Homilies on 1 Samuel

Origen of Alexandria (c. AD 185–253)

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Homilies on 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms) — Fragment on Hannah's Song

This is a single catena fragment on Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2), preserved in the Canticum catena (the catena on the biblical odes). Origen follows the wording of his Greek Septuagint. Source: E. Klostermann, GCS 6 (Origenes Werke III, 1901). Released into the public domain. [Fragment 1]

On 1 Samuel 2:3, 6, 10, 2, 10

Through this ode also he teaches the one who comes to God to place his hopes in him alone and to boast in him — not to boast greatly, but to be humble-minded. Inasmuch as he, being God, has the knowledge of all things, he renders to each according to his practices. And he himself is master of both death and life. And he exhorts us to know the Lord — clearly, that is, through good deeds — wherefore he adds the "to do judgment and righteousness in the midst of the earth." Inasmuch as he is a righteous judge of all the earth, he himself is strength, he himself is exaltation, he himself is a horn of salvation for those who love him.

Homilies on 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms) — Fragments on Kingdoms (from the catena)

These are twenty-two catena fragments preserving Origen's exegesis of 1–2 Samuel (1–2 Kingdoms) and 1–2 Kings (3–4 Kingdoms). They are terse exegetical notes excerpted by later compilers, and they follow the wording of Origen's Greek Septuagint. Source: E. Klostermann, GCS 6 (Origenes Werke III, 1901). Released into the public domain. [Fragment 1]

On 1 Samuel 3:11–21
Since the divine Scripture was about to foretell the destruction of the sons of Eli, and that the ark of God would be taken by the foreigners, it first prepares the hearer beforehand, lest anyone should suppose God to be harsh. For this reason, as I said, it relates that the wickedness and the sin of the sons of Eli were not lessened by the threat and by the prediction against them, but rather increased. [Fragment 2]

On 1 Samuel 4:13
Eli was pious in himself; for he was not anxious primarily about the salvation of his children, but about the ark, lest it should come to be under the foreigners — which indeed also happened. [Fragment 3]

On 1 Samuel 5:3
This was so that the foreigners might know that God had neither been defeated through the Israelites, nor had they conquered him by their own power, but that the sins and impieties of the Jews had brought about the defeat. And Dagon fell before the ark, not in order to worship — for he was not worthy — but in order to be crushed; which indeed also came to pass. [Fragment 4]

On 1 Samuel 15:9–11
Just as in the case of human beings "hand" and "foot" and "eye" and "ear" and anything else so named are indicative of the members of our body, but in the case of God "hand" means his creative power, "eye" his power of oversight, "ear" his power of hearing, and "foot" the power

of his presence whenever he is at work upon something: so also God's "wrath" is said to be the discipline exercised against those who err, and not a passion of God; and "repentance" is the transference of God's dispensation from one course of action to another. For what we do when we repent — that is, we flee the things for which we felt regret, and pursue other, better things — this is what is called God's "repentance." Why? Because it was necessary for the prophets to discourse about God in a more bodily manner to those of the dullest understanding, so that it might be grasped. For those who supposed the images which they carved and cast to be gods — indeed, even irrational things — how could they have grasped what is said about God through spiritual concepts and words?

And again: If God foreknows all things, and is not angered or brought to repentance on the basis of things he comes to know afterward, then anger or repentance is not a passion of God; rather, the work of the "wrath" is punishment, and likewise the work of the "repentance" is a withdrawal from the former course and a transference to the other dispensation. So too it is said concerning the sword: "Sword, be sharpened and slay"; so too a "hand of iron" is named (Solomon: "that it may deliver you from the hand of iron") and "of a sword" (as David says: "into the hands of the sword"). So too God's wrath is said "to be angry," and sin to "have a face," according to David, and God's wrath to have "a face," as in the thirty-seventh Psalm, and the rivers to "clap with their hands." But neither do rivers have hands nor do sins have a face. Let us not, then, on account of the things said in a bodily way about God — as the ancients were able to receive them — suppose God to be a body, or that he is filled with passions.

The changeableness of human judgment must not be attributed to God; for it is we ourselves who, in our own case, bring about the turns of the divine dispensation that justly come upon us, showing ourselves through our deeds unworthy of the honor granted by God. So then, having condemned Saul and wishing to hand over the affairs of rule to David and to preserve the kingdom for his seed — on account of the King of all creation who was to be born from him according to the flesh — God used human words, speaking to human beings, and said, "I have repented that I anointed Saul as king," instead of, "I wish to give the rule of the kingdom to another, and to make this one cease from his dominion." The "I have repented" on account of Saul means this: he made himself so unworthy of the kingdom that, if indeed I had a nature that repents, I would have changed my mind about him. Why, then, was he anointed? Because at that time he was worthy. But having turned, he again became unworthy.

[Fragment 5]

On 1 Samuel 15:11

From these things is shown what I said before: that God's "repentance" is the name for the transference of God's dispensation from one course of action to another. The passage shows that even a prophet and a righteous man, when he prays on behalf of others, is not otherwise heard unless that other person demonstrates repentance by his deed. For in this way the petition of the righteous man is effective when it is worked out through the one who

has sinned. Therefore, in order that the matter may be brought to completion, both must run together: both the prayer of the righteous man and the deed of the one who repents. [Fragment 6]

On 1 Samuel 16:12

Esau was "ruddy, hairy as a hide," having the deadness that comes from sin and thirsting for murder against Jacob. But David was ruddy together with beauty of eyes, so as to indicate David's power of discernment. [Fragment 7]

On 1 Samuel 16:18

How was he "a man," and how "prudent in speech," and how also "a warrior," while he was still shepherding sheep? He did not, then, speak of himself in saying this, but foretold the things to come as though present, and he testifies concerning David to the things which were going to be — except for the "the Lord is with him" and the "good in appearance," which belonged to him from childhood and remained with him, the one by nature, the other by grace. [Fragment 8]

On 1 Samuel 19:23–24

Since Saul was powerful, having a multitude to help him wickedly against David, while the two alone were pursued — Samuel and David — the grace of God makes Saul prophesy not only whatever was against him, but also the things on David's behalf; and it casts him down naked, signifying beforehand that he would be stripped of the kingdom. [Fragment 9]

On 1 Samuel 21:4

By "profane" he now means not the unclean, but those who are not holy, in contradistinction to the holy loaves set out upon the table. For the table continually held six loaves, being exchanged, on behalf of the twelve tribes of Israel, which they called the loaves "before the Lord," so that each of the loaves was offered on behalf of two tribes, and all of them on behalf of the twelve tribes. What good, then, came from this? That the tribes of Israel were joined together in concord. And what greater thing was signified beforehand? That the blessed apostles were sent out two by two by the Savior to preach first among the tribes of Israel, so that of the twelve disciples the number came to six pairs at once. "Lay" bread: not because those who are not holy are profane, but because they are being compared with what is holy.

[Fragment 10]

On 1 Samuel 21:5–6

"Today it shall be sanctified because of the vessels" — he said this rather obscurely, but it means this: "My young men have been sanctified and have kept themselves from a woman both yesterday and the day before" — for this is what his saying that the young men were purified amounts to. And if it were not so, in any case it would be sanctified through the eating of the bread of the setting-forth. Persuaded by what was said, the priest gives David some of the loaves, which none other ought to eat except the priests alone. And this belongs to the prophecy that reveals through deeds: that, although the royal tribe was one, that is, that of Judah, and the priestly tribe was another, I mean the Levitical, the priestly

dignity and the royal were going to be joined together and made one in the coming of our Savior descended from David, priest and king at once, the one "according to the order of Melchizedek."

[Fragment 11]

On 1 Samuel 21:7

"The Neessar": this indicates either that Doeg the Edomite was detained on account of sin, being tended before the Lord and making confession, or that, being demon-possessed like Saul, he was not out pasturing the she-mules. [Fragment 12]

On 1 Samuel 21:7

Saul bears the type of the evil spirit, when Israel, then taking rule to itself, said, "We have no king." For indeed the people of old, having despised the Lord who reigned over them, asked that Saul be given to them as ruler. [Fragment 13]

On 1 Samuel 25:22

No one urinates standing, and that against a wall, unless he is at leisure. This, then, is what he means: also the man who is carefree and expects to suffer nothing — provided he belongs to Nabal. [Fragment 14]

On 1 Samuel 28:11–12

The witch of Endor did not bring up Samuel, for that is impossible; nor did the one who came up speak the truth. But who this was, and by what power he came up, inquire. [Fragment 15]

On 2 Samuel 5:6–8

David was besieging Jebus. Jebus was the name of what is now Jerusalem, when it was under the foreigners. So the Jebusites, knowing that David was a lover of the poor, set the blind and the lame up above upon the wall to insult him. But he, when he had taken possession of Jerusalem, was so far from treating badly those who were maimed in body that he even established a law of death for his own soldiers, if anyone should attempt to kill a blind or a lame man. For "everyone who strikes a lame or blind Jebusite," he says, "let him assail him with a dagger" — that is, let him be put to death. For even though they had hated David's life, yet they meet with mercy. Therefore he is deemed worthy of honor from all — those who had insulted David, whom he spared, being the ones of whom it is said, "The lame and the blind shall not enter into the house of the Lord."

[Fragment 16]

On 2 Samuel 5:14

It should be noted that Nathan the son of David is born to him after he had captured and settled in Jerusalem. And this is the Nathan whom the blessed Luke sets in the genealogy, while the blessed Matthew sets in the genealogy Solomon his brother. And from this point — I mean from the aforementioned sons of David — the one line is traced through one genealogy, and the other through another. [Fragment 17]

On 2 Samuel 16:10–12

So that from this also it is shown that what God does not do, but permits to happen, he is said to have done. It is agreed, then, that the uprising of Absalom, and the reviling of Shimei, and his throwing stones at David, were not God's work. And David makes what I say clearer by saying, "Let him curse, because the Lord has told him to, so that he may look upon my humiliation, and the Lord will repay me good things in return for his cursing on this day." For it is evident that what was happening did not please God; and what did not please him, he would not have commanded to be done. [Fragment 18]

On 2 Samuel 21:2, 6, 9, 11

If Saul, in his zeal for Israel and Judah, attempted to kill the Gibeonites — with whom Joshua the son of Nun and all the people had made covenants — and on account of this seven of Saul's descendants, those born from his daughters, were killed, why is it that not the tribes, who were at fault, but those who had done no wrong, paid the penalty? For this is unjust. Unless, perhaps, someone should say that Saul, being king, was unable to withstand the Israelites and the tribe of Judah, and to break the fathers' covenants with the Gibeonites. But I would add to these considerations that it was God's dispensation that the whole family of Saul should be consumed — all that was ever suspected of laying claim to the royal dignity, and on account of this of rising up against David and against his children. And the "the Gibeonites exposed them to the sun before the Lord on the mountain" stands instead of saying that they did not bury the slain, but left them to lie under the sun. "And they were dissolved," it says, "and Dan the son of Joah, of the descendants of the giants, took them." It surely means to say that the giant, taking those who had been placed under the sun, carried off those who had already been dissolved by the sun's flame.

The account concerning the Gibeonites remains obscure, unless perhaps we should say that, when he sat at Gibeah to make war, Saul both routed the foreigners and destroyed, along with them, the Gibeonites also. And the narrative is in the thirty-second and thirty-third section, and the thirty-seventh, of the First book of Kingdoms, where it says, "And he warred round about against all his enemies," and what follows. And what the text says is this: Saul did wrong against him, and from his house came the avenging of the wrong done against Joshua. But those who obtained their being from that one are not wronged in being taken away together with the one who was at the beginning. For from the source whence they had their being, from there also they have their non-being; but if they were worthy of any good thing for their own sake, they receive this later.

[Fragment 19]

On 1 Kings 2:5, 6, 8, 9

It is inquired how David — who bears no grudge and is gentle — having pardoned Shimei, charges Solomon to kill him, and Joab too, who had toiled alongside him. Why, then, was this so arranged? Being wise, David knew that Solomon would not allow Shimei to live, for fear of an uprising — since, as from a royal dignity, he was going to fight Solomon over the kingdom — nor Joab, as one who, apart from David's judgment, had established David's

son as king, and who moreover had killed Abner, though he had toiled alongside the father in many wars and had achieved success. Foreseeing these things, David charges Solomon beforehand to do what Solomon would in any case have done of himself, so that when the aforementioned men are killed by him — that is, by Solomon — Solomon might have excuse, as having fulfilled his father's will and not having been moved against them of his own accord.

[Fragment 20]

On 1 Kings 19:5–7

"And turning," it says, "he slept. And the angel of the Lord returned a second time and touched him." Perhaps they were symbols of powers ministering to the prophet food befitting one who withdraws from human affairs and is worthy of the teaching that comes from such powers, so that afterward he might be able to hear, "Arise and eat," and might find at his head ineffable mysteries, of which the cake baked in the ashes was a type. Does he not also a second time partake, according to the command of the angel who said, "Arise, eat, for the journey is far from you"? "Loaves," then, "the ravens brought to Elijah in the morning" (corresponding to the things spoken by the Lord to Moses, among which was, "In the morning you shall be filled with bread, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God"), and "flesh in the evening" (similarly, "Toward evening you shall eat flesh").

[Fragment 21]

On 2 Kings 2:16

The power of Christ Jesus is what makes men into sons. And if anyone is a man of power, he is clearly a son of Christ. But sometimes the powers under Christ cannot make sons; and if they do make them, they do not make men but infants. [Fragment 22]

On 2 Kings 20:18

"Spadones" are eunuchs. And he says this concerning the three young men and Daniel, since they were descended from this Hezekiah.

Homilies on 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms) — Homily 1: On Elkanah, Peninnah, and Hannah

Homily I on 1 Kingdoms / 1 Samuel 1–2 (Elkanah, Peninnah, Hannah, Samuel, Eli, Hophni and Phinehas), surviving only in Rufinus's Latin translation; this is a fresh English translation, none having previously existed. The base text is Migne, Patrologia Graeca 12 (coll. 995–1012), reprinting Delarue's text of Rufinus's Latin. Origen's biblical quotations follow the Septuagint as rendered in Rufinus's Latin, and are translated from his wording (which sometimes differs from the Masoretic and Authorized Version). Released into the public domain.

On Elkanah and Peninnah, and Hannah and Samuel, Eli, and Hophni and Phinehas.

[§1] Not only in that first age did God plant a paradise, but so long as the life of mortals endures, so long as the salvation of men is provided for by divine institutions, there is always coming to pass what the voice of the righteous man prays in the Psalms, when it says: "Bringing them in, plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance. And so we all pray that we may be a planting of God; for if anyone should not be a planting of God, sentence has once for all been pronounced by the Judge of all, our Savior, when he says: "Every planting which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. God therefore plants, and there is a certain husbandry that is properly God's own; and it is necessary that the field which God tills and plants should not have one kind of tree only, but, like the estate of a rich and powerful farmer, should be filled with every sort of growing thing. Now how all things are contained in the field of God, let us consider from the fields of this earth which men cultivate. Does the householder, the farmer, have his field all vines, or all figs, or all apples, or all palms? No, the diligent and industrious tiller has his field planted and filled with all of these together.

So then let us understand also concerning that field which God plants, that there is not one single kind of tree, which alone bears sweet fruits, but some sweet, some harsh, yet each of its own usefulness and grace. Do not, therefore, require in us that which you have in

Pope Alexander. For we confess that he surpasses us all in the grace of gentleness; of which grace I am not the only one to proclaim it, but you all know it by experience and approve it. And therefore we can indeed be, and we wish to be, plants of the same field, yet not to yield the same flavor. In our fruits, indeed, we confess that we have something of bitterness in the taste, or perhaps something that seems to be more bitter than it is; because the word of reproof does indeed seem bitter while it reproves, but becomes sweet when it amends. Consider too the words of our very Lord and Savior, that they do not all contain blessing, nor do they all declare pardon and indulgence, but there are among his words certain things also that are harsh and grievous. For just as he says, Blessed are they who do this and that, so he says, Woe to them who have done this and that. This too I have searched out in the prophets, and I have found it granted to but few of the prophets never to speak anything bitter or grievous to the peoples, but always sweet and gentle things.

Yet it has been observed by our predecessors that in the Psalms it is only to those which are entitled "To the sons of Korah," in these alone, that no bitterness or harshness seems to be introduced, but this has been granted to them as by a divine gift, that the Psalms of their name should always contain glad things. There is therefore also among the prophets themselves much diversity: some announce grievous things, others glad things. But the apostle Paul himself too, who is an imitator of Christ, says that he has a rod—for those, of course, who are in need of discipline—and says that he comes in the spirit of meekness—for those, assuredly, whose life was free of faults. And so there is found in one and the same epistle of his both a bitter and a sweet word. Just as he says to the Corinthians, in the first part of the earlier epistle, that "in all things ye were made rich in him, in all utterance and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. And going on a little further, see how his speech is roughened when he says: "It is reported altogether that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who hath done this deed might be taken away from your midst. Now he wrote this for the reason that not all to whom his word was directed were worthy of praise, nor did all deserve to be confuted or reproved; and therefore he mingles bitter things with sweet, so that the praise is referred to the best among them, but the reproof to the worst. These things we have said in the preface for this reason, that I know you have been accustomed always to hear the sweet discourses of your most gentle father, but the little tree of our planting has something of harshness in the taste—which nevertheless, if you pray, will become for you a medicine of salvation; for certain medicines too are sweet, but certain are harsh, and some even bitter, and yet each in its own place affords remedies, if they be taken with measure and at the fitting time.

[§2] A narrative has been read to us from the first book of Kingdoms, which seems so difficult that without the grace of divine power its explanation cannot be set forth. It is related there, then: "There was one man of Ramathaim-zophim, of Mount Ephraim, and his name was

Elkanah. And when it had enumerated his whole ancestry, it says: "And he had, it says, two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the second was Peninnah: and there were born to Peninnah sons, but Hannah had no son. And that man went up out of his city from year to year, to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. There were Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, priests of the Lord. And there came a day on which Elkanah sacrificed, and he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and daughters, portions: but to Hannah he gave one portion. For she had no sons, because the Lord had shut up her womb. Then next the Scripture relates that Hannah was grieved, because, whereas Peninnah had received very many portions along with her sons, she herself had received one portion only; and that, stricken with this sorrow, she entered the temple of the Lord and wept and prayed in silence, so that her voice was not heard;

and that Eli the priest, thinking her to be drunken, rebuked her, but she, answering with humility, satisfied the priest, and prayed to the Lord that she might conceive a son, promising that she would consecrate to God whatever she should bear. And when she had received a son according to the promise, it is related that, having weaned him from the milk, she offered him to the Lord. For she could not offer him to the Lord before she had weaned him from the milk. She offers him, then, in a certain prayer marked out with prophetic mysteries. We have abridged, as much as we could, the substance of the reading.

[§3] Let us now see what is also indicated by these things which we have set forth. For perhaps someone who has lately come to the hearing of our law may say to us: The Christian religion professes chastity, to such a degree that, if it be possible, we should not so much as touch a woman at all. For thus says the Apostle: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." But this righteous man of yours, Elkanah, who is set before us by Scripture as an example, is described as having had two wives at once; of whom she who is named first has no son—that is, Hannah—while Peninnah is said both to have many sons and to have received many portions. But that first one received one portion only, because she herself is alone, and complains of barrenness. Ought we too, then, to be grieved because we have no sons, and ought our virgins to be grieved because they live without sons? These things I have said, taking on the person of those who, not yet fully instructed concerning the things that are read in the ancient Scriptures, are wont to be moved rather scrupulously. But I entreat you all, that since we are attempting to open up the meaning of things so difficult, and to unfold to the ears of the Church the things that are covered with a veil (for in the reading of the Old Testament, as the Apostle says, a veil is laid), you would ask of the Lord by your prayers that he would deign, when we are turned to him, to take away the veil also from this reading which we have in hand, and to unlock more fully for us the things that are covered, so that we too may, with unveiled face, behold in these things that are covered the glory of the Lord.

[§4] "There was, it says, one man of Ramathaim, of Mount Ephraim. It does not escape me that in the first place, in some copies it stands: "There was a certain man"; but in those copies which we have approved as more correct it stands thus: "There was one man. And

in this the Hebrews too, who contradict us in other things, agree with us. There was, then, one man. See whether this very thing does not pertain to the praise of the righteous man, that it is said of him: "There was one man. We who are still sinners cannot acquire this title of praise, because each one of us is not one, but is many. For observe the countenance of someone now angry, and again sad, and a little later once more rejoicing, and again troubled, and again gentle; at one time consulting about divine things and the acts of eternal life, but a little after contriving the things that pertain either to avarice or to the glory of the world. You see how he who is thought to be one is not one, but there seem to be as many persons in him as there are moods, because also, according to the Scriptures, "the fool is changed as the moon. Whence the moon too, although it seems to be one, through the changing of its substance is nevertheless always other than itself and always different; and so even in it there stands the fact that the one is many.

So then we also, who are still foolish and imperfect, because we are always changing our opinions and always desiring and perceiving different things, cannot be called one. But of the righteous, not only is each singly called one, but even all together are fittingly called one. And why should not all be called one, whose heart and soul are described as being one? They all meditate always one wisdom, they savor one thing, they perceive one thing, they venerate one God, they confess one Lord Jesus Christ, they are filled with one Spirit of God. Whence deservedly they too all are called, not only one thing, but even one man, as the Apostle also indicated when he said: "All indeed run, but one receives the prize. You see plainly that of all the righteous, it is one who receives the prize. For the righteous man who is such truly imitates the one Lord. For, as I judge, that saying too which is spoken through the prophet, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God," designates him as one not merely in number—he who assuredly is to be believed to be above all number—but rather is to be understood to be called one for this reason, that he is never made other than himself, that is, is never changed, is never turned into anything else, as David also testifies of him, saying: "But thou art the selfsame, and thy years shall not fail. But that too looks to this sense which is written:

"I am the Lord your God, and I am not changed. Unchangeable, therefore, is God: and for this reason he is called one, that he is not changed. So then the righteous man too, the imitator of God, who has been made to the image of God, is himself also called one when he has come to perfection, because he too, when he stands in the summit of virtue, is not changed, but remains always one. For as long as each one is in wickedness, he is divided through many things and scattered into diverse things; and while he is in the many kinds of wickedness, he cannot be called one. Therefore, since according to this wonderful unity the righteous man is one, indeed since even many righteous are one, for this reason also the holy Apostle exhorts the whole Church, saying: "That ye all say the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you, but that ye be perfected in the same mind and in the same knowledge. Therefore also in the Acts of the Apostles the heart and soul of the believers is said to be one. But if we wish to consider something still more subtle, we can find another unity as well. For example, if I have so mortified my members that the flesh no longer lusts

against the spirit, nor the spirit against the flesh; if there be no longer another law in my members which fights against the law of my mind, and leads me captive into the law of sin;

if all the things that are within me be perfected in one and the same mind, and be moved by one and the same purpose—then I too shall be one man.

[§5] This praiseworthy man of two wives, then—first of all let us see whence he is: "Of Mount Ephraim," it says. Therefore the righteous man is not of the valleys, nor of the plains, nor of any lower places, nor even of the hills. Of the mountain, it says, he is. Of what mountain? Of Mount Ephraim, which is interpreted 'fruitfulness.' Therefore he is of a fruitful mountain, and his place is fruitful. See also the Scripture, what praise it speaks to the mountains: "God," it says, "is the God of the mountains, and not of the valleys. But the name too of this righteous man is Elkanah, which is interpreted 'possession of God.' It is certain that he of whom it was said that he was one man is a possession of God and not a possession of demons. For him whom demons possess is not one, but many: as the demons themselves also answered concerning him whom they possessed, that Legion is his name. But Elkanah is one, who is a possession of God, who also has for his fatherland Mount Ephraim, the fruitful mountain. This man, then, so praiseworthy, had two wives. The name of the one Hannah, and the name of the second Peninnah. But he had sons of the second, Peninnah: the former wife was barren, she who was also the nobler. Similar things you will find also in Genesis. For divine Scripture is akin to itself.

You will find there that the first wife of Abraham, Sarah, was the nobler, but the second, the Egyptian Hagar, was ignoble; and that Abraham became a father of the ignoble one before he did of the noble one. But afterward he becomes a father also of the noble spouse. So then now too Elkanah here, who is a possession of God, first becomes a father of the second wife, since indeed God had shut up the womb of Sarah. But after the many childbearings of Peninnah, the womb of Hannah too is opened by prayers and entreaties, and she too becomes the mother of a son, whom she offered to God. What then these things contain in themselves of the sacrament, let us see. Peninnah is interpreted 'conversion,' but Hannah is interpreted 'grace.' Each one of us, therefore, who wishes to be made a possession of God, let him join to himself these two wives, and celebrate his nuptials with them. Let him join to himself first her who is the nobler and more well-born, grace. This is joined to us first through faith, as the Apostle also says: "By grace ye are saved, through faith. But let him be joined secondly to Peninnah, that is, to conversion: because after the grace of belief there comes the amendment of morals and the conversion of life. But although this is the order of the nuptials, another order of procreation comes about.

For Peninnah first bears us sons, because we bring forth the first fruits from conversion, and we procreate the first germinations of righteousness from our acts and works. For the first work of righteousness is to be converted from sins: because unless we first are converted and turn aside from evil, we shall be able neither to be made fathers of Hannah, nor to beget sons from grace. Let us see, then, now the differences of each. Peninnah has sons, but such as do not attend upon God. For the sons of conversion cannot be such as to attend

and cleave to God. Nor yet are they empty and wholly alien from the things of God. For they receive portions of the divine sacrifices, and eat of the victims of God. Each one of us, therefore, first is converted from sin, and out of conversion begets works of righteousness. But afterward, Hannah being roused up in us through zeal and emulation of the good, pours forth a prayer to God, that she too may beget sons. What sons, then, does Hannah, who is grace, beget? Such as sit beside God. "For grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. This, then, is the son of grace, who is free for God and for the word of God. But do you wish me to show you a more evident form of this kind of understanding even in the Gospels—a form which in the Law indeed is adumbrated through wives, but in the Gospels is already described as present through sisters?

See Martha and Mary: of whom Martha indeed is troubled, and is busy about much ministry, and fulfills the works of conversion, and through these begets, as it were, sons of conversion. But Mary, intent at the feet of the Word of God, is said to have chosen the best part, and through these is understood to procreate, as it were, the germinations of grace. So then now too Hannah begets a son. What son? Samuel, it says, who attends upon God, of whom it is said in the Psalms: "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name. But Jeremiah too says: "If Moses and Samuel should stand before me, I will not let them go. If, then, so great and such a one is the son of grace, let us too hasten indeed to the nuptials of Hannah, but let us act patiently, so that first sons may be born to us from conversion, so that first we may please in good works, and then afterward may procreate a son also from grace and the gift of the Spirit. And what kind of son? Such as is this son, Samuel, it says, who is interpreted 'There God himself.' You see what kind of sons grace begets? For thus it is written of those who have obtained the grace of the Spirit, the Apostle saying:

"But if a prophet enter, or an unlearned, or an ignorant man, into your assembly, he is discerned by all, and the hidden things also of his heart are made manifest: and then, falling on his face, he will worship God, saying that God is indeed in you. This, then, is what Samuel is interpreted, 'There God himself.' For where the grace of the Spirit is, there God himself is said to be. But this kind of son cannot be born to us unless first the sons of Peninnah go before; for unless the works of conversion go before, we do not merit the grace of the Spirit, nor can we from it beget the gift of the Spirit.

[§6] But let us see also to what place Elkanah came together with his wives, "to sacrifice, it says, to the Lord in Shiloh. But there were, it says, Eli, and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas, priests of the Lord. Shiloh is the name of the place in which sacrifices were offered to the Lord, before the temple was built in Jerusalem. In this place, then, which is called Shiloh, victims for sins were offered, and there was made the purgation of sins. Now Shiloh is interpreted 'avulsion' or 'unshoeing,' that is, the loosing of the sandal, and either sense is fittingly applied. For the place in which sins are purged is rightly named avulsion, where the heart of stone is torn away, and a heart of flesh is inserted: or unshoeing, because all of us, until we come to the holy place, are unshod; but when we have arrived at it, we

are commanded to be unshod. So it is said to Moses: ”Loose the strap of thy sandal. For the place in which thou standest is holy ground. And do we suppose that in these things there was not something of mystery hidden, but that God abhorred the bodily sandals of Moses, and therefore these things were commanded? Or is this rather to be supposed, that when he came out of the land of Egypt, he had sandals of dead skins, and was, as it were, bound about with a certain mortality:

but when he began to advance toward virtue and to ascend the mountain of God, and there to minister immortal mysteries, then he says to him that he should cast off the tokens of mortality, which are designated in the sandals of skin? I think that for this reason too the Savior commanded his apostles not to have sandals on their feet, so that their feet, which ran to announce eternal life, should lack every token of mortality: inasmuch as they trod that way which says: ”I am the way, the truth, and the life. For no one treads the way of life with a token of mortality. Such, then, is that place likewise where Eli is, a man less praiseworthy. For on account of sin, falling backward, he expired. And let us not suppose that he alone, falling backward, expired, but even now, if anyone falls backward, if anyone turns back from faith and truth, it is necessary that he fall, and that he straightway die. But in Deuteronomy too a threat is aimed at sinners, when it is said: ”And an incurable opisthotonos. Now opisthotonos signifies a sickness of the back and of the hinder parts, and assuredly not without cause, when there are so many kinds of human ailment, is this kind of ailment above all ascribed to the sinner.

For in Genesis too the wife of Lot, who was turned back, is said to have transgressed the divine precept, by which it had been commanded her that she should not look backward, nor stand in all the region round about; and therefore she was made a little pillar of salt. Our Lord and Savior too in the Gospel: ”No one, he says, putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. And moreover, when he had taught concerning many things, he adds this also, saying: ”Remember Lot’s wife. It is best, therefore, to forget the things that are before, to forget the things that are past, so that the opisthotonos, the incurable ailment, may not seize us, and that we may not fall backward like Eli, and die.

[§7] Now there were there the two sons of Eli. Eli is interpreted ’Arab,’ or ’outsider.’ For he is an outsider from God who does not maintain discipline, who does not chastise the offending son, does not reprove him that he may amend, who is indulgent to vices, who does not punish faults, as the Apostle also says: ”But if ye are without discipline, of which all are made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. This, then, is Eli, who on account of these things is punished by God. But let us see who his sons also are. Hophni, it says, and Phinehas. Now Hophni is interpreted ’excess of conversion.’ Of Peninnah we said a little before that she was conversion: but this one, who exceeds, and is made far from amendment, and will not be converted to the Lord, therefore remains impious. But also, whoever he be, whom we see after sin not converted to the Lord, and not doing penance, nor receiving the desert of the future judgment, and of the divine word that commands: ”Doth not he who falls add to rise again? Or he who is turned away, shall he not return?”—of him too we

rightly say that he is Hophni, and exceeding beyond conversion. But the other son of his is called Phinehas. We know two in the Scriptures called by this name, that Phinehas the righteous, the son of Aaron, and this unrighteous one, the son of Eli. Whence fittingly too we find two interpretations of this name.

For Phinehas signifies in our tongue 'obturation of the mouth,' or 'sparing the mouth.' The sinner, therefore, and he who has not firmness, has his mouth obstructed for speaking: but the righteous man spares his mouth. Today too among the priests of the Lord there is found either Phinehas; there is found also Eleazar, who in the Scriptures is the first named bishop, as it is written in Numbers. There are, then, today too among the priests those who spare their mouth, and no evil word by any means proceeds from their mouth. There are priests from whose mouth no scandal, no lie, no guile, nor any falsehood is uttered, and these are deservedly compared to that Phinehas the son of Aaron. But there are also some priests according to that Phinehas the son of Eli, who have their mouth obstructed, whether by the vice of ignorance, or by the conscience of sins. But this is what I entreat, that if there is anyone who sees himself admitted into the priestly order, let him take pains to give heed to instruction and amendment, and let him hasten to be made of that number of the blessed, lest perhaps he be found among those priests who are both reprobate and punished by God.

[§8] But it is now time to recall also a few things concerning the prayer of Hannah, which she poured forth when offering to God Samuel, whom she had weaned from the milk. In which, first indeed, we say this, that the boy who is offered to God could not be offered before he was weaned from the milk. In which it is shown that no one can be consecrated to God who is still nourished with milk, and is a boy in his senses, and is without part in the word of righteousness, nor can he administer the priestly sacraments unless he desists from childish things, and ascends to greater things from those to whom the Apostle says: "Milk I gave you to drink, not meat. For ye were not yet able. Otherwise, according to the letter, what does it seem worth the trouble that a little boy lately weaned from the milk should be offered to God, where the mother will not be present, nor nurses cherish him, nor any supports for the rearing of the boy be at hand? But see that the discourse of Scripture is so apt that it teaches figuratively that everyone who is first converted to the faith is nourished with milk and not with strong food, of whom in another place it is said: "And ye have become such as have need of milk, and not of strong food. For everyone who is nourished with milk is a stranger to the word of righteousness. For he is a little child.

But solid food is for the perfect, who, according to their capacity for taking it, have their senses exercised to the discerning of good and evil. Therefore whoever is not yet weaned from the milk, but is a little child, cannot ascend to the temple of the Lord, cannot ascend to the ministries of the priests, nor be present at the sacrifices; but neither does his mother ascend, though she is able to ascend. For Hannah, his mother, is grace, who keeps and guards him and nourishes him, so that at the fitting time she may ascend together with him. And when she has seen that the time is at hand for him, so that now, departing from the milk, he uses solid and strong foods, so that he may be able both to be present with

the priests and to eat of the sacrifices of the altar, then she consecrates him to God. See whether in another place in the holy Scriptures you find someone signified as weaned from the milk. I, however, so far as memory suggests for the present, remember Isaac: of whom it is written that Abraham made a great banquet on that day on which Isaac his son was weaned from the milk. Among the men of this age indeed, parents are wont to celebrate the birthday of their sons:

but Abraham does not celebrate the birthday of Isaac his son, but he keeps that day as a feast, and reckons it for gladness, and celebrates banquets, when he weans him from the milk, and applies him to strong and solid foods, as though through these Isaac were saying: "When I became a man, I put away the things that were of a child. It is fitting, therefore, that such should be he who is offered to God, that he may dwell among the holy things, who can feed on holy flesh, of which it is written: "Be sanctified, that ye may eat flesh."

[§9] But let us see with what kind of prayer Hannah, that is, grace, consecrates him to God. For we shall observe something new in the very beginnings. For she says: "And Hannah prayed, and said. And nowhere do I find her, as it were, praying to God, or speaking, except through two words only, where she says: "I rejoiced in thy salvation," and the other: "Because there is none beside thee. But the beginning has it thus: "My heart exulted in the Lord. She did not say, My heart exulted in thee. For if it were a prayer, it were consistent to speak thus: My heart exulted in thee. And again in the following verse of hers she says: "My horn was exalted in God. She did not say: My horn was exalted in thee, but in God. "My mouth was enlarged over my enemies, because I rejoiced in thy salvation. One utterance, as I said, contains a prayer: "I rejoiced in thy salvation," and in what follows she does not say that there is none holy but thou, but, "There is none holy as the Lord," and, "There is none beside thee. This utterance does not seem to have kept the order of prayer. But at the very last, in the manner of a long supplication, she introduces even certain agitations, saying: "Do not multiply to speak evil things, neither let evil-speaking come out of your mouth, because the Lord is strong in knowledge.

In which she does not even seem to be any longer speaking to the Lord. What, then, shall we say of these things? When I once read in the Apostle that he said: "Pray without ceasing," I asked whether this precept could possibly be fulfilled. For who can never cease from prayer, so that he has no time either for taking food or drink? Since indeed, if these things be done, prayer seems to have to be interrupted. But neither does prayer, commonly understood, grant, according to this precept, leave for sleeping or for doing anything else of human use. Let us see, then, whether perhaps all the acts of him who is engaged in the divine office, and all the deeds or words which he does and speaks according to God, are reckoned toward prayer. For if prayer be understood as only that which we commonly know, then neither will Hannah seem to have prayed in these words, and never can any of the righteous, according to the Apostle's precept, pray without ceasing. But if every act of the righteous man, which he does according to God and according to the divine commandment, is reckoned prayer, then, because the righteous man without ceasing does the things that are righteous, through this

the righteous man will pray without ceasing, nor will he ever cease from prayer unless he cease to be righteous. For when we do something unrighteous or offend, it is certain that at that time we also cease from prayer.

I think that we are taught this too in the Psalms, when it is said: "The lifting up of my hands is an evening sacrifice. For I do not think that, if anyone should lift up or stretch out his hands to heaven (as is wont to be the posture of those who pray), he has straightway offered a sacrifice to God. But let us see whether perhaps this is what the word of God there indicates, that by the hands works are understood. He lifts up his hands who lifts up his acts from the earth, and whose conversation, while yet he walks on earth, is in the heavens. Lofty acts, therefore, and sublime, which men seeing magnify the heavenly Father, are called the lifting up of the hands, and an evening sacrifice. Was not this too taught through a mystery in the Law, when, as Moses lifted up his hands, Israel was conquering; but when he let them down and cast them downward, Amalek was conquering? And if "all these things happened to them figuratively, but were written for our sakes, upon whom the ends of the ages have come," then we ought to understand that, so long as the servant of God lifts up his acts to God, the people of God conquers: but when he has cast down and let down his hands, that is, his acts, Amalek, the enemy of God, conquers. Or what does it seem?

(for I wish to linger a little with those who are unwilling to understand these things spiritually, but according to the letter) is it to be supposed that the omnipotent God was looking to the hands of Moses, and if indeed he saw them lifted up on high, would give the victory to Israel; but if cast down below, to the Amalekites? Is it thus worthy to think concerning the words of the Holy Spirit? Or is this rather to be supposed, that he was prefiguring future mysteries in these things? Which indeed, that they are to be understood of the sacrament of the cross and of the affixing of the Savior's hands, is now commonplace, and has often been discoursed of by many. But since he who lives according to the Gospel is always bidden to be renewed, and the New Testament ought always to be illustrated by new meanings, and we are bidden to sing to the Lord a new song, and our inner man (Paul did not say that it is renewed and stands still, but "is renewed from day to day")—it was fitting that we too should explain, both concerning the manner of prayer, how one is to pray without ceasing, and concerning the lifting up of the hands, which is called an evening sacrifice, not only by the usual and worn-out expositions, but also by somewhat renewed ones.

[§10] Let us see, then, what this reasoning of Hannah's prayer means, which if we shall have learned, perhaps we too shall be able to pray likewise. "My heart, it says, exulted in the Lord. Necessarily she added: "In the Lord. For there is an exultation which is not in the Lord, as that too is said: "Rejoice in the Lord. For a man can rejoice in carnal things, and not in the Lord. For if I rejoice because I have found a visible treasure, that is a joy of the flesh, and not in the Lord. If I rejoice because men praise me, and perhaps not according to desert, this is not to rejoice in the Lord. If I rejoice in things frail and perishing, all these have no praiseworthy joy. But if I rejoice because I have been held worthy to suffer injury for the name of the Lord, that joy is in the Lord, because he himself said concerning these

things: ”Rejoice and exult, because your reward is great in the heavens. If I rejoice when unjust hatreds are exercised against me, if I rejoice when I am assailed on account of the word of God, if I rejoice when I am chastised in ailments, in persecutions, in straits—if I receive all these things gladly, that joy is in the Lord. And therefore the Scripture teaches us that, casting away earthly joys, frail and perishing, we should exult in the Lord over eternal joys, so that we may deservedly say what Hannah said:

”My heart exulted in the Lord. And since, while these things are being said, a certain one of the bystanders has been filled with an unclean spirit, and has cried out so that there was a running-together of the people, let us too say with Hannah, who says: ”My heart exulted in the Lord. The contrary spirit could not bear our exultation in the Lord, but wishes to change it, so that, this being taken away, it may introduce sadness, and prevent us from saying, ”My heart exulted in the Lord. But let us not be hindered, but rather more and more say: ”My heart exulted in the Lord: and for this very thing, that we see the unclean spirits scourged, let us rejoice, because through these things too many are converted to the Lord, many are amended, many come to the faith; and there is nothing that the Lord does without cause, nor does he permit anything to be done in vain. For since there are many who do not believe the word, nor receive the reason of the teaching, when the demon has leaped upon them, then they are converted, so that where the offense abounded, grace may superabound: and where the malign power has worked, there afterward the grace of the Lord may work the more: because when the grace of the Lord has expelled the malign spirit, it introduces the Holy Spirit: and the soul which had been filled with an unclean spirit is afterward filled with the Holy Spirit.

Therefore for all these things let us say: ”My heart exulted in the Lord. And my horn was exalted in my God. There are certain horns of the righteous which they use either in doing something or in speaking, as when they say: ”In thee we will toss our enemies with the horn. In the Greek it is said keratioumen, which is, We will strike with the horn, or, We will toss. But elsewhere too it is said: ”And the horns of the righteous shall be exalted. We ought, therefore, to have those horns, which are conferred on the righteous, for just causes, by the points of the cross of Christ, so that with them we may destroy and cast down the adversary powers from our soul, which being laid low and expelled, a vineyard may be able to be planted in us, because ”a vineyard was made to the beloved on a horn, in a fruitful place. Exalted, therefore, is the horn both of this righteous grace, and of every righteous man, in the Lord. ”My mouth was enlarged over my enemies. It is written: ”Enlarge thy mouth, and I will fill it,” and now this righteous woman says: ”My mouth was enlarged. If I have been made fit and strong in the word, and mighty in wisdom, so that not with narrow assertions, but with enlarged and abounding ones, I may be able to confute every knowledge that exalts itself against the faith and truth of Christ:

or when, reproving the unbelief or perfidy of the Jews, out of the Law and the prophets I shall have shown Christ Jesus, and in all things I shall be able to refute the enemies of the truth: then worthily I too can say: ”My mouth was enlarged over my enemies. If

Basilides should stir up a contest with me, and I should vehemently crush him: if a disciple of Valentinus should meet me and toss me with questions, and I should come forth victor from this contest: if, these being laid low, Marcion should meet me, and he too should depart overcome: "My mouth was enlarged over my enemies. If, these being confuted, the philosophers should meet me, insulting the simplicity of our faith, and clamoring that we are ignorant and unlearned, and I should turn also to them, and with the powers of true wisdom should scatter the mist of false and painted wisdom, and should destroy not only the wisdom of this world, but even of the princes of this world, then more fully is my mouth enlarged over my enemies. This voice, therefore, is of the holy and perfect man, who by the very facts and by the truth can utter a discourse of this kind resting on solid ground, and say: "My mouth was enlarged over my enemies. We ought, therefore, first to enlarge our mouth, so that God may fill it. But how do we first enlarge the mouth?

By the meditation of the divine word, so that we may be able to advance so far as to come from the enlargement of the mouth even to the enlargement of the heart, and to say with the Apostle: "My heart is enlarged toward you, O Corinthians. For out of the breadth of the heart abundance is ministered to the wise mouth.

[§11] "Because I rejoiced in thy salvation. If I have rejoiced in the salvation of God, then my mouth was enlarged over my enemies. "There is none holy as the Lord. If it were written, There is none holy but the Lord, it would follow that we all renounce ourselves from this hope of being made holy: but now she uses a necessary distinction and says: "There is none holy as the Lord"; that is, although there be many holy, yet none is so holy as the Lord. Many, therefore, can become holy, as the commandment of God also says: "Be ye holy, because I too am holy. But however much anyone advances in holiness, however much of purity and sincerity he acquires, a man cannot be so holy as the Lord; because he is the giver of holiness, this one the receiver; he is the fountain of holiness, but this one the drinker of the holy fountain; he is the light of holiness, this one the beholder of the holy light; and therefore "there is none holy as the Lord, and there is none beside thee. What it is that she says, "there is none beside thee," I do not plainly grasp. If she had said, There is no God beside thee, or, There is no creator beside thee, or had added some such thing, nothing would have seemed to need inquiry; but now, because she says, "there is none beside thee," it seems to me that in this place there is designated this:

that none of the things that are has this very thing, that they are, naturally. Thou alone art he to whom what thou art was given by no one. For we all, that is, the whole creation, were not before we were created, and therefore what we are is the will of the Creator. And because at one time we were not, it is not accurate if it be said of us that we are, so far as regards that time when we were not. But God alone is he who has always had what he is, and did not receive that he should be a beginning. In short, when Moses wished to learn from God what his name was, God, teaching him, said: "I am he who is, and this is my name. If, then, anything else among the creatures could be called by this name or with this signification, never would the Lord say that this was his name. For he knew that he alone

was, but that the creatures had received from him that they should be. For a shadow, in comparison with the body, is not; and smoke, in comparison with fire, is not. So then also the things that are in the heavens and the things that are on earth, visible and invisible, so far as regards the nature of God, are not; so far as regards the will of the Creator, they are that which he who made them willed them to be. Therefore it is said, that "beside thee, there is none."

[§12] "There is none mighty as God, our God." This is similar to that which was said above, that there is none holy as the Lord. For just as there she did not say that there is not anyone holy, but that there is none holy as the Lord, so that she might show that although there are holy ones, yet none is so holy as the Lord is: so also in this place, although there be someone mighty, "there is none, she says, mighty as our God."

[§13] "Do not multiply to speak lofty things. Why did she not say: Do not speak lofty things? Therefore it is permitted me to speak some lofty things, but to multiply lofty and arduous things is not permitted me; for this seems to be designated by that which was said: "Do not multiply to speak lofty things. What, then, is indicated by this, let us consider. It is not permitted to human nature to speak many lofty things, nor to understand many lofty things. For Solomon too says: "Seek not the things too high for thee, and search not the things too strong for thee, but of the things that are commanded thee, these understand. Therefore in this place too it is said "lofty things," not that thou shouldst not seek at all, but that thou shouldst not multiply questions concerning them. For to one who looks to the weakness of the human condition, let it suffice thee to have either inquired or spoken concerning the lofty and arduous things such things as give life to those who inquire or speak. But what are the things in which it is necessary for me to speak lofty things? When I speak of the omnipotence of God, of his invisibility and everlastingness, I speak lofty things. When I pronounce concerning the co-eternity of his Only-begotten and his other mysteries, I speak lofty things. When I discourse of the magnificence of the Holy Spirit, I speak lofty things. In these things only is it granted us to speak lofty things.

After these three, speak thou nothing lofty any longer. For all things are lowly and cast down, so far as regards the loftiness of this Trinity. Do not, therefore, multiply to speak lofty things, except concerning the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. And that what we say may be more fully manifest, let us use still, if it seems good, examples. For instance, the gentiles introduce many gods. These multiply to speak lofty things. Certain of the heretics, abandoning the creator of the world, and his Son, feign for themselves some other, I know not what, loftier god, and introduce others likewise, whether those whom they call aeons, or those whom they call gods. These too, then, multiply to speak lofty things.

[§14] "Let not great speech come out of your mouth." See what was said by the Apostle: "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is fittingly said of every man. For wretched is the race of mortals: since indeed we are in peril not only in evils, but even in good things. For example, I have seen certain good visions, and they have become to me an occasion of elation. Signs and wonders have been fulfilled through

me, and I have become proud in good things. I have kept righteousness, continence, virtue, but in these I am in peril. For when the Devil has done nothing else, for all these he stirs up pride in me, so that afterward I may have an angel of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted and great speech come out of my mouth, that is, lest I speak great things of myself, since indeed the Lord exterminates deceitful lips, and the boastful tongue of those who said: "We will magnify our tongue." Let not, therefore, great speech come out of your mouth, because the Lord is strong in knowledges.

[§15] "And they did not amend, making excuses;" as it was also said there: "Let not thy heart incline to evil words, to make excuses for excuses in sins with men that work iniquity." And in the Proverbs it is said: "The sluggard takes occasions and says: There is a lion in the way, and murderers in the streets." We find, therefore, that sinners are such as accuse everything rather than themselves, and feign for themselves occasions of excuses, when they say: The Devil supplanted me, the woman seduced me, that man furnished me an occasion to sin—when assuredly one ought to remember the precept that says: "Declare thou thy sins first, that thou mayest be justified": for excuses do not amend, neither here nor in the future, if we have done evil. But that too seems necessarily to occur in passing. For it contains a wonderful sense, that it is written: "The righteous man is his own accuser in the beginning of his speech," whereas nevertheless the unrighteous is not his own accuser but of others. Just as the Devil too is indeed an accuser, but an accuser not of himself, but of the brethren. Meanwhile, it is necessary that all be accused; but if indeed I shall be righteous, I do not wait for another to accuse me, but I myself stand forth as my own accuser. Yet I should like to discuss more fully how the righteous man can be his own accuser. It is certain that as long as anyone sins and remains in offenses, he is neither righteous, nor his own accuser. For he does not accuse what he does. But when he has repented of his offenses, then he is made righteous, and stands forth as the accuser not of another, but of himself.

[§16] "The bow of the mighty was made weak." The darts of the malign one, which are called fiery, are sent forth through the bow of the mighty. Now by the mighty are meant the adverse powers, of which it is said, "for behold, the sinners have bent the bow, and in it have prepared vessels of death." And again: "He made his arrows for them that burn." But now too it is said, that "the bow of the mighty was made weak." For if thou be clothed with the arms of God, if thou be fortified with the shield of faith and covered with the helmet of salvation, and with the breastplate of charity, and girded with the sword of the spirit, the bow of the mighty against thee, because of such defenses, will be made weak. For if he have hurled against thee some one fiery dart, it, received on the shield of faith, is straightway extinguished. He has cast another dart also, and it too is repelled by the breastplate of righteousness. He has cast a third also, and it too is cut off by the sword of the spirit. He sends perhaps a fourth also, which likewise is thrown off by the helmet of salvation. And when, through all these, the man of God who is assailed has remained invulnerable, then by the bow of the mighty he will by no means, though so many darts be aimed, be made weak.

[§17] "And the weak were girded with strength." If we see how "God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might confound the wise, and the weak things of the world, that he might confound the strong," thou understandest how the weak were girded with strength. Weak was the gentile people, inasmuch as it was a stranger to the covenant of God: this obtained strength. What strength? "My strength and my praise is the Lord, and he is become to me for salvation." My strength, therefore, is Christ the Lord himself, with whom we were girded, we who were once strangers to the covenant of God, and without God in this world.

[§18] "They that were filled with loaves were led into servitude. She shows that it is blameworthy to be filled with loaves, because Jacob ate and drank, and was filled, and grew fat, and the beloved kicked. "They that were hungry were forsaken. She means those who had been filled with loaves, because they forsook the hungry. There came a famine, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. Therefore "they that were hungry were forsaken, until the barren bore seven, and she that was fruitful in sons was made weak. For many are the sons of the deserted, more than of her that hath a husband. Barren is our mother the Church; she bore seven, that is, the number seven, to which rest is ascribed. "And she that was fruitful in sons was made weak. I should like to see how the Jews, the patrons of the letter, assert that she who is fruitful in sons is made weak, and how the barren bore seven: but, their fables despised, let us consider, whether perhaps each one of us may have within himself the barren woman who bore seven, and may have also the woman fruitful in sons who is made weak. Fruitful in offspring was my flesh, having very many fruits of the flesh: fornication, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, sorceries, enmities, contentions, jealousies, provocations, dissensions; these were the numerous progeny of our flesh.

But when we came to the faith of the cross of Christ, and to the mortification of Jesus, we began to carry about in our body, and to mortify our members which are upon the earth, and to present them to serve righteousness and sobriety: then the fecundity of this shameful generation was shut out, and in this way she that was fruitful in sons was made weak. But how the barren woman bears seven, let us see. Barren in me was my soul, it brought no fruits of righteousness: but now, when through the faith of Christ it merited the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding filled it, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of righteousness and mercy, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord filled it: it is certain that the barren woman bore seven, and she that was fruitful in sons was made weak.

[§19] "The Lord kills and makes alive." Whom does the Lord kill, and whom does he make alive? Me myself he kills, when he makes me be dead to sin. And me myself he makes alive, when he makes me live to God. I was a sinner, and lived in offenses: he killed me from sins, he made me die to my former life, and he will make me alive, that I may live in his fear, that I may stand in his faith, that I may live no longer to sin, but to God, who raised me from

the dead, that I may walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom is glory and dominion unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Homilies on 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms) — Homily 2: On the Witch of Endor

This is the one complete Greek homily on 1 Kingdoms (1 Samuel) that survives — an exposition of 1 Samuel 28:3–25, the story of Saul and the medium of En-dor. Against certain brethren who deny it, Origen argues at length that the real Samuel was truly raised and that, like all the prophets before Christ, he had descended into Hades to foretell Christ's coming and to build up the souls waiting there. The source is E. Klostermann, GCS 6 (Origenes Werke III, 1901). One key rendering to note: the Greek word γγαστρίμυθος (the medium; rendered "belly-myther" in FOTC 97) is here rendered "witch of Endor." Released into the public domain.

Of Origen, on the First Book of Kingdoms.

[§1] The passages that were read out are many, and since one must speak by way of abridgement, there are four passages. There was read the sequel to the matters concerning Nabal the Carmelite. Then after this the narrative concerning David's being hidden among the Ziphites and being slandered by them, and how Saul came wishing to take David and, having come, watched for an opportunity; and how David came upon Saul and took, while Saul slept and those guarding him slept, "the spear and the jar of water," and after this brought a rebuke against those who had been entrusted with guarding him but had fallen asleep. Then next was the third narrative, that David fled "to [Achish son of] Ammach king of Gath," and how much favor David found with him after his many deeds of valor — to whom Achish says, "I will make you chief of my bodyguard." Next to these was the notorious narrative concerning the witch of Endor and concerning Samuel, that the witch of Endor seemed to have brought up Samuel, and Samuel prophesies to Saul. There being four passages, each of which has not a few matters in it — matters able to occupy those capable of examining them not for the hours of one service only but of several — let the bishop propose whichever of the four he wishes, that we may occupy ourselves with it. "Let the matters concerning the witch of Endor," he says, "be examined."

[§2] Some narratives do not touch us, but some are necessary for our hope. I have spoken of "narratives" in this way, since we have not yet arrived at the matters of the spiritual interpretation — matters useful to everyone who knows how to interpret spiritually or to

hear things being so interpreted. [Of the things of the narrative, then, some are useful] to all, but some not to all. For instance, by way of example: the narrative concerning Lot and his daughters — whether it has anything useful according to the spiritual interpretation, God knows, and he to whom God grants to examine those words; but if [you take it] according to the narrative, you might well inquire: for what benefit is there to me from the narrative concerning Lot and his daughters? Likewise, what benefit to me is the narrative of Judah and Tamar and the things concerning her, if it is told simply [as history]? Since, however, the narrative concerning Saul and the witch of Endor touches everyone, it is a necessary truth according to reason. For who, when released from this life, wishes to be under the authority of a demon, so that a witch of Endor might bring up — not just any random one of the believers, but Samuel the prophet? Concerning Samuel God says through Jeremiah: "Not even if Moses and Samuel stood before my face, not even to these would I hearken"; concerning him the prophet says in the hymns:

"Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he hearkened to them; in a pillar of cloud he spoke to them"; and elsewhere: "If Moses and Samuel stand and pray," and so forth. If, then, so great a man [was] under the earth and the witch of Endor brought him up, does a demon have authority over a prophetic soul? What shall we say? These things are written: are they true, or are they not true? To say that they are not true urges toward unbelief (it will come down upon the heads of those who say it); but to say they are true furnishes us with inquiry and perplexity.

[§3] And indeed we know some of our own brethren who have looked askance at the Scripture and say: I do not believe the witch of Endor. The witch of Endor says she saw Samuel — she lies. Samuel was not brought up; Samuel does not speak. But just as there are certain false prophets who say, "Thus says the Lord," when "the Lord has not spoken," so also this demon lies, promising to bring up the one whom Saul commanded. For "whom shall I bring up? it says; "Bring me up Samuel. [And] these things are said by those who assert that this narrative is not true: Samuel in Hades? Samuel brought up by a witch of Endor — the choice one of the prophets, the one dedicated to God from his birth, the one said before his birth that he would be in the temple, the one who, as soon as he was weaned, put on an ephod and was clothed with a double cloak and became a priest of the Lord, the one to whom, while he was still a child, the Lord gave oracles, speaking to him? Samuel in Hades? Samuel among those below — he who succeeded Eli when Eli was condemned by Providence on account of his children's sins and transgressions? Samuel in Hades — he whom God heard in the time of the wheat harvest, and gave rain to come from heaven? Samuel in Hades — he who spoke so boldly, [asking] whether he had taken the desired possession of anyone?

He took not the calf, he took not the ox; he judged and condemned the people while remaining poor; never did he desire to take anything from so great and so numerous a people. Why should Samuel be in Hades? Do you see what follows for Samuel [being] in Hades? Samuel in Hades? Why not also Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in Hades? Samuel in Hades? Why

not also Moses, who is yoked with Samuel according to what is said: ”Not even if Moses and Samuel stand, not even to those would I hearken”? Samuel in Hades? Why not also Jeremiah in Hades, to whom it is said: ”Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I sanctified you”? In Hades also Isaiah, in Hades also Jeremiah, in Hades all the prophets, in Hades.

[§4] These things, then, he will say who does not wish to accept the contest — [namely, the one who denies] that it is truly Samuel who was brought up. But since one must be fair-minded in listening to the Scriptures, now that the [objector's] argument has plausibly thundered against us and is truly able to trouble and shake us, let us see whether the Scripture has ever been rightly understood by the one who does not accept this, or whether he sets out from plausible premises but says things contrary to what is written. For what are the things written? ”And the woman said: Whom shall I bring up to you? Whose is the voice that says, ”the woman said”? Is it the person of the Holy Spirit, from whom the Scripture is believed to have been written, or the person of some other? For the narrative voice everywhere (as those who have busied themselves with all sorts of discourses know) is the person of the writer; and the writer of these words is believed to be not a human being — the writer is the Holy Spirit who moved the human beings. Therefore it is the Holy Spirit who says: ”And the woman said: Whom shall I bring up to you? And he said: Bring me up Samuel. Who is it that says, ”And the woman saw Samuel, and the woman cried out with a loud voice, saying”?

We will say to that one who has thundered so much against us and said countless things — that Samuel was not in Hades: ”the woman saw Samuel” — the narrative voice said this — ”and the woman cried out with a loud voice and said to Saul: Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul. And the king said to her: What is it? Do not fear. What have you seen? And the woman said to Saul: I saw gods coming up out of the earth. And he said to her: What is their form? And she said to him: An aged man coming up, and he is clothed with a double cloak, an ephod. It says that she saw also the priestly garment. But I know that the one on the opposing side of the argument says: ”No wonder; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. It is no great thing, then, if his servants too are transformed as servants of righteousness. But what is it that ”the woman saw”? ”Samuel. And why is it not said: the woman saw a demon that pretended to be Samuel? But it is written that ”Saul knew that it was Samuel. [If it had not been Samuel, it ought to have been written: and Saul thought that it was Samuel; but as it is, it is written: ”Saul knew” — and no one knows that which does not exist;

therefore ”Saul knew that it was Samuel.”] ”And he fell upon his face to the ground and did obeisance. Then again the voice of the Scripture: ”And Samuel said to Saul: Why have you provoked me by bringing me up? ”Said” (says the Scripture, which one must believe) — ”Samuel said: Why have you provoked me by bringing me up? Then to this Saul answers: ”The foreigners war mightily against me, and God has departed from me and has answered me no more, neither by the hand of the prophets nor in dreams; I called for you to show

me what I should do. Again the Scripture did not speak otherwise, but [says] that Samuel himself said: "And why have you questioned me? For the Lord has departed from you. Does he speak truly or falsely when he says: "The Lord has departed from you and has become [an adversary] against you and has made for himself another, in the manner that he spoke by my hand, and he will rend the kingdom from your hand" — and [is it really] a demon [that] prophesies concerning the kingdom of Israel? What does the opposing argument say? See how great a contest there is in the word of God, needing also hearers able to hear holy words, great and ineffable, concerning the departure [from this life] — while the former matters are still perplexing and the latter are not yet clear.

[§5] But the argument is still under examination. And I say that both the narrative and the examination concerning it are necessary, so that we may see what awaits us after our departure. "He has spoken by my hand, and the Lord will rend the kingdom from your hand and give it to your neighbor, to David." But a demon cannot know the kingdom of David that was appointed by the Lord. "Because you did not hearken to the voice of the Lord, you did not execute the anger of his wrath upon Amalek." Are these not the words of God? Are they not true? For truly Saul did not do the will of the Lord, but "preserved the king of Amalek alive," for which also, before his death and at his departure, Samuel reproached Saul: "And on account of this word the Lord has done this to you on this day; and the Lord will give Israel also into the hand of the foreigners." Can a demon prophesy about the whole people of God — that the Lord is about to hand over Israel? "The Lord will also hand over the camp of Israel into the hand of the foreigners. But hasten, Saul: tomorrow both you and your sons [shall be] with me." And can a demon know this — concerning a king anointed together with a prophet — that tomorrow Saul was about to depart from life, and his sons with him? "Tomorrow you and your sons [shall be] with me."

[§6] These things, then, [show] that the things written are not false, and that it is Samuel who has come up. What, then, does a witch of Endor do here? What does a witch of Endor do concerning the bringing up of the soul of the righteous man? That man fled, the one who spoke the first argument (so that he might not seem to have a contest over the many other things sought regarding the passage), and says: It is not Samuel; the demon lies, since the Scripture cannot lie. But the words of the Scripture are not from the person of the demon, but from the person of the Scripture itself: "And the woman saw Samuel," "Saul said" . . . . . the things spoken by Samuel. How, then, will the matters concerning the witch of Endor appear, once the things regarding the passage are resolved? I inquire of the one who spoke the former things (Samuel in Hades? and the rest), and let him answer to what is asked: Who is greater, Samuel or Jesus Christ? Who is greater, the prophets or Jesus Christ? Who is greater, Abraham or Jesus Christ? Here no one of those who have once come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, proclaimed beforehand by the prophets, will dare to say that Christ is not greater than the prophets. When, then, you have confessed that Jesus Christ is greater — was Christ in Hades, or did he not come to be there?

Is not the saying in the Psalms true, interpreted by the apostles in their Acts concerning the Savior's having descended into Hades? It is written that there is borne upon him the saying in the fifteenth Psalm: "For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will you give your holy one to see corruption. Then [is] Jesus Christ in Hades, but you fear to say that yes, even there he descends to prophesy and to come to the other souls? Then after this, if he answers that Christ has descended into Hades, I will say: Christ has descended into Hades to do what? To conquer, or to be conquered by death? And he has gone down into those regions not as a slave of those there, but as a master, to wrestle — as we said earlier when expounding the twenty-first Psalm: "Many calves surrounded me, fat bulls encircled me; they opened their mouth upon me, as a ravening and roaring lion. My bones were scattered. We remember, if indeed we remember the sacred writings; for I remember them being said with reference to the twenty-first Psalm. Therefore the Savior descended to save; did he descend there proclaimed beforehand by the prophets, or not? Was he here proclaimed beforehand by the prophets, but elsewhere descends not through prophets? Moses too proclaims him as about to sojourn among the race of human beings, so that it is well said by our Lord and Savior: "If you had believed Moses, you would have believed me; for he wrote concerning me.

But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? And Christ has sojourned in this life, and Christ is proclaimed beforehand as sojourning in this life. But if Moses prophesies him here, do you not wish that he had also descended there, to prophesy that Christ would come? What then? Moses [yes], but the prophets after him not? And Samuel not? What is absurd about physicians going down to those who are sick? And what is absurd about the chief physician also going down to those who are sick? Those were many physicians, but my Lord and Savior is the chief physician; for indeed the inward longing, which cannot be healed by others, he himself heals; that which "could not be healed by any" of the physicians, Christ Jesus heals. Do not fear, do not be amazed: Jesus has come to be in Hades, and the prophets before him, and they proclaim beforehand the coming of Christ.

[§7] Then I wish to say also something else from the Scripture itself. Samuel comes up — and what does the woman tell Saul she has seen? She does not say she saw a human being; she cowered before this one whom she saw. Whom does she see? "I," she says, "saw gods, gods coming up from the earth. And perhaps Samuel did not come up alone even then to prophesy to Saul; but it is likely — just as here "with the holy you will be holy, and with the innocent man you will be innocent, and with the chosen you will be chosen," and here there are associations of holy ones with holy ones, and not of holy ones with sinners (and if ever there is an association of the holy with sinners, it is for the sake of saving the sinners also) — so perhaps also, as Samuel was coming up, there came up together with him either holy souls of other prophets, or angels were there who had come up together with the spirits. Perhaps you will inquire whether angels were [set] over their spirits? The prophet says: "The angel who speaks in me. And every place is filled with those who need salvation, and "all are ministering spirits sent forth for service on account of those who are about to inherit

salvation. Why do you fear to say that every place needs Jesus Christ? He who needs Christ needs the prophets;

for he does not need Christ [only] and yet not need those who prepare the coming and sojourn of Christ. And John — than whom no one among those born of women was greater, according to the testimony of our Savior, who says, "Among those born of women there is none greater than John the Baptist" — do not fear to say that he too descended into Hades, proclaiming beforehand my Lord, that he might announce him as about to descend. For this reason, when he was in prison and knew the departure that lay upon him, he sent two of his disciples and inquired — not, "Are you the coming one? (for he knew), but, "Are you the coming one, or do we look for another? He had seen his glory, he had spoken much about his marvelousness, he had borne witness to him first: "The one coming after me has come to be before me"; he had seen his glory, "glory as of an only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. Having seen such great things concerning Christ, does he hesitate to believe? Does he doubt and not say: Tell him, Are you the Christ? For now some, not understanding the things said, say: John, so great a man, did not know Christ, but the Holy Spirit had departed from him. And yet he did know this one, to whom he bore witness before his birth and over whom he leaped for joy, when Mary too came to him, as his mother testified to him, saying:

"For behold, as the voice of your greeting came into my ears, the babe leaped for joy in my womb. This John, then, who leaped for joy before his birth, who said, "This is he concerning whom I said, The one coming after me has come to be before me," and, "He who sent me said to me, Upon whomever you see the Spirit descending and remaining, this is the Son of God" — this one, they say, no longer knew Jesus Christ? For in the womb he knew him. But through excess of glory he did something similar to what Peter did. What similar thing? This one [Peter] knew something great concerning Christ. Who am I? "Whom do men say that I am? And he answered: this and that. But you, what [do you say]? "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"; for which he is also blessed, because "flesh and blood did not reveal it" to him, "but the Father who is in the heavens. Since, then, he had heard great things concerning Christ and supposed great things and did not accept the divine cry made to him — "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and it shall be accomplished," and, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the chief priests and elders, and be killed, and on the third day rise" — he says, "God be merciful to you, Lord. He knew great things concerning Christ; he was unwilling to accept the lowlier things concerning him.

Understand John, too, as someone such as this for me. He was in prison, knowing great things concerning Christ; he had seen the heavens opened, he had seen the Holy Spirit descending from heaven upon the Savior and remaining upon him; and having seen such great glory, he doubted, and perhaps disbelieved, whether the one so glorious would descend even to Hades and even to the abyss. For this reason he said: "Are you the coming one, or do we look for another?"

[§8] I have not digressed, nor have I forgotten the matter at hand; but this is what we wish to establish: that if all the prophets of Christ descended into Hades before Christ, as forerunners of Christ, so also Samuel descended there — not simply, but as a holy one. Wherever the holy one may be, he is holy. Is Christ no longer Christ, because he was once in Hades? Was he no longer the Son of God, because he came to be in the region below, "that every knee should bow in the name of Jesus Christ, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth"? Thus Christ was Christ even when he was below; and, so to speak, though being in the region below, in purpose he was above. So also the prophets and Samuel: even if they descend where the souls below are, they can be below in place, but they are not below in purpose. And I inquire: did they prophesy the things above the heavens? Yet I cannot grant to a demon such great power, that it prophesies concerning Saul and the people of God, and prophesies concerning the kingdom of David that he is about to reign. Those who say these things will come to know the truths regarding the passage; they will not find how to establish that a holy one would [not] come, for the salvation of those who are sick, into the place of those who are sick. Let physicians go into the places of the wounded soldiers, and let them enter where the stenches of their wounds are; this is what the physicians' love of humankind prompts. In this way the Word has prompted the Savior and the prophets both to come here and to descend into Hades.

[§9] And this too must be added to the argument: that [if] Samuel was a prophet, and when he departed the Holy Spirit left him, and prophecy left him, then the apostle does not speak truly who says: "Now I prophesy in part, and I know in part; but when the perfect comes, then that which is in part shall be done away. Therefore the perfect is after this life. And if Isaiah prophesied anything, he prophesied in part, with all boldness; but the things here are testified of David as [pointing] to the perfection of prophecy. Samuel, then, did not cast away the prophetic grace. And [to show] that he did not cast it away: did he use it in such a way — like those who speak in tongues — as to say, "My spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful"? And yet the one who speaks in a tongue does not build up the church; for Paul says that the one who prophesies builds up the church, saying in these very words: "But the one who prophesies builds up the church. Now if "the one who prophesies builds up the church," and Samuel had the prophetic grace (for he had not lost it, since he had not sinned; for only he loses the prophetic grace who, after prophesying, has done things unworthy of the Holy Spirit, so that the Spirit forsakes him and flees from his governing faculty — which David too feared then, after his sin, and said:

"And take not your Holy Spirit from me") — if, therefore, the Holy Spirit prophesies, and Samuel was a prophet, and "the one who prophesies builds up the church," whom does he build up? Does he prophesy to heaven? To whom? To angels, who have no need? "[They have no need,] those who are strong, of physicians, but those who are sick. Some need his prophecy; for the prophetic grace is not idle — no gift of those [given] in the Holy [Spirit] is idle. Of the prophetic grace, then, the souls of those who sleep had need ([that] I may dare even to say it). But here Israel had need of the prophet; and the one who sleeps also, the one released from life, had need of the prophets, that again the prophets might proclaim to him

the coming of Christ. Besides, before the coming of my Lord Jesus Christ it was impossible for anyone to pass where the tree of life is; it was impossible to pass those appointed to guard the way of the tree of life: "He stationed the Cherubim and the flaming sword that turns, to guard the way of the tree of life. Who was able to make a way? Who was able to make anyone pass through the flaming sword? Just as it belonged to no one to make a way through the sea except to God and to the pillar of fire, the pillar of light from God;

just as it belonged to no one to make a way through the Jordan except to Joshua (that Joshua was a type of the true God) — so through the flaming sword Samuel was not able to pass, nor Abraham. For this reason Abraham too is seen by the one being punished, and "being in torments, the rich man, lifting up his eyes, sees Abraham," even though "he sees from afar," yet he sees, "and Lazarus in his bosom. They awaited, then, the coming of my Lord Jesus Christ — both patriarchs and prophets and all — that this one might open the way. "I am the way," "I am the door. There is a way to the tree of life, so that it may come to pass: "If you pass through fire, the flame shall not burn you. What fire? "He stationed the Cherubim and the flaming sword that turns, to guard the way of the tree of life. So for this reason the blessed ones waited there, carrying out a dispensation and not being able to come where the tree of life is, where the paradise of God is, where God is husbandman, where the blessed and chosen and holy ones of God are.

[§10] There is, then, no stumbling block regarding the passage, but all things have been wondrously written and understood by those to whom God may reveal them. But we who have come at the consummation of the ages have something more. What more? If we depart from here, having become good and noble, not bringing with us the burdens of sin, we too shall pass through "the flaming sword," and shall not descend into the region where those who slept before his coming awaited Christ; rather we shall pass through, in no way harmed by the flaming sword. "And each one's work, of what sort it is, the fire itself will test. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." We shall pass through, then; and we have something more, and we cannot, having lived well, depart badly. The ancients did not say — nor the patriarchs, nor the prophets — what we can say, if we live well: "For it is better to depart and to be with Christ." Therefore, having thus something more and much gain in having come at the consummation of the ages, we first receive the denarius; for hear the parable, that "beginning, he gave the denarius from the last; but the first thought that they would receive something more." You, then, who are first, having come last, receive the wages from the householder in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be the glory and the might unto the ages of the ages. Amen.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them,

and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.