefore, virtue and wisdom are necessary, that both grief, which is contracted by the suffering and the sight of unworthy objects, may be repelled by fortitude, and that pleasure may be overcome, not only by abstaining from drinking, but also from other things. For if it be destitute of virtue, if it be given up to pleasure, and thus rendered effeminate, it will become subject to death, since virtue, as we have shown, is the contriver of immortality, as pleasure is of death. But death, as I have set forth, does not entirely extinguish and destroy, but visits with eternal torments. For the soul cannot entirely perish, since it received its origin from the Spirit of God, which is eternal. The soul, he says, is sensible even of disease of the body, and suffers forgetfulness of itself; and as it grows ill, so also it is often healed. This is therefore the reason why virtue is especially to be used, that the mind-not the soul -may not be harassed by any pain of the body, or undergo oblivion of itself. And since this has its seat in a certain part of the body, when any violence of disease has vitiated that part, it is moved from its

place; and as though shaken, it departs from its station, about to return when a cure and health shall have remodelled its abode.

For, since the soul is united with the body, if it is destitute of virtue, it grows sick by the contagion of the body, and from sharing its frailty the weakness extends to the mind. But when it shall be disunited from the body it will flourish by itself; nor will it now be assailed by any, condition of frailty, because it has laid aside its frail covering. As the eye, he says, when torn out and separated from the body, can see nothing, so also the soul, when separated, can perceive nothing, because it is itself also a part of the body. This is false, and dissimilar to the case supposed; for the soul is not a part of the body, but in the body. As that which is contained in a vessel is not a part of the vessel, and these things which are in a house are not said to be a part of the house; so the mind is not a part of the body, because the body is either the vessel or the receptacle of the soul.

Now, that is a much more empty argument which says that the soul appears to be mortal because it is not quickly sent forth from the body, but gradually unfolds itself from all the members, beginning from the extremity of the feet; as though, if it were eternal, it would burst forth in a single moment of time, which takes place in those who die by the sword. But they who are slain by disease are longer in breathing forth their spirit, so that as the limbs grow cold the soul is breathed forth. For, since it is contained in the material of the blood, as light is in the oil, that material being consumed by the heat of fevers, the extremities of the limbs must grow cold; since the more slender veins are extended into the extremities of the body, and the extreme and smaller streams are dried up when the fountain-spring fails. It must not, however, be supposed that, because the perception of the body fails, the sensibility of the soul is extinguished and perishes. For it is not the soul that becomes senseless when the body fails, but it is the body which becomes senseless when the soul takes its departure, because it draws all sensibility with it. But since the soul by its presence gives sensibility to the body, and causes it to live, it is impossible that it should not live and perceive by itself, since it is in itself both consciousness and life. For as to that which says,

"But if our mind were immortal, it would not when dying complain so much of its dissolution as it would rejoice in passing abroad and quitting its vesture like a snake," I never saw any one who complained of his dissolution in death; but he perhaps had seen some Epicurean philosophizing even in death, and with his latest breath discoursing about his dissolution.

How can it be known whether he feels that he is in a state of dissolution, or that he is being set free from the body, when his tongue grows dumb at his departure? For as long as he perceives and has the power of speech, he is not yet dissolved; when he has suffered dissolution, he is now unable either to perceive or to speak, so that either he is not yet able to complain of his dissolution, or he is no longer able. But, it is said, he understands before he undergoes dissolution, that he must undergo it. Why should I mention that we see many of the dying, not complaining that they are undergoing dissolution, but testifying that they are passing out, and setting forth on their journey and walking? and they signify this by gesture, or if they still are able, they express it also by their voice. From which it is evident

that it is not a dissolution which takes place, but a separation; and this shows that the soul continues to exist. Other arguments of the Epicurean system are opposed to Pythagoras, who contends that souls migrate from bodies worn out with old age and death, and gain admission into those which are new and recently born; and that the same souls are always reproduced at one time in a man, at another time in a sheep, at another in a wild beast, at another in a bird;

and that they are immortal on this account, because they often change their abodes, consisting of various and dissimilar bodies. And this opinion of a senseless man, since it is ridiculous and more worthy of a stage-player than of a school of philosophy, ought not even to have been refuted seriously; for he who does this appears to be afraid lest any one should believe it. Therefore we must pass by those things which have been discussed in behalf of falsehood against falsehood; it is sufficient to have refuted those things which are against the truth.

Chapter XIII.-Of the Soul, and the Testimonies Concerning Its Eternity.

I have made it evident, as I think, that the soul is not subject to dissolution. It remains that I bring forward witnesses by whose authority my arguments may be confirmed. And I will not now allege the testimony of the prophets, whose system and divination consist in this alone, the teaching that man was created for the worship of God. and for receiving immortality from Him; but I will rather bring forward those whom they who reject the truth cannot but believe. Hermes, describing the nature of man, that he might show how he was made by God, introduced this statement: "And the same out of two natures-the immortal and the mortal-made one nature, that of man, making the same partly immortal, and partly mortal; and bringing this, he placed it in the midst, between that nature which was divine and immortal, and that which was mortal and changeable, that seeing all things, he may admire all things." But some one may perhaps reckon him in the number of the philosophers, although he has been placed among the gods, and honoured by the Egyptians under the name of Mercury, and may give no more authority to him than to Plato or Pythagoras. Let us therefore seek for greater testimony. A certain Polites asked Apollo of Miletus whether the soul remains after death or goes to dissolution; and he replied in these verses:-

"As long as the soul is bound by fetters to the body, perceiving corruptible sufferings, it yields to mortal pains; but when, after the wasting of the body, it has found a very swift dissolution of mortality, it is altogether borne into the air, never growing old, and it remains always uninjured; for the first-born providence of God made this disposition."

What do the Sibylline poems say? Do they not declare that this is so, when they say that the time Will come when God will judge the living and the dead?-whose authority we will hereafter bring forward. Therefore the opinion entertained by Democritus, and Epicurus, and Dicae archus concerning the dissolution of the soul is false; and they would not venture to speak concerning the destruction of souls, in the presence of any magician, who knew that souls are called forth from the lower regions by certain incantations, and that they are at hand, and afford themselves to be seen by human eyes, and speak, and foretell future

events; and if they should thus venture, they would be overpowered by the fact itself, and by proofs presented to them. But because they did not comprehend the nature of the soul, which is so subtle that it escapes the eyes of the human mind, they said that it perishes. What of Aristoxenus, who denied that there is any soul at all, even while it lives in the body? But as on the lyre harmonious sound, and the strain which musicians call harmony, is produced by the tightening of the strings, so he thought that the power of perception existed in bodies from the joining together of the vitals, and from the vigour of the limbs; than which nothing can be said more senseless. Truly he had his eyes uninjured, but his heart was blind, with which he did not see that he lived, and had the mind by which he had conceived that very thought. But this has happened to many philosophers, that they did not believe in the existence of any object which is not apparent to the eyes; whereas the sight of the mind ought to be much clearer than that of the body, for perceiving those things the force and nature of which are rather felt than seen.

Chapter XIV.-Of the First and Last Times of the World.

Since we have spoken of the immortality of the soul, it follows that we teach how and when it is given to man; that in this also they may see the errors of their perverseness and folly, who imagine that some mortals have become gods by the decrees and dogmas of mortals; either because they had invented arts, or because they had taught the use of certain productions of the earth, or because they had discovered things useful for the life of men, or because they had slain savage beasts. How far these things were from deserving immortality we have both shown in the former books, and we will now show, that it may be evident that it is righteousness alone which procures for man eternal life, and that it is God alone who bestows the reward of eternal life. For they who are said to have been immortalized by their merits, inasmuch as they possessed neither righteousness nor any true virtue, did not obtain for themselves immortality, but death by their sins and lusts; nor did they deserve the reward of heaven, but the punishment of hell, which impends over them, together with all their worshippers. And I show that the time of this judgment draws near, that the due reward may be given to the righteous, and the deserved punishment may be inflicted on the wicked.

Plato and many others of the philosophers, since they were ignorant of the origin of all things, and of that primal period at which the world was made, said that many thousands of ages had passed since this beautiful arrangement of the world was completed; and in this they perhaps followed the Chaldeans, who, as Cicero has related in his first book respecting divination, foolishly say that they possess comprised in their memorials four hundred and seventy thousand years; in which matter, because they thought that they could not be convicted, they believed that they were at liberty to speak falsely. But we, whom the Holy Scriptures instruct to the knowledge of the truth, know the beginning and the end of the world, respecting which we will now speak in the end of our work, since we have explained respecting the beginning in the second book. Therefore let the philosophers, who enumerate thousands of ages from the beginning of the world, know that the six thousandth year is not yet completed, and that when this number is completed the consummation must take place, and the condition of human affairs be remodelled for the better, the proof of which must first be related, that the matter itself may be plain. God completed the world and this

admirable work of nature in the space of six days, as is contained in the secrets of Holy Scripture, and consecrated the seventh day, on which He had rested from His works. But this is the Sabbath-day, which in the language of the Hebrews received its name from the number, whence the seventh is the legitimate and complete number. For there are seven days, by the revolutions of which in order the circles of years are made up; and there are seven stars which do not set, and seven luminaries which are called planets, whose differing and unequal movements are believed to cause the varieties of circumstances and times.

Therefore, since all the works of God were completed in six days, the world must continue in its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years. For the great day of God is limited by a circle of a thousand years, as the prophet shows, who says ”In Thy sight, O Lord, a thousand years are as one day.” And as God laboured during those six days in creating such great works, so His religion and truth must labour during these six thousand years, while wickedness prevails and bears rule. And again, since God, having finished His works, rested the seventh day and blessed it, at the end of the six thousandth year all wickedness must be abolished from the earth, and righteousness reign for a thousand years; and there must be tranquillity and rest from the labours which the world now has long endured. But how that will come to pass I will explain in its order. We have often said that lesser things and things of small importance are figures and previous shadowings forth of great things; as this day of ours, which is bounded by the rising and the setting of the sun, is a representation of that great clay to which the circuit of a thousand years affixes its limits.

In the same manner also the fashioning of the earthly man held forth to the future the formation of the heavenly people. For as, when all things were completed which were contrived for the use of man, last of all, on the sixth day, He made man also, and introduced him into this world as into a home now carefully prepared; so now on the great sixth day the true man is being formed by the word of God, that is, a holy people is fashioned for righteousness by the doctrine and precepts of God. And as then a mortal and imperfect man was formed from the earth, that he might live a thousand years in this world; so now from this earthly age is formed a perfect man, that being quickened by God, he may bear rule in this same world through a thousand years. But in what manner the consummation will take place, and what end awaits the affairs of men, if any one shall examine the divine writings he will ascertain. But the voices also of prophets of the world, agreeing with the heavenly, announce the end and overthrow of all things after a short time, describing as it were the last old age of the wearied and wasting world. But the things which are said by prophets and seers to be about to happen before that last ending comes upon the world, I will subjoin, being collected and accumulated from all quarters.

Chapter XV.-Of the Devastation of the World and Change of the Empires.

It is contained in the mysteries of the sacred writings, that a prince of the Hebrews, compelled by want of corn, passed into Egypt with all his family and relatives. And when his posterity, remaining long in Egypt, had increased into a great nation, and were oppressed by the heavy and intolerable yoke of slavery, God smote Egypt with an incurable stroke, and freed His people, leading them through the midst of the sea, when, the waves being cut asunder and parted on either side, the people went over on dry ground. And the king of the Egyptians endeavouring to follow them as they fled, the sea returning to its place, he was cut off, with all his people. And this deed so illustrious and so wonderful, although for the present it displayed to men the power of God, was also a foreshadowing and figure of a greater deed, which the same God was about to perform at the last consummation of the times, for He will free His people from the oppressive bondage of the world. But since at that time the people of God were one, and in one nation only, Egypt only was smitten. But now, because the people of God are collected out of all languages, and dwell among all nations, and are oppressed by those hearing rule over them, it must come to pass that all nations, that is, the whole world, be beaten with heavenly stripes, that the righteous people, who are worshippers of God, may be set free. And as then signs were given by which the coming destruction was shown to the Egyptians, so at the last time wonderful prodigies will take place throughout all the elements of the world, by which the impending destruction may be understood by all nations.

Therefore, as the end of this world approaches, the condition of human affairs must undergo a change, and through the prevalence of wickedness become worse; so that now these times of ours, in which iniquity and impiety have increased even to the highest degree, may be judged happy and almost golden in comparison of that incurable evil. For righteousness will so decrease, and impiety, avarice, desire, and lust will so greatly increase, that if there shall then happen to be any good men, they will be a prey to the wicked, and will be harassed on all sides by the unrighteous; while the wicked alone will be in opulence, but the good will be

afflicted in all calumnies and in want. All justice will be confounded, and the laws will be destroyed. No one will then have anything except that which has been gained or defended by the hand: boldness and violence will possess all things. There will be no faith among men, nor peace, nor kindness, nor shame, nor truth; and thus also there will be neither security, nor government, nor any rest from evils. For all the earth will be in a state of tumult; wars will everywhere rage; all nations will he in arms, and will oppose one another; neighbouring states will carry on conflicts with each other; and first of all, Egypt will pay the penalties of her foolish superstitions, and will be covered with blood as if with a river.

Then the sword will traverse the world, mowing down everything, and laying low all things as a crop. And-my mind dreads to relate it, but I will relate it, because it is about to happen-the cause of this desolation and confusion will be this; because the Roman name, by which the world is now ruled, will be taken away from the earth, and the government return to Asia; and the East will again bear rule, and the West he reduced to servitude. Nor ought it to appear wonderful to any one, if a kingdom rounded with such vastness, and so long increased by so many and such men, and in short strengthened by such great resources, shall nevertheless at some time fall. There is nothing prepared by human strength which cannot equally he destroyed by human strength, since the works of mortals are mortal. Thus also other kingdoms in former times, though they had long flourished, were nevertheless destroyed. For it is related that the Egyptians, and Persians, and Greeks, and Assyrians had the government of the world; and after the destruction of them all, the chief power came to the Romans also. And inasmuch as they excel all other kingdoms in magnitude, with so much greater an overthrow will they fall, because those buildings which are higher than others have more weight for a downfall.

Seneca therefore not unskilfully divided the times of the Roman city by ages. For he said that at first was its infancy under King Romulus, by whom Rome was brought into being, and as it were educated; then its boyhood under the other kings, by whom it was increased and fashioned with more numerous systems of instruction and institutions; but at length, in the reign of Tarquinius, when now it had begun as it were to be grown up, it did not endure slavery; and having thrown off the yoke of a haughty tyranny, it preferred to obey laws rather than kings; and when its youth was terminated by the end of the Punic war, then at length with confirmed strength it began to be manly. For when Carthage was taken away, which was long its rival in power, it stretched out its hands by land and sea over the whole world, until, having subdued all kings and nations, when the materials for war now failed, it abused its strength, by which it destroyed itself. This was its first old age, when, lacerated by civil wars and oppressed by intestine evil, it again fell back to the government of a single ruler, as it were revolving to a second infancy. For, having lost the liberty which it had defended under the guidance and authority of Brutus, it so grew old, as though it had no strength to support itself, unless it depended on the aid of its rulers.

But if these things are so, what remains, except that death follow old age? And that it will so come to pass, the predictions of the prophets briefly announce under the cover of other

names, so that no one can easily understand them. Nevertheless the Sibyls openly say that Rome is doomed to perish, and that indeed by the judgment of God, because it held His name in hatred; and being the enemy of righteousness, it destroyed the people who kept the truth. Hystaspes also, who was a very ancient king of the Medes, from whom also the river which is now called Hydaspes received its name, handed down to the memory of posterity a wonderful dream upon the interpretation of a boy who uttered divinations, announcing long before the founding of the Trojan nation, that the Roman empire and name would be taken away from the world.

Chapter XVI.-Of the Devastation of the World, and Its Prophetic Omens.

But, test any one should think this incredible, I will show how it will come to pass. First, the kingdom will be enlarged, and the chief power, dispersed among many and divided, will be diminished. Then civil discords will perpetually be sown; nor will there be any rest from deadly wars, until ten kings arise at the same time, who will divide the world, not to govern, but to consume it. These, having increased their armies to an immense extent, and having deserted the cultivation of the fields, which is the beginning of overthrow and disaster, will lay waste and break in pieces and consume all things. Then a most powerful enemy will suddenly arise against him from the extreme boundaries of the northern region, who, having destroyed three of that number who shall then be in possession of Asia, shall be admitted into alliance by the others, and shall be constituted prince of all. He shall harass the world with an intolerable rule; shall mingle things divine and human; shall contrive things impious to relate, and detestable; shall meditate new designs in his breast, that he may establish the government for himself: he will change the laws, and appoint his own; he will contaminate, plunder, spoil, and put to death. And at length, the name being changed and the seat of government being transferred, confusion and the disturbance of mankind will follow. Then, in truth, a detestable and abominable time shall come, in which life shall be pleasant to none of men.

Cities shall be utterly overthrown, and shall perish; not only by fire and the sword, but also by continual earthquakes and overflowings of waters, and by frequent diseases and repeated famines. For the atmosphere will be tainted, and become corrupt and pestilential- at one time by unseasonable rains, at another by barren drought, now by colds, and now by excessive heats. Nor will the earth give its fruit to man: no field, or tree, or vine will produce anything; but after they have given the greatest hope in the blossom, they will fail in the fruit. Fountains also shall be dried up, together with the rivers; so that there shall not be a sufficient supply for drinking; and waters shall be changed into blood or bitterness. On account of these things, beasts shall fail on the land, and birds in the air, and fishes

in the sea. Wonderful prodigies also in heaven shall confound the minds of men with the greatest terrors, and the trains of comets, and the darkness of the sun, and the colour of the moon, and the gliding of the falling stars. Nor, however, will these things take place in the accustomed manner; but there will suddenly appear stars unknown and unseen by the eyes; the sun will be perpetually darkened, so that there will be scarcely any distinction between the night and the day;

the moon will now fail, not for three hours only, but overspread with perpetual blood, will go through extraordinary movements, so that it will not be easy for man to ascertain the courses of the heavenly bodies or the system of the times; for there will either be summer in the winter, or winter in the summer. Then the year will be shortened, and the month diminished, and the day contracted into a short space; and stars shall fall in great numbers, so that all the heaven will appear dark without any lights. The loftiest mountains also will fall, and be levelled with the plains; the sea will be rendered unnavigable.

And that nothing may be wanting to the evils of men and the earth, the trumpet shall be heard from heaven, which the Sibyl foretells in this manner:- "The trumpet from heaven shall utter its wailing voice." And then all shall tremble and quake at that mournful sound. But then, through the anger of God against the men who have not known righteousness, the sword and fire, famine and disease, shall reign; and, above all things, fear always overhanging. Then they shall call upon God, but He will not hear them; death shall be desired, but it will not come; not even shall night give rest to their fear, nor shall sleep approach to their eyes, but anxiety and watchfulness shall consume the souls of men; they shall deplore and lament, and gnash their teeth; they shall congratulate the dead, and bewail the living. Through these and many other evils there shall be desolation on the earth, and the world shall be disfigured and deserted, which is thus expressed in the verses of the Sibyl:-

"The world shall be despoiled of beauty, through the destruction of men." For the human race will be so consumed, that scarcely the tenth part of men will be left; and from whence a thousand had gone forth, scarcely a hundred will go forth. Of the worshippers of God also, two parts will perish; and the third part, which shall have been proved, will remain.

Chapter XVII.-Of the False Prophet, and the Hardships of the Righteous, and His Destruction.

But I will more plainly set forth the manner in which this happens. When the close of the times draws nigh, a great prophet shall be sent from God to turn men to the knowledge of God, and he shall receive the power of doing wonderful things. Wherever men shall not hear him, he will shut up the heaven, and cause it to withhold its rains; he will turn their water into blood, and torment them with thirst and hunger; and if any one shall endeavour to injure him, fire, shall come forth out of his mouth, and shall bum that man. By these prodigies and powers he shall turn many to the worship of God; and when his works shall be accomplished, another king shall arise out of Syria, born from an evil spirit, the overthrower and destroyer of the human race, who shall destroy that which is left by the former evil, together with himself. He shall fight against the prophet of God, and shall overcome, and slay him, and shall suffer him to lie unburied; but after the third day he shall come to life again; and while all look on and wonder, he shall be caught up into heaven. But that king will not only be most disgraceful in himself, but he will also be a prophet of lies; and he will constitute and call himself God, and will order himself to be worshipped as the Son of God;

and power will be given him to do signs and wonders, by the sight of which he may entice men to adore him. He will command fire to come down from heaven, and the sun to stand and leave his course, and an image to speak; and these things shall be done at his word,-by which miracles many even of the wise shall be enticed by him. Then he will attempt to destroy the temple of God, and persecute the righteous people; and there will be distress and tribulation? such as there never has been from the beginning of the world.

As many as shall believe him and unite themselves to him, shall be marked by him as sheep; but they who shall refuse his mark will either flee to the mountains, or, being seized, will be slain with studied tortures. He will also enwrap righteous men with the books of the prophets, and thus burn them; and power will be given him to desolate the whole earth for forty-two months. That will be the time in which righteousness shall be cast out, and innocence be hated; in which the wicked shall prey upon the good as enemies; neither law,

nor order, nor military discipline shall be preserved; no one shall reverence hoary locks, nor recognise the duty of piety, nor pity sex or infancy; all things shall be confounded and mixed together against right, and against the laws of nature. Thus the earth shall be laid waste, as though by one common robbery. When these things shall so happen, then the righteous and the followers of truth shall separate themselves from the wicked, and flee into solitudes. And when he hears of this, the impious king, inflamed with anger, will come with a great army, and bringing up all his forces, will surround all the mountain in which the righteous shall be situated, that he may seize them. But they, when they shall see themselves to be shut in on all sides and besieged, will call upon God with a loud voice, and implore the aid of heaven; and God shall hear them, and send from heaven a great king to rescue and free them, and destroy all the wicked with fire and sword.

Chapter XVIII.-Of the Fortunes of the World at the Last Time, and of the Things Foretold by the Soothsayers.

That these things will thus take place, all the prophets have announced from the inspiration of God, and also the soothsayers at the instigation of the demons. For Hystaspes, whom I have named above, having described the iniquity of this last time, says that the pious and faithful, being separated from the wicked, will stretch forth their hands to heaven with weeping and mourning, and will implore the protection of Jupiter: that Jupiter will look to the earth, and hear the voices of men, and will destroy the wicked. All which things are true except one, that he attributed to Jupiter those things which God will do. But that also was withdrawn from the account, not without fraud on the part of the demons, viz., that the Son of God would then be sent, who, having destroyed all the wicked, would set at liberty the pious. Which, however, Hermes did not conceal. For in that book which is entitled the Complete Treatise, after an enumeration of the evils concerning which we have spoken, he added these things: ”But when these things thus come to pass, then He who is Lord, and Father, and God, and the Creator of the first and one God, looking upon what is done, and opposing to the disorder His own will, that is, goodness, and recalling the wandering and cleansing wickedness, partly inundating it with much water, and partly burning it with most rapid fire, and sometimes pressing it with wars and pestilences, He brought His world to its ancient state and restored it.” The Sibyls also show that it would not be otherwise than that the Son of God should be sent by His supreme Father, to set free the righteous from the hands of the wicked, and to destroy the unrighteous, together with their cruel tyrants. One of whom thus wrote:-

”He shall come also, wishing to destroy the city of the blest; and a king sent against him from the gods shall slay all the great kings and chief men: then judgment shall thus come from the Immortal to men.” Also another Sibyl:- ”And then God shall send a king from the sun, who shall cause all the earth to cease from disastrous war.” And again another:- ”He

will take away the intolerable yoke of slavery which is placed on our neck, and he will do away with impious laws and violent chains."

Chapter XIX.-Of the Advent of Christ to Judgment, and of the Overcoming of the False Prophet.

The world therefore being oppressed, since the resources of men shall be insufficient for the overthrow of a tyranny of immense strength, inasmuch as it will press upon the captive world with great armies of robbers; that calamity so great will stand in need of divine assistance. Therefore God, being aroused both by the doubtful danger and by the wretched lamentation of the righteous, will immediately send a deliverer. Then the middle of the heaven shall be laid open in the dead and darkness of the night, that the light of the descending God may be manifest in all the world as lightning: of which the Sibyl spoke in these words:- "When He shall come, there will be fire and darkness in the midst of the black night." This is the night which is celebrated by us in watchfulness on account of the coming of our King and God: of which night there is a twofold meaning; because in it He then received life when He suffered, and hereafter He is about to receive the kingdom of the world. For He is the Deliverer, and Judge, and Avenger, and King, and God, whom we call Christ, who before He descends will give this sign: There shall suddenly fall from heaven a sword, that the righteous may know that the leader of the sacred warfare is about to descend; and He shall descend with a company of angels to the middle of the earth, and there shall go before Him an unquenchable fire, and the power of the angels shall deliver into the hands of the just that multitude which has surrounded the mountain, and they shall be slain from the third hour until the evening, and blood shall flow like a torrent; and all his forces being destroyed, the wicked one shall alone escape, and his power shall perish from him.

Now this is he who is called Antichrist; but he shall falsely call himself Christ, and shall fight against the truth, and being overcome shall flee; and shall often renew the war, and often be conquered, until in the fourth battle, all the wicked being slain, subdued, and captured, he shall at length pay the penalty of his crimes. But other princes also and tyrants who have harassed the world, together with him, shall be led in chains to the king; and he shall rebuke them, and reprove them, and upbraid them with their crimes, and condemn them, and consign them to deserved tortures. Thus, wickedness being extinguished and impiety

suppressed, the world will be at rest, which having been subject to error and wickedness for so many ages, endured dreadful slavery. No longer shall gods made by the hands be worshipped; but the images being thrust out from their temples and couches, shall be given to the fire, and shall be burnt, together with their wonderful gifts: which also the Sibyl, in accordance with the prophets, announced as about to take place:-

"But mortals shall break in pieces the images and all the wealth." The Erythraean Sibyl also made the same promise:- "And the works made by the hand of the gods shall be burnt up."

Chapter XX.-Of the Judgment of Christ, of Christians, and of the Soul.

After these things the lower regions shall be opened, and the dead shall rise again, on whom the same King and God shall pass judgment, to whom the supreme Father shall give the great power both of judging and of reigning. And respecting this judgment and reign, it is thus found in the Erythraean Sibyl:- "When this shall receive its fated accomplishment, and the judgment of the immortal God shall now come to mortals, the great judgment shall come upon men, and the beginning." Then in another:- "And then the gaping earth shall show a Tartarean chaos; and all kings shall come to the judgment-seat of God." And in another place in the same:- "Rolling along the heavens, I will open the caverns of the earth; and then I will raise the dead, loosing fate and the sting of death; and afterwards I will call them into judgment, judging the life of pious and impious men."

Not all men, however, shall then be judged by God, but those only who have been exercised in the religion of God. For they who have not known God, since sentence cannot be passed upon them for their acquittal, are already judged and condemned, since the Holy Scriptures testify that the wicked shall not arise to judgment. Therefore they who have known God shall be judged, and their deeds, that is, their evil works, shall be compared and weighed against their good ones: so that if those which are good and just are more and weighty, they may be given to a life of blessedness; but if the evil exceed, they may be condemned to punishment. Here, perhaps, some one will say, If the soul is immortal, how is it represented as capable of suffering, and sensible of punishment? For if it shall be punished on account of its deserts, it is plain that it will be sensible of pain, and even of death. If it is not liable to death, not even to pain, it follows that it is not capable of suffering.

This question or argument is thus met by the Stoics: that the souls of men continue to exist, and are not annihilated by the intervention of death: that the souls, moreover, of those who have been just, being pure, and incapable of suffering, and happy, return to the heavenly abodes from which they had their origin, or are borne to some happy plains, where they may enjoy wonderful pleasures; but that the wicked, since they have defiled

themselves with evil I passions, have a kind of middle nature, between that of an immortal and a mortal, and have something of weakness, from the contagion of the flesh; and being enslaved to its desires and lusts, they contract an indelible stain and earthly blot; and when this has become entirely inherent through length of time, souls are given over to its nature, so that, though they cannot altogether be extinguished, inasmuch as they are from God, nevertheless they become liable to torment through the taint of the body, which being burnt in by means of sins, produces a feeling of pain. Which sentiment is thus expressed by the poet: -

”Nay, when at last the life has fled, And left the body cold and dead, E’en then there passes not away The painful heritage of clay: Full many a long contracted stain Perforce must linger deep in grain. So penal sufferings they endure For ancient crime, to make them pure.” These things are near to the truth. For the semi, when separated from the body, is, as the same poet says, such as ”No vision of the drowsy night, No airy current half so light,” because it is a spirit, and by its very slightness incapable of being perceived, but only by us who are corporeal but capable of being perceived by God, since it belongs to Him to be able to do all things.

Chapter XXI.-Of the Torments and Punishments of Souls.

First of all, therefore, we say that the power of God is so great, that He perceives even incorporeal things, and manages them as He will. For even angels fear God, because they can be chastised by Him in some unspeakable manner; and devils dread Him, because they are tormented and punished by Him. What wonder is it, therefore, if souls, though they are immortal, are nevertheless capable of suffering at the hand of God? For since they have nothing solid and tangible in themselves, they can suffer no violence from solid and corporeal beings; but because they live in their spirits only, they are capable of being handled by God alone, whose energy and substance is spiritual. But, however, the sacred writings inform us in what manner the wicked are to undergo punishment. For because they have committed sins in their bodies, they will again be clothed with flesh, that they may make atonement in their bodies; and yet it will not be that flesh with which God clothed man, like this our earthly body, but indestructible, and abiding for ever, that it may be able to hold out against tortures and everlasting fire, the nature of which is different from this fire of ours, which we use for the necessary purposes of life, and which is extinguished unless it be sustained by the fuel of some material. But that divine fire always lives by itself, and flourishes without any nourishment; nor has it any smoke mixed with it, but it is pure and liquid, and fluid, after the manner of water. For it is not urged upwards by any force, as our fire, which the taint of the earthly body, by which it is held, and smoke intermingled, compels to leap forth, and to fly upwards to the nature of heaven, with a tremulous movement.

The same divine fire, therefore, with one and the same force and power, will both burn the wicked and will form them again, and will replace as much as it shall consume of their bodies, and will supply itself with eternal nourishment: which the poets transferred to the vulture of Tityus. Thus, without any wasting of bodies, which regain their substance, it will only burn and affect them with a sense of pain. But when He shall have judged the righteous, He will also try them with fire. Then they whose sins shall exceed either in weight or in number, shall be scorched by the fire and burnt: but they whom full justice and maturity of virtue has imbued will not perceive that fire; for they have something of God in themselves which repels and rejects the violence of the flame. So great is the force of innocence, that the flame shrinks from it without doing harm; which has received from God this power, that

it burns the wicked, and is under the command of the righteous. Nor, however, let any one imagine that souls are immediately judged. after death. For all are detained in one and a common place of confinement, until the arrival of the time in which the great Judge shall make an investigation of their deserts. Then they whose piety shall have been approved of will receive the reward of immortality; but they whose sins and crimes shall have been brought to light will not rise again, but will be hidden in the same darkness with the wicked, being destined to certain punishment.

Chapter XXII.-Of the Error of the Poets, and the Return of the Soul from the Lower Regions.

Some imagine that these things are figments of the poets, not knowing whence the poets received them, and they say that these things are impossible; and it is no wonder that it so appears to them. For the matter is related by the poets in a manner which is different from the truth; for although they are much more ancient than the historians and orators, and other kinds of writers, yet because they were ignorant of the secret of the divine mystery, and mention of a future resurrection had reached them by an obscure rumour, yet they handed it down, when carelessly and lightly heard, after the manner of a feigned story. And yet they also testified that they did not follow a sure authority, but mere opinion, as Maro, who says, "What ear has heard let tongue make known."

Although, therefore, they have partly corrupted the secrets of the truth, yet the matter itself is found to be more true, because it partly agrees with the prophets: which is sufficient for us as a proof of the matter. Yet some reason is contained in their error. For when the prophets proclaimed with continual announcements that the Son of God was about to judge the dead, and this announcement did not escape their notice; inasmuch as they supposed that there was no other ruler of heaven but Jupiter, they reported that the son of Jupiter was king in the lower regions, but not Apollo, or Liber, or Mercurius, who are supposed to be gods of heaven, but one who was both mortal and just, either Minos, or Aeacus, or Rhadamanthus. Therefore with poetic licence they corrupted that which they had received; or, the opinion being scattered through different mouths and various discourses, changed the truth. For inasmuch as they foretold that, when a thousand years had been passed in the lower regions, they should again be restored to life, as Maro said: -

"All these, when centuries ten times told The wheel of destiny have rolled, The voice divine from far and wide Calls up to Lethe's river side, That earthward they may pass once more, Remembering not the things before, And with a blind propension yearn To fleshly bodies to return: "

this matter escaped their notice, that the dead will rise again, not after a thousand years from their death, but that, when again restored to life, they may reign with God a thousand years. For God will come, that, having cleansed the world from all defilement, He may restore the souls of the righteous to their renewed bodies, and raise them to everlasting blessedness.Therefore the other things are true, except the water of oblivion, which they feigned on this account, that no one might make this objection: why, therefore, did they not remember that they were at one time alive, or who they were, or what things they accomplished? But nevertheless it is not thought probable, and the whole matter is rejected, as though licentiously and fabulously invented. But when we affirm the doctrine of the resurrection, and teach that souls will return to another life, not forgetful of themselves, but possessed of the same perception and figure, we are met with this objection: So many ages have now passed; what individual ever arose from the dead, that through. his example we may believe it to be possible? But the resurrection cannot take place while unrighteousness still prevails. For in this world men are slain by violence, by the sword, by ambush, by poisons, and are visited with injuries, with want, with imprisonment, with tortures, and with proscriptions. Add to this that righteousness is hated, that all who wish to follow God are not only held in hatred, but are harassed with all reproaches, and are tormented by manifold kinds of punishments, and are driven to the impious worship of gods made with hands, not by reason or truth, but by dreadful laceration of their bodies.

Ought men therefore to rise again to these same things, or to return to a life in which it is impossible for them to be safe? Since the righteous, then, are so lightly esteemed, and so easily taken away, what can we suppose would have happened if any one returning from the dead had recovered life by a recovery of his former condition? He would assuredly be taken away from the eyes of men, lest, if he were seen or heard, all men with one accord should leave the gods and betake themselves to the worship and religion of the one God. Therefore it is necessary that the resurrection should take place once only when evil shall have been taken away, since it is befitting that those who have risen again should neither die any more, nor be injured in any way, that they may be able to pass a happy life whose death has been annulled. But the poets, knowing that this life abounds with all evils, introduced the river of oblivion, lest the souls, remembering their labours and evils, should refuse to return to the upper regions; whence Virgil says: -

”O Father l and can thought conceive That happy souls this realm would leave, And seek the upper sky, With sluggish clay to reunite? This dreadful longing for the light, Whence comes it, say, and why? ” For they did not know how or when it must take place; and therefore they supposed that souls were born again, and that they returned afresh to the womb, and went back to infancy. Whence also Plato, while discussing the nature of the soul, says that it may be known from this that souls are immortal and divine, because in boys minds are pliant, and easy of perception, and because they so quickly comprehend the subjects which they learn, that they appear not then to be learning for the first time, but to be recalling them to mind and recollecting them: in which matter the wise man most foolishly believed the poets.

Chapter XXIII.-Of the Resurrection of the Soul, and the Proofs of This Fact.

Therefore they will not be born again, which is impossible, but they will rise again, and be clothed by God with bodies, and will remember their former life, and all its actions; and being placed in the possession of heavenly goods, and enjoying the pleasure of innumerable resources, they will give thanks to God in His immediate presence, because He has destroyed all evil, and because He has raised them to His kingdom and to perpetual life. Respecting which resurrection the philosophers also attempted to speak as corruptly as the poets. For Pythagoras asserted that souls passed into new bodies; but foolishly, that they passed from men into cattle, and from cattle into men; and that he himself was restored from Euphorbus. Chrysippus says better, whom Cicero speaks of as supporting the portico of the Stoics, who, in the books which he wrote concerning providence, when he was speaking of the renewing of the world, introduced these words: "But since this is so, it is evident that nothing is impossible, and that we, after our death, when certain periods of time have again come round, are restored to this state in which we now are." But let us return from human to divine things. The Sibyl thus speaks:-

"For the whole race of mortals is hard to be believed; but when the judgment of the world and of mortals shall now come, which God Himself shall institute, judging the impious and the holy at the same time, then at length He shall send the wicked to darkness in fire. But as many as are holy shall live again on the earth, God giving them at the same time a spirit, and honour, and life." But if not only prophets, but even bards, and poets, and philosophers, agree that there will be a resurrection of the dead, let no one ask of us how this is possible: for no reason can be assigned for divine works; but if from the beginning God formed man in some unspeakable manner, we may believe that the old man can be restored by Him who made the new man.

Chapter XXIV.-Of the Renewed World.

Now I will subjoin the rest. Therefore the Son of the most high and mighty God shall come to judge the quick and the dead, as the Sibyl testifies and says:- ”For then there shall be confusion of mortals throughout the whole earth, when the Almighty Himself shall come on His judgment-seat to judge the souls of the quick and dead, and all the world.” But He, when He shall have destroyed unrighteousness, and executed His great judgment, and shall have recalled to life the righteous, who have lived from the beginning, will be engaged among men a thousand years, and will rule them with most just command. Which the Sibyl proclaims in another place, as she utters her inspired predictions:- ”Hear me, ye mortals; an everlasting King reigns.”

Then they who shall be alive in their bodies shall not die, but during those thousand years shall produce an infinite multitude, and their offspring shall be holy, and beloved by God; but they who shall be raised from the dead shall preside over the living as judges. But the nations shall not be entirely extinguished, but some shall be left as a victory for God, that they may be the occasion of triumph to the righteous, and may be subjected to perpetual slavery. About the same time also the prince of the devils, who is the contriver of all evils, shall be bound with chains, and shall be imprisoned during the thousand years of the heavenly rule in which righteousness shall reign in the world, so that he may contrive no evil against the people of God. After His coming the righteous shall be collected from all the earth, and the judgment being completed, the sacred city shall be planted in the middle of the earth, in which God Himself the builder may dwell together with the righteous, bearing rule in it. And the Sibyl marks out this city when she says:-

”And the city which God made this He made more brilliant than the stars, and sun, and moon.”

Then that darkness will be taken away from the world with which the heaven will be overspread and darkened, and the moon will receive the brightness of the sun, nor will it be further diminished: but the sun will become seven times brighter than it now is; and the earth will open its fruitfulness, and bring forth most abundant fruits of its own accord; the rocky mountains shall drop with honey; streams of wine shall run down, and rivers flow

with milk: in short, the world itself shall rejoice, and all nature exult, being rescued and set free from the dominion of evil and impiety, and guilt and error. Throughout this time beasts shall not be nourished by blood, nor birds by prey; but all things shall be peaceful and tranquil. Lions and calves shall stand together at the manger, the wolf shall not carry off the sheep, the hound shall not hunt for prey; hawks and eagles shall not injure; the infant shall play with serpents. In short, those things shall then come to pass which the poets spoke of as being done in the reign of Saturnus. Whose error arose from this source,-that the prophets bring forward and speak of many future events as already accomplished. For visions were brought before their eyes by the divine Spirit, and they saw these things, as it were, done and completed in their own sight. And when fame had gradually spread abroad their predictions, since those who were uninstructed in the mysteries of religion did not know why they were spoken, they thought that all those things were already fulfilled in the ancient ages, which evidently could not be accomplished and fulfilled under the reign of a man. But when, after the destruction of impious religions and the suppression of guilt, the earth shall be subject to God,-

"The sailor himself also shall renounce the sea, nor shall the naval pine Barter merchandise; all lands shall produce all things. The ground shall not endure the harrow, nor the vineyard the pruning hook; The sturdy ploughman also shall loose the bulls from the yoke. The plain shall by degrees grow yellow with soft ears of corn, The blushing grape shall hang on the uncultivated brambles, And hard oaks shall distil the dewy honey. Nor shall the wool learn to counterfeit various colours; But the ram himself in the meadows shall change his fleece, Now for a sweetly blushing purple, now for saffron dye; Scarlet of its own accord shall cover the lambs as they feed. The goats of themselves shall bring back home their udders distended with milk; Nor shall the herds dread huge lions." Which things the poet foretold according to the verses of the Cumaean Sibyl. But the Erythraean thus speaks:-

"But wolves shall not contend with lambs on the mountains, and lynxes shall eat grass with kids; boars shall feed with calves, and with all flocks; and the carnivorous lion shall eat chaff at the manger, and serpents shall sleep with infants deprived of their mothers." And in another place, speaking of the fruitfulness of all things:- "And then shall God give great joy to men; for the earth, and the trees, and the numberless flocks of the earth shall give to men the true fruit of the vine, and sweet honey, and white milk, and corn, which is the best of all things to mortals." And another in the same manner:- "The sacred land of the pious only will produce all these things, the stream of honey from the rock and from the fountain, and the milk of ambrosia will flow for all the just." Therefore men will live a most tranquil life, abounding with resources, and will reign together with God; and the kings of the nations shall come from the ends of the earth with gifts and offerings, to adore and honour the great King, whose name shall be renowned and venerated by all the nations which shall be trader heaven, and by the kings who shall rule on earth.

Chapter XXV.-Of the Last Times, and of the City of Rome.

These are the things which are spoken of by the prophets as about to happen hereafter: but I have not considered it necessary to bring forward their testimonies and words, since it would be an endless task; nor would the limits of my book receive so great a multitude of subjects, since so many with one breath speak similar things; and at the same time, lest weariness should be occasioned to the readers if I should heap together things collected and transferred from all; moreover, that I might confirm those very things which I said, not by my own writings, but in an especial manner by the writings of others, and might show that not only among us, but even with those very persons who revile us, the truth is preserved, which they refuse to acknowledge. But he who wishes to know these things more accurately may draw from the fountain itself, and he will know more things worthy of admiration than we have comprised in these books. Perhaps some one may now ask when these things of which we have spoken are about to come to pass? I have already shown above, that when six thousand years shall be completed this change must take place, and that the last day of the extreme conclusion is now drawing near. It is permitted us to know respecting the signs, which are spoken by the prophets, for they foretold signs by which the consummation of the times is to be expected by us from day to day, and to be feared.

When, however, this amount will be completed, those teach, who have written respecting the times, collecting them from the sacred writings and from various histories, how great is the number of years from the beginning of the world. And although they vary, and the amount of the number as reckoned by them differs considerably, yet all expectation does not exceed the limit of two hundred years. The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place; except that while the city of Rome remains it appears that nothing of this kind is to be feared. But when that capital of the world shall have fallen, and shall have begun to be a street, which the Sibyls say shall come to pass, who can doubt that the end has now arrived to the affairs of men and the whole world? It is that city, that only, which still sustains all things; and the God of heaven is to be entreated by us and implored-if, indeed, His arrangements and decrees can be delayed-lest, sooner than we think for, that detestable tyrant should come who will trader-take so great a deed, and dig out that eye, by

the destruction of which the world itself is about to fall. Now let us return, to set forth the other things which are then about to follow.

Chapter XXVI.-Of the Loosing of the Devil, and of the Second and Greatest Judgement.

We have said, a little before, that it will come to pass at the commencement of the sacred reign, that the prince of the devils will be bound by God. But he also, when the thousand years of the kingdom, that is, seven thousand of the world, shall begin to be ended, will be loosed afresh, and being sent forth from prison, will go forth and assemble all the nations, which shall then be trader the dominion of the righteous, that they may make war against the holy city; and there shall be collected together from all the world an innumerable company of the nations, and shall besiege and surround the city. Then the last anger of God shall come upon the nations, and shall utterly destroy them; and first He shall shake the earth most violently, and by its motion the mountains of Syria shall be rent, and the hills shall sink down precipitously, and the walls of all cities shall fall, and God shall cause the sun to stand, so that he set not for three days, and shall set it on fire; and excessive heat and great burning shall descend upon the hostile and impious people, and showers of brimstone, and hailstones, and drops of fire; and their spirits shall melt through the heat, and their bodies shall be bruised by the hail, and they shall smite one another with the sword. The mountains shall be filled with carcases, and the plains shall be covered with bones; but the people of God during those three days shall be concealed under caves of the earth, until the anger of God against the nations and the last judgment shall be ended.

Then the righteous shall go forth from their hiding-places, and shall find all things covered with carcases and bones. But the whole race of the wicked shall utterly perish; and there shall no longer be any nation in this world, but the nation of God alone. Then for seven continuous years the woods shall be untouched, nor shall timber be cut from the mountains, but the arms of the nations shall be burnt; and now there shall be no war, but peace and everlasting rest. But when the thousand years shall be completed, the world shall be renewed by God, and the heavens shall be folded together, and the earth shall be changed, and God shall transform men into the similitude of angels, and they shall be white as snow; and they shall always be employed in the sight of the Almighty, and shall make offerings

to their Lord, and serve Him for ever. At the same time shall take place that second and public resurrection of all, in which the unrighteous shall be raised to everlasting punishments. These are they who have worshipped the works of their own hands, who have either been ignorant of, or have denied the Lord and Parent of the world. But their lord with his servants shall be seized and condemned to punishment, together with whom all the band of the wicked, in accordance with their deeds, shall be burnt for ever with perpetual fire in the sight of angels and the righteous.

This is the doctrine of the holy prophets which we Christians follow; this is our wisdom, which they who worship frail objects, or maintain an empty philosophy, deride as folly and vanity, because we are not accustomed to defend and assert it in public, since God orders us in quietness and silence to hide His secret, and to keep it within our own conscience; and not to strive with obstinate contention against those who are ignorant of the truth, and who rigorously assail God and His religion not for the sake of learning, but of censuring and jeering. For a mystery ought to be most

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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.