A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed

Rufinus of Aquileia (c. AD 345–411)

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This exposition of the Creed was made at the request of Laurentius, a Bishop whose see is unknown, but is conjectured by Fontanini, in his life of Rufinus, to have been Concordia, Rufinus' birthplace. Its exact date cannot be fixed; but from the fact that he says nothing of his difficulty in writing Latin after being so long in the East, as he does in several of his books, and from the comparative ease of the style, it is most probable that it was written in the later years of his sojourn at Aquileia, that is, about 307-309. Its value is considerable (1) as bearing witness to the state of the Creed in local churches at the beginning of the 5th century, especially their variations. (In the church of Aquileia, in Jesu Christo. Patrem invisibilem et impassibilem. Resurrectio hujus carnis); (2) as showing the adaptation of Eastern ideas to the formation of Western theology; (2)as giving the Canon of the books of Scripture, and the Apocrypha of both the Old and New dispensations.

The exposition is clear and reasonable; and, with the exception of a very few passages, such as the argument from the Phoenix for the Virgin Birth of our Lord, is still of use to us. We prefix the words of the creed on which Rufinus makes his commentary. It seems desirable to give the original Latin, as well as the English version of the Creed of Aquileia. The words or letters which are peculiar to this creed are put in italics. Credo in Deo Patre omnipotenti invisibili et impassibili. I believe in God the Father Almighty, invisible and impassible. Et in Jesu Christo, unico Filio ejus, Domino nostro; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine; Who was born from the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary; Crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato, et sepultus; Was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried;

Descendit ad inferna; tertia die resurrexit a mortuis; He descended to hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead. Ascendit in coelos; sedet ad dexteram Patris; He ascended to the heavens; he sitteth at the right hand of the Father; Inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos; Thence he is to come to judge the quick and the dead. Et in Spiritu Sancto; And in the Holy Ghost; Sanctam Ecclesiam; The Holy Church. Remissionem peccatorum; The remission of sins. Hujus carnis resurrectionem. The resurrection of this flesh. My mind has as little inclination for writing as sufficiency, most faithful Bishop (Papa) Laurentius, for I

well know that it is a matter of no little peril to submit a slender ability to general criticism. But, since in your letter you rashly (forgive my saying so) require me, by Christ's sacraments, which I hold in the greatest reverence, to compose something for you concerning the Faith, in accordance with the traditional and natural meaning of the Creed. although in so doing you impose a burthen upon me beyond my strength to bear (for I do not forget the opinion of the wise, which so justly says, that "to speak of God even what is true is perilous"); still, if you will aid with your prayers the necessity which your requisition has laid upon me, I will try to say something, moved rather by a reverential regard for your injunction than by presumptuous confidence in my ability. What I write, however, will hardly seem worthy of the consideration of persons of mature understanding, but suited rather to the capacity of children and young beginners in Christ.

I find, indeed, that some eminent writers have published treatises on these matters piously and briefly written. Moreover, I know that the heretic Photinus has written on the same; but with the object, not of explaining the meaning of the text to his readers. but of wresting things simply and truthfully said in support of his own dogma, while yet the Holy Spirit has taken care that in these words nothing should be set down which is ambiguous or obscure, or inconsistent with other truths: for therein is that prophecy verified, "Finishing and cutting short the word in equity: because a short word will the Lord make upon the earth." It shall be our endeavour, then, first to restore and emphasize the words of the Apostles in their native simplicity; and, secondly, to supply such things as seem to have been omitted by former expositors. But that the scope of this "short word," as we have called it, may be made more plain, we will enquire from the beginning how it came to be given to the Churches.

2. Our forefathers have handed down to us the tradition, that, after the Lord's ascension, when, through the coming of the Holy Ghost, tongues of flame had settled upon each of the Apostles, that they might speak diverse languages, so that no race however foreign, no tongue however barbarous, might be inaccessible to them and beyond their reach, they were commanded by the Lord to go severally to the several nations to preach the word of God. Being on the eve therefore of departing from one another, they first mutually agreed upon a standard of their future preaching, lest haply, when separated, they might in any instance vary in the statements which they should make to those whom they should invite to believe in Christ. Being all therefore met together, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, they composed, as we have said, this brief formulary of their future preaching, each contributing his several sentence to one common summary: and they ordained that the rule thus framed should be given to those who believe.

To this formulary, for many and most sufficient reasons, they gave the name or Symbol. For Symbol (ku/mblon) in Greek answers to both "Indicium" (a sign or token) and "Collatio" (a joint contribution made by several) in Latin. For this the Apostles did in these words, each contributing his several sentence. It is called "Indicium" or "Signum," a sign or token, because, at that time, as the Apostle Paul says, and as is related in the Acts of the Apostles,

many of the vagabond Jews, pretending to be apostles of Christ, went about preaching for gain's sake or their belly's sake, naming the name of Christ indeed, but not delivering their message according to the exact traditional lines. The Apostles therefore prescribed this formulary as a sign or token by which he who preached Christ truly, according to Apostolic rule, might be recognised. Finally, they say that in civil wars, since the armour of both sides is alike, and the language the same, and the custom and mode of warfare the same, each general, to guard against treachery, is wont to deliver to his soldiers a distinct symbol or watchword-in Latin "signum" or "indicium"-so that if one is met with, of whom it is doubtful to which side he belongs, being asked the symbol (watchword), he discloses whether he is friend or foe. And for this reason, the tradition continues, the Creed is not written on paper or parchment, but is retained in the hearts of the faithful, that it may be certain that no one has learnt it by reading, as is sometimes the case with unbelievers, but by tradition from the Apostles.

The Apostles therefore, as we have said, being about to separate in order to preach the Gospel, settled upon this sign or token of their agreement in the faith; and, unlike the sons of Noah, who, when they were about to separate from one another, builded a tower of baked bricks and pitch, whose top might reach to heaven, they raised a monument of faith, which might withstand the enemy, composed of living stones and pearls of the Lord, such that neither winds might overthrow it, nor floods undermine it, nor the force of storms and tempests shake it. Right justly, then, were the former, when, on the eve of separation, they builded a tower of pride, condemned to the confusion of tongues, so that no one might understand his neighbour's speech; while the latter, who were building a tower of faith, were endowed with the knowledge and understanding of all languages; so that the one might prove a sign and token of sin, the other of faith.

But it is time now that we should say something about these same pearls, among which is placed first the fountain and source of all, when it is said,- 3. I Believe in God the Father Almighty. But before I begin to discuss the meaning of the words, I think it well to mention that in different Churches some additions are found in this article. This is not the case, however, in the Church of the city of Rome; the reason being, as I suppose, that, on the one hand, no heresy has had its origin there, and, on the other, that the ancient custom is there kept up, that those who are going to be baptized should rehearse the Creed publicly, that is, in the audience of the people; the consequence of which is that the ears of those who are already believers will not admit the addition of a single word. But in other places, as I understand, additions appear to have been made, on account of certain heretics, by means of which it was hoped that novelty in doctrine would be excluded. We, however, follow that order which we received when we were baptized in the Church of Aquileia.

I Believe, therefore, is placed in the forefront, as the Apostle Paul, writing to the Hebrews, says, "He that cometh to God must first of all believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who believe on Him. The Prophet also says, "Except ye believe, ye shall not understand. That the way to understand, therefore, may be open to you, you do rightly first of all, in

professing that you believe; for no one embarks upon the sea, and trusts himself to the deep and liquid element, unless he first believes it possible that he will have a safe voyage; neither does the husbandman commit his seed to the furrows and scatter his grain on the earth, but in the belief that the showers will come, together with the sun's warmth, through whose fostering influence, aided by favouring winds, the earth will produce and multiply and ripen its fruits. In fine, nothing in life can be transacted if there be not first a readiness to believe. What wonder then, if, coming to God, we first of all profess that we believe, seeing that, without this, not even common life can be lived. We have premised these remarks at the outset, since the Pagans are wont to object to us that our religion, because it lacks reasons, rests solely on belief. We have shewn, therefore, that nothing can possibly be done or remain stable unless belief precede. Finally, marriages are contracted in the belief that children will be born;

and children are committed to the care of masters in the belief that the teaching of the masters will be transferred to the pupils; and one man assumes the ensigns of empire, believing that peoples and cities and a well-equipped army also will obey him. But if no one enters upon any one of these several undertakings except in the belief that the results spoken of will follow, must not belief be much more requisite if one would come to the knowledge of God? But let us see what this "short word" of the Creed sets forth.

4. "I Believe in God the Father Almighty." The Eastern Churches almost universally deliver the article thus, "I believe in One God the Father Almighty;" and again in the next article, where we say, "And in Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord," they deliver it., "And in One (Lord) our Lord Jesus Christ, His only Son;" confessing, that is, "one Gods" and "one Lord," in accordance with the authority of the Apostle Paul. But we shall return to this by-and-by. For the present, let us turn our attention to the words, "In God the Father Almighty." "God," so far as the human mind can form an idea, is the name of that nature or substance which is above all things. "Father" is a word expressive of a secret and ineffable mystery. When you hear the word "God," you must understand thereby a substance without beginning, without end simple, uncompounded, invisible, incorporeal, ineffable, inappreciable, which has in it nothing which has been either added or created. For He is without cause who is absolutely the cause of all things. When you hear the word "Father," you must understand by this the Father of a Son, which Son is the image of the aforesaid substance. For as no one is called "Lord" unless he have a possession or a servant whose lord he is, and as no one is called "master" unless he have a disciple, so no one can possibly be called "father" unless he have a son. This very name of "Father," therefore, shews plainly that, together with the Father there subsists a Son also.

But I would not have you discuss how God the Father begat the Son, nor intrude too curiously into the profound mystery, lest haply, by prying too eagerly into the brightness of light inaccessible, you should lose the faint glimpse which, by the gift of God, has been vouchsafed to mortals. Or, if you suppose that this is a subject to be investigated with all possible scrutiny, first propose to yourself questions which concern ourselves, and then, if

you are able to deal satisfactorily with them, speed on from earthly things to heavenly, from visible to invisible. Determine first, if you can, how the mind, which is within you, generates a word, and what is the spirit of the memory which is in it; and how these, though diverse in reality and in operation, are yet one in substance or nature; and though they proceed from the mind, yet are never separated from it. And if these, though they are in us and in the substance of our own soul, yet seem to be hidden from us in proportion as they are invisible to our bodily sight, let us take for our enquiry things which are more open to view. How does a spring generate a river from itself? By what spirit is it borne into a rapidly flowing stream?

How happens it that, while the river and the spring are one and inseparable, yet neither can the river be understood to be, or can be called, the spring, nor the spring the river, and yet he who has seen the river has seen the spring also? Exercise yourself first in explaining these, and explain, if you are able, things which you have trader your hands; and then you may come to loftier matters. Do not think, however, that I would have you ascend all at once from the earth above the heavens: I would first, with your leave, draw your attention to this firmament which our eyes behold, and ask you to explain, if you can, the nature of this visible luminary,-how that celestial fire generates from itself the brightness of light, how it also produces heat; and though these are three in reality, how they are yet one in substance. And if you are capable of investigating each of these, even then you must acknowledge that the mystery of the Divine generation is by so much the more diverse and the more transcendent as the Creator is more powerful than the creatures, as the artificer is more excellent than his work, as He who ever is more noble than that which had its beginning out of nothing.

That God then is the Father of His only Son our Lord is to be believed, not discussed; for it is not lawful for a servant to dispute about the nativity of his lord. The Father hath borne witness from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased: hear Him." The Father saith that He is His Son and bids us hear Him. The Son saith, "He who seeth Me seeth the Father also," and "I and the Father are one," and "I came forth from God and am come into the world." Where is the man who can thrust himself as a disputant between these words of Father and Son, who cart divide the Godhead, separate its volition, break asunder the substance, cut the spirit in parts, and deny that what the Truth speaks is true? God then is a true Father as the Father of the Truth, not begetting extrinsically, but generating the Son from that which Himself is; that is, as the All-wise He generates Wisdom, as the Just Justice, as the Everlasting the Everlasting, as the Immortal Immortality, as the Invisible the Invisible; because He is Light, He generates Brightness, because He is Mind, He generates the Word.

5. Now whereas we said that the Eastern Churches, in their delivery. of the Creed, say, "In one God the Father Almighty," and "in one Lord," the "one" is not to be understood numerically but absolutely. For example, if one should say, "one man" or "one horse," here "one" is used numerically. For there may be a second man and a third, or a second horse

and a third. But where a second or a third cannot be added, if we say "one" we mean one not numerically but absolutely. For example, if we say, "one Sun," here the meaning is that a second or a third cannot be added, for there is but one Sun. Much more then is God, when He is said to be "one," called "one," not numerically but absolutely, that is, He is therefore said to be one because there is no other. In like manner, also, it is to be understood of the Lord, that He is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by or through Whom God the Father possesses dominion over all, whence also, in the next clause, God is called "Almighty."

God is called Almighty because He possesses rule and dominion over all things. But the Father possesses all things by His Son, as the Apostle says, "By Him were created all things, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." And again, writing to the Hebrews, he says, "By Him also He made the worlds," and "He appointed Him heir of all things." By "appointed" we are to understand "generated." Now if the Father made the worlds by Him, and all things were created by Him, and He is heir of all things, then by Him He possesses rule also over all things. Because, as light is born of light, and truth of truth, so. Almighty is born of Almighty. As it is written of the Seraphim in the Revelation of John, "And they have no rest day and night, crying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, which was and which is and which is to come, the Almighty." He then who "is to come" is called "Almighty." And what other is there who "is to come" but Christ, the Son of God?

To the foregoing is added "Invisible and Impassible." I should mention that these two words are not in the Creed of the Roman Church. They were added in our Church, as is well known, on account of the Sabellian heresy, called by us "the Patripassian," that, namely, which says that the Father Himself was born of the Virgin andbecame visible, or affirms that He suffered in the flesh. To exclude such impiety, therefore, concerning the Father, our forefathers seem to have added these words, calling the Father "invisible and impassible." For it is evident that the Son, not the Father, became incarnate and was born in the flesh, and that from that nativity in the flesh the Son became "visible and passible." Yet so far as regards that immortal substance of the Godhead, which He possesses, and which is one and the same with that of the Father, we must believe that neither the Father, nor the Son, nor the Holy Ghost is "visible or passible." But the Son, in that He condescended to assume flesh, was both seen and also suffered in the flesh. Which also the Prophet fore told when he said, "This is our God: noother shah be accounted of in comparison of Him. He hath found out all the way of knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob His servant and to Israel His beloved. Afterward He shewed Himself upon the earth, and conversed with men."

6. Next there follows, "And in Christ Jesus, His Only Son, Our Lord." "Jesus" is a Hebrew word meaning "Saviour." "Christ" is so called from "Chrism," i.e. unction. For we read in the Books of Moses, that Auses, the son of Nave, when he was chosen to lead the people, had his name changed from "Auses" to "Jesus," to shew that this was a name proper for princes and generals, for those, namely, who should "save" the people who followed them. Therefore, both were called "Jesus," both the one who conducted the people, who had been brought

forth out of the land of Egypt, and freed from the wanderings of the wilderness, into the land of promise, and the other, who conducted the people, who had been brought forth from the darkness of ignorance, and recalled from the errors of the world, into the kingdom of heaven. "Christ" is a name proper either to High Priests or Kings. For formerly both high priests and kings were consecrated with the ointment of chrism: but these, as mortal and corruptible, with material and corruptible ointment. Jesus is made Christ, being anointed with tile Holy Spirit, as the Scripture saith of Him "Whom the Father hath anointed with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." And Isaiah had prefigured the same, saying in the person of the Son, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me, He hath sent Me to preach good tidings to the poor."

Having shewn them what "Jesus" is, Who saves His people, and what "Christ" is, Who is made a High Priest for ever, let us now see in what follows, of Whom these things are said, "His only Son, our Lord." Here we are taught that this Jesus, of whom we have spoken, and this Christ, the meaning of whose name we have expounded, is "the only Son of God" and "our Lord." Lest, perchance, you should think that these human names have an earthly significance, therefore it is added that He is "the only Son of God, our Lord." For He is born One of One, because there is one brightness of light, and there is one word of the understanding. Neither does an incorporeal generation degenerate into the plural number, or suffer division, where He Who is born is in no wise separated from Him Who begets. He is "only" (unique), as thought is to the mind, as wisdom is to the wise, as a word is to the understanding, as valour is to the brave. For as the Father is said by the Apostle to be "alone wise," so likewise the Son alone is called wisdom. He is then the "only Son." And, although in glory, everlastingness, virtue, dominion, power, He is what the Father is, vet all these He hath not unoriginately as the Father, but from the Father, as the Son, without beginning and equal; and although He is the Head of all things, yet the Father is the Head of Him. For so it is written, "The Head of Christ is God."

7. When you hear the word "Son," you must not think of a nativity after the flesh; but remember that it is spoken of an incorporeal substance, and a simple and uncompounded nature. For if, as we said above, whether when the understanding generates a word, or the mind sense, or light brings forth brightness from itself, nothingof this sort is sought for, or any manner of weakness and imperfection imagined in this kind of generation, how much purer and more sacred ought to be our conception of the Creator of all these!

But perhaps you say, "The generation of which you speak is an unsubstantial generation. For light does not produce substantial brightness, nor the understanding generate a substantial word, but the Son of God, it is affirmed, was generated substantially." To this we reply, first, When in other things examples or illustrations are used, the resemblance cannot hold in every particular, but only in some one point for which the illustration is employed. For instance, When it is said in the Gospel, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman hid in three measures of meal," are we to imagine that the kingdom of heaven is in all respects like leaven, so that like leaven it is palpable and perishable so as to become sour

and unfit for use? Obviously the illustration was employed simply for this object-to shew how, through the preaching of God's word which seems so small a thing, men's minds could be imbued with the leaven of faith. So likewise, when it is said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea, which draws in fishes of every kind," are we to suppose that the substance of the kingdom of heaven is likened in all respects to the nature of twine of which a net is made, and to the knots with which the meshes are tied? No; the sole object of the comparison is to shew that, as a net brings fishes to the shore from the depths of the sea, so by the preaching of the kingdom of heaven men's souls are liberated from the depth of the error of this world. From whence it is evident that examples or illustrations do not answer in every particular to the things which they are brought to exemplify or illustrate. Otherwise, if they were the same in all respects, they would no longer be called examples or illustrations, but rather would be the things themselves.

8. Then further it is to be observed that no creature can be such as its Creator. And therefore, as the divine substance or essence admits of no comparison, so neither does the Divinity. Moreover, every creature is of nothing. If therefore a spark which is so unsubstantial but vet is fire, begets of itself a creature which is of nothing, and maintains in it the essential nature of that from which it springs, (i.e. the fire of the parent spark), why could not the substance of that eternal Light which ever has been because it has in itself nothing which is not substantial, produce from itself substantial brightness? Rightly, therefore, is the Son called "only," "unique." For He who hath been so born is "only" and "unique." That which is unique can admit of no comparison. Nor can He who made all things be like in substance to the things which He has made. This then is Christ Jesus, the only Son of God, who is also our Lord. "Only" may be referred both to Son and to Lord. For Jesus Christ is "only" both as truly Son and as one Lord. For all other sons, though they are called sons, are so called by the grace of adoption, not by verity of nature; and if there be others who are called lords, they are called so from an authority bestowed not inherent. But Christ alone is the only Sonand the only Lord. as the Apostle saith, "One Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things." Therefore, after the Creed has in due order set forth the ineffable mystery of the nativity of the Son from the Father, it now descends to the dispensation which He vouchsafed to enter upon for man's salvation. And of Him whom just now it called the "only Son of God" and "our Lord," it now says.

9. "Who Was Born by (de) The Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary." This nativity among men is in the way of dispensation, whereas the former nativity is of the divine substance; the one results from his condescension, the other from his essential nature. He is born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin. Here a chaste ear and a pure mind is required. For you must understand that now a temple hath been built within the secret recesses of a Virgin's womb for Him of Whom erewhile you learnt that He was born ineffably of the Father. And just as in the sanctification of the Holy Ghost no thought of imperfection is to be admitted, so in the Virgin-birth no defilement is to be imagined. For this birth was a new birth given to this world, and rightly new. For He Who is the only Son in heaven is by consequence the only Son on earth, and was uniquely born, born as no other ever was or can be.

The words of the Prophets concerning Him, "A Virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son," are known to all, and are cited in the Gospels again and again. The Prophet Ezekiel too had predicted the miraculous manner of that birth, calling Mary figuratively "the Gate of the Lord," the gate, namely, through which the Lord entered the world. For he saith, "The gate which looks towards the East shall be closed, and shall not be opened, and no one shall pass through it, because the Lord God of Israel shall pass through it, and it shall be closed." What could be said with such evident reference to the inviolate preservation of the Virgin's condition? That Gate of Virginity was closed; through it the Lord God of Israel entered; through it He came forth from the Virgin's womb into this world; and the Virgin-state being preserved inviolate, the gate of the Virgin remained closed for ever. Therefore the Holy Ghost is spoken of as the Creator of the Lord's flesh and of His temple.

10. Starting from this point you may understand the majesty of the Holy Ghost also. For the Gospel witnesses of Him that when the angel said to the Virgin, "Thou shalt bring forth a Son and shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins," she replied, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" on which the angel said to her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Wherefore that holy Thing which shall be born of Thee shall be called the Son of God." See here the Trinity mutually cooperating with each other. The Holy Ghost is spoken of as coming upon the Virgin, and the Power of the Highest as overshadowing her. What is the Power of the Highest but Christ Himself, Who is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God? Whose is this Power? The Power of the Highest. There is here then the Highest, there is also the Power of the Highest, there is also the Holy Ghost. This is the Trinity, everywhere latent, and everywhere apparent, distinct in names and persons, but inseparable in the substance of the Godhead. And although the Son alone is born of the Virgin, yet there is present also the Highest, there is present also the Holy Ghost, that both the conception and the bringing forth of the Virgin may be sanctified.

11. These things, since they are asserted upon the warrant of the Prophetical Scriptures, may possibly silence the Jews, infidel and incredulous though they be. But the Pagans are wont to ridicule us when they hear us speak of a Virgin-birth. We must, therefore, say a few words in reply to their cavils. Every birth, I suppose, depends upon three conditions. There must be a woman of mature age, she must have intercourse with a man, her womb must not be barren. Of these three conditions, in the birth of which we are speaking, one was wanting, the man. And this, forasmuch as He of Whose birth we speak was not an earthly but a heavenly man, was supplied by the Heavenly Spirit, the virginity of the mother being preserved inviolate. And yet why should it be thought marvellous for a virgin to conceive, when it is well known that the Eastern bird, which they call the Phoenix, is in such wise born, or born again, without the intervention of a mate, that it remains continually one, and continually by being born or born again succeeds itself? That bees know no wedlock, and no bringing forth of young, is notorious. There are also other things which are found to be subject to some such law of birth. Shall it be thought incredible, then, that was done

by divine power, for the renewal and restoration of the whole world, of which instances are observed in the nativity of animals?

And yet it is strange that the Gentiles should think this impossible, who believe their own Minerva to have been born from the brain of Jupiter. What is more difficult to believe, or what more contrary to nature? Here, there is a woman, the order of nature is kept, there is conception, and in due time birth; there, there is no female, but a man alone, and-birth! Why does he who believes the one marvel at the other? Again, they say that Father Bacchus was born from Jupiter's thigh. Here is another portent, yet it is believed. Venus also, whom they call Aphrodite, was born, they believe, of the foam of the sea, as her compounded name shews. They affirm that Castor and Pollux were born of an egg, the Myrmidons of ants. There are a thousand other things which, though contrary to nature, find credit with them, such as the stones thrown by Deucalion and Pyrrha, and the crop of men sprung from thence. And when they believe such myths and so many of them, does one thing seem impossible to them, that a woman of mature age, not defiled by man but impregnated by the Holy Ghost, should conceive a divine progeny? who, forsooth, if they are hard of belief, ought in no wise to have given credence to those prodigies, being, as they are, so many and so degrading;

but if they do believe them, they ought much more readily to receive these beliefs of ours, so honourable and so holy, than theirs so discreditable and so vile.

12. But they say, perhaps, If it was possible to God that a virgin should conceive, it was possible also that she should bring forth, but they think it unmeet that a being of so great majesty should enter the world in such wise, that even though there had been no defilement from intercourse with man, there should yet be the unseemliness attendant upon the act of delivery. To which let us reply briefly, meeting them on their own level. If a person should see a little child in the act of being suffocated in a quagmire, and himself, a great man and powerful, should go into the mire, just at its verge, so to say, to rescue the dying child; would you blame this than as defiled for having stepped into a little mire, or would you praise him as merciful, for having preserved the life of one that was perishing? But the case supposed is that of an ordinary man. Let us return to the nature of Him Who was born. How much, think you, is the nature of the Sun inferior to him? How much beyond doubt, the Creature to the Creator? Consider now if a ray of the sun alights upon a quagmire, does it receive any pollution from it? or is the sun the worse for shedding his light upon foul objects? Fire, too, how far inferior is its nature to the things of which we are speaking? Yet no substance, whether foul or vile, is believed to pollute fire if applied to it.

When the case is plainly thus with regard to material things, do you suppose that aught of pollution and defilement can befall that supereminent and incorporeal nature, which is above all fire and all light? Then, lastly, note this also: we say that man was created by God out of the clay of the earth. But if God is thought to be defiled in seeking to recover His own work, much more must He be thought so in making that work originally. And it is idle to ask why He passed through what is repugnant to our sense of modesty, when you cannot tell why He made what is so repugnant. And therefore it is not nature but general

estimation that has made us think these things to be such. Otherwise, all things that are in the body, being formed from one and the same clay, are distinguished from one another only in their uses. and natural offices.

13. But there is another consideration which we must not leave out in the solution of this question, namely, that the substance of God, which is wholly incorporeal, cannot be introduced into bodies or be received by them in the first instance, unless there be some spiritual substance as a medium, which is capable of receiving the divine Spirit. For instance, if we say that light is able to irradiate all the members of the body, yet by none of them can it be received except by the eye. For it is the eve alone which is receptive of light. So the Son of God is horn of a virgin, not associated with the flesh alone in the first instance, but begotten with a soul as a medium between the flesh and God. With the soul, then, serving as a medium, and receiving the Word of God in the secret citadel of the rational spirit, God was born of the Virgin without any such disparagement as you imagine. And therefore nothing is to be esteemed base or unseemly wherein was the sanctification of the Spirit, and where the soul which was capable of God became also a partaker of flesh. Account nothing impossible where the power of the Most High was present. Have no thought of human weakness where there was the plenitude of Divinity.

14. He Was Crucified Under Pontius Pilate and Was Buried: He Descended into Hell.The Apostle Paul teaches us that we ought to have "the eyes of our understanding enlightened" "that we may understand what is the height and breadth and depth." "The height and breadth and depth" is a description of the Cross, of which that part which is fixed in the earth he calls the depth, the height that which is erected upon the earth and reaches upward, the breadth that which is spread out to the right hand and to the left. Since, therefore, there are so many kinds of death by which it is given to men to depart this life, why does the Apostle wish us to have our understanding enlightened so as to know the reason why, of all of them, the Cross was chosen in preference for the death of the Saviour. We must know, then, that Cross was a triumph. It was a signal trophy. A triumph is a token of victory over an enemy. Since then Christ, when He came, brought three kingdoms at once into subjection under His sway (for this He signifies when he says, "That in tile name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth"), and conquered all of these by His death, a death was sought answerable to the mystery, so that being lifted up in the air, and subduing the powers of the air, He might make a display of His victory over these supernatural and celestial powers. Moreover the holy Prophet says that "all the day long He stretched out His hands" to the people on the earth, that He might both make protestation to unbelievers and invite believers: finally, by that part which is sunk under the earth, He signified His bringing into subjection to Himself the kingdoms of the nether world.

15. Moreover,-to touch briefly some of the more recondite topics,-when God made the world in the beginning, He set over it and appointed certain powers of celestial virtues by whom the race of mortal men might be governed and directed. That this was so done Moses signi-

fies in the Song in Deuteronomy, "When the Most High divided the nations, He appointed the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God. But some of these, as he who is called the Prince of this world, did not exercise the power which God had committed to them according to the laws by which they had received it, nor did they teach mankind to obey God's commandments, but taught them rather to follow their own perverse guidance. Thus we were brought under the bonds of sin, because, as the Prophet saith, "We were sold under our sins. For every man, when he yields to lust, is receiving the purchase-money of his soul. Under that bond then every man was held by those most wicked rulers, which same bond Christ, when the came, tore down and stripped them of this their power. This Paul signifies under a great mystery, when he says of Him, "He destroyed the hand-writing which was against us, nailing it to His cross, and led away principalities and powers, triumphing over them in Himself.

Those rulers, then, whom God had set over mankind, having become contumacious and tyrannical, took in hand to assail the men who had been committed to their charge and to rout them utterly in the conflicts of sin, as the Prophet Ezekiel mystically intimates when he says, "In that day angels shall come forth hastening to exterminate Ethiopia, and there shall he perturbation among them in the day of Egypt; for behold He comes. Having stript them then of their almighty power, Christ is said to have triumphed, and to have delivered to men the power which was taken from them, as also Himself saith to His disciples in the Gospel, "Behold I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the might of the enemy. The Cross of Christ, then, brought those who had wrongfully abused the authority which they had received into subjection to those who had before been in subjection to them. But us, that is, mankind, it teaches first of all to resist sin even unto death, and willingly to die for the sake of religion. Next, this same Cross sets before us an example of obedience, in like manner as it hath punished the contumacy of those who were once oar rulers. Hear, therefore, how the Apostle would teach us obedience by the Cross of Christ:

"Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. As, then, a consummate master teaches both by example and precept, so Christ taught the obedience, which good men are to render even at the cost of death, by Himself first dying in rendering it.

16. But perhaps some one is alarmed at hearing us discourse of the death of Him of Whom, a short while since, we said that He is everlasting with God the Father, and that He was begotten of the Father's substance, and is one with God the Father, in dominion, majesty, and eternity. But be not alarmed, O faithful hearer. Presently thou wilt see Him of Whose death thou hearest once more immortal; for the death to which He submits is about to spoil death. For the object of that mystery of the Incarnation which we expounded just now was that the divine virtue of the Son of God, as though it were a hook concealed beneath the

form and fashion of human flesh (He being, as the Apostle Paul says, "found in fashion as a man"), might lure on the Prince of this world to a conflict, to whom offering His flesh as a bait, His divinity underneath might catch him and hold him fast with its hook, through the shedding of His immaculate blood. For He alone Who knows no stain of sin hath destroyed the sins of all, of those, at least, who have marked the door-posts of their faith with His blood.

As, therefore, if a fish seizes a baited hook, it not only does not take the bait off the hook, but is drawn out of the water to be itself food for others, so He Who had the power of death seized the body of Jesus in death, not being aware of the hook of Divinity inclosed within it, but having swallowed it he was caught forthwith, and the bars of hell being burst asunder, he was drawn forth as it were from the abyss to become food for others. Which result the Prophet Ezekiel long ago foretold under this same figure, saying, "I will draw thee out with My hook, and stretch thee out upon the earth: the plains shall be filled with thee, and I will set all the fowls of the air over thee, and I will satiate all tim beasts of the earth with thee. The Prophet David also says, "Thou hast broken the heads of the great dragon, Thou hast given him to be meat to the people of Ethiopia. And Job in like manner witnesses of the same mystery, for he says in the person of the Lord speaking to him, "Wilt thou draw forth the dragon with a hook, and wilt thou put thy bit in his nostrils?"

17. It is with no loss or disparagement therefore of His Divine nature that Christ suffers in the flesh, but His Divine nature through the flesh descended into death, that by the infirmity of the flesh He might effect salvation; not that He might be detained by death according to the law of mortality, but that He might by Himself in his resurrection open the gates of death. It is as if a king were to proceed to a prison, and to go in and open the doors, undo the fetters, break in pieces the chains, the bars, and the bolts, and bring forth and set at liberty the prisoners, and restore those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death to light and life. The king, therefore, is said indeed to have been in prison, but not under the same condition as the prisoners who were detained there. They were in prison to be punished, He to free them from punishment.

18. They who have handed down the Creed to us have with much forethought specified the time when these things were done-"under Pontius Pilate,"-lest in any respect the tradition should falter, as though vague and uncertain. But it should be known that the clause, "He descended into Hell," is not added in the Creed of the Roman Church, neither is it in that of the Oriental Churches. It seems to be implied, however, when it is said that "He was buried." But in the love and zeal for the Divine Scriptures which possess you, you say to me, I doubt not, "These things ought to be proved by more evident testimonies from the Divine Scriptures. For the more important the things are which are to be believed, so much the more do they need apt and undoubted witness." True. But we, as speaking to those who know the law, have left unnoticed, for the sake of brevity, a whole forest of testimonies. But if this also be required, let us cite a few out of many, knowing, as we do, that to those who are acquainted with the Scriptures, a very ample sea of testimonies lies open.

19. First of all, then, we must know that the doctrine of the Cross is not regarded by all in the same light. It is one thing to the Gentiles, to the Jews another, to Christians another; as also the Apostle says. "We preach Christ crucified,-to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God;" and, in the same place, "For the preaching of the Cross is to those who perish foolishness, but to those who are saved," that is, to us, it is "the Power of God." The Jews, to whom it had been delivered out of the Law, that Christ should abide for ever, were offended by His Cross, because they were unwilling to believe His resurrection. To the Gentiles it seemed foolishness that God should have submitted to death, because they were ignorant of the mystery of the Incarnation. But Christians, who had accepted His birth and passion in the flesh and His resurrection from the dead, of course believed that it was the power of God which had overcome death.

First, therefore, hear how this very thing is prophetically declared by Isaiah, that the Jews, to whom the Prophets had foretold these things, would not believe, bat that they who had never heard them from the Prophets, would believe them. "To whom He was not spoken of they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand." Moreover, this same Isaiah foretells that, while those who were engaged in the study of the Law from childhood to old age believed not, to the Gentiles every mystery should be transferred. His words are: "And the Lord of Hosts shall make a feast on this mountain unto all nations: they shall drink joy, they shall drink wine, they shall be anointed with ointment on this mountain. Deliver all these things to the nations." This was the counsel of the Almighty respecting all the nations. But they who boast themselves of their knowledge of the Law will, perhaps, say to us, "You blaspheme in saying that the Lord was subjected to the corruption of death and to the suffering of the Cross." Read, therefore, what you find written in the Lamentations of Jeremiah: "The Spirit of our countenance, Christ the Lord, was taken in our corruptions, of whom we said, we shall live under His shadow among the nations." Thou hearest how the Prophet gays that Christ the Lord was taken, and for us, that is, for our sins, delivered to corruption. Under whose shadow, since the people of the Jews have continued in unbelief, he says the Gentiles lie, because we live not in Israel, but among the Gentiles.

20. But, if it does not weary you, let the point out as briefly as possible, specific references to prophecy in the Gospels, that those who are being instructed in the first elements of the faith may have these testimonies written on their hearts, test any doubt concerning the things which they believe should at any time take them by surprise. We are told in the Gospel that Judas, one of Christ's friends and associates at table, betrayed Him. Let the show you how this is foretold in the Psalms: "He who hath eaten My bread hath lifted up his heel against Me: and in another place; "My friends and My neighbours drew near and set themselves against Me: and again; "His words were made softer than oil and yet be they very darts. What then is meant by his words were made soft? "Judas came to Jesus and said unto Him, Hail, Master, and kissed Him. Thus through the soft blandishment of a kiss he implanted the execrable dart of betrayal. On which the Lord said to him, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss? You observe that He was appraised by the traitor's covetousness

at thirty pieces of silver. Of this also the Prophet speaks, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price, or if not, forbear; and presently, "I received from them," he says, "thirty pieces of silver, and I cast them into the house of the Lord, into the foundry.

Is not this what is written in the Gospels, that Judas, "repenting of what he had done, brought back the money, and threw it down in the temple and departed? Well did He call it His price, as though blaming and upbraiding. For He had done so many good works among them, He had given sight to the blind, feet to the lame, the power of walking to the palsied, life also to the dead; for all these good works they paid Him death as His price, appraised at thirty pieces of silver. It is related also in the Gospels that He was bound. This also the word of prophecy had foretold by Isaiah, saying, "Woe unto their soul, who have devised a most evil device against themselves, saying, Let us bind the just One, seeing that He is unprofitable to us."

21. But, says some one, "Are these things to be understood of the Lord? Could the Lord be held prisoner by men and dragged to judgment? Of this also the same Prophet shall convince you. For he says, "The Lord Himself shall come into judgment with the elders and princes of the people. The Lord is judged then according to the Prophet's testimony, and not only judged, but scourged, and smitten on the face with the palms (of men's bands), and spitted on, and suffers every insult and indignity for our sake. And because all who should hear these things preached by the Apostles would be perfectly amazed, therefore also the Prophet speaking in their person exclaims, "Lord, who hath believed our report? For it is incredible that God, the Son of God, should be spoken of and preached as having suffered these things. For this reason they are foretold by the Prophets, lest any doubt should spring up in those who are about to believe. Christ the Lord Himself therefore in His own person, says, "I gave My back to the scourges, and My cheeks to the palms, I turned not away My face from shame and spitting. This also is written among His other sufferings, that they bound Him, and led Him away to Pilate. This also the Prophet foretold, saying, "And they bound him and conducted Him as a pledge of friendship (xenium) to King Jarim. But some one objects, "But Pilate was not a king.

Hear then what the Gospel relates next, "Pilate hearing that He was from Galilee, sent Him to Herod, who was king in Israel at that time. And rightly does the Prophet add the name "Jarim," which means "a wild-vine, for Herod was not of the house of Israel, nor of that Israelitish vine which the Lord had brought out of Egypt, and "planted in a very fruitful hill," but was a wild vine, i.e. of an alien stock. Rightly, therefore, was he called "a wild-vine," because he in nowise sprung from the shoots of the vine of Israel. And whereas the Prophet used the phrase "xenium," "A pledge of friendship," this also corresponds, "For Herod and Pilate," as the Gospel witnesses, "from being enemies were made friends," and, as though in token of their reconciliation, each sent Jesus bound to the other. What matter, so long as Jesus, as Saviour, reconciles those who were at variance, and restores peace, and also brings back concord! Wherefore of this also it is written in Job, "May the Lord reconcile the hearts of the princes of the earth."

22. It is related that when Pilate would fain have released Him all the people cried out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him! This also the Prophet Jeremiah foretells, saying, in the person of the Lord Himself, "My inheritance is become to Me as a lion in the forest. He hath uttered his voice against Me, wherefore I have hated it. And therefore (saith He) I have forsaken and left My house. And again in another place, "Against whom have ye opened your mouth, and against whom have ye let loose your tongues? When He stood before His judge, it is written that "He held His peace. Many Scriptures testify of this. In the Psalms it is written, "I became as a man that beareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. And again, "I was as a deaf man, and heard not, and as one that is dumb and openeth not his mouth. And again another Prophet saith, "As a lamb before her shearer, so He opened not Ills mouth. In His humiliation His judgmentwas taken away. It is written that there was put on Him a crown of thorns. Of thishear in the Canticles the voice of God the Father marvelling at the iniquity of Jerusalem in the insult done to His Son: "Go forth and see, ye daughters of Jerusalem, the crown wherewith His mother hath crowned Him" Moreover, of the thorns another Prophet makes mention: "I looked that she should bring forth grapes, and she brought forth thorns, and instead of righteousness a cry.

But that thou mayest know the secrets of the mystery, it behoved Him, Who came to take away the sins of the world, to free the earth also from the curse, which it had received through the sin of the first man, when the Lord said "Cursed be the earth in thy labours: thorns: and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. For this cause, therefore, is Jesus crowned with thorns, that first sentence of condemnation might be remitted. He is led to the cross, and the life of the whole word is suspended on the wood of which it is made. I would point out how this also is confirmed by testimony from the Prophets. You find Jeremiah speaking of it thus, "Come and let us cast wood into His bread, and crush Him out of the land of the living. And again, Moses, mourning over them, says, "Thy life shall be suspended before thine eyes, and thou shall fear day and night, and shall not believe thy life. But we must pass on, for already we are exceeding our proposed measure of brevity, and are lengthening out our "short word" by a long dissertation. Yet we will add a few words more, test we should seem altogether to have passed over what we undertook.

23. It is written that when the side of Jesus was pierced "He shed thereout blood and water." This has a mystical meaning. For Himself had said, "Out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water." But He shed forth blood also, of which the Jews sought that it might be upon themselves and upon their children. He shed forth water, therefore, which might wash believers; He shed forth blood also which might condemn unbelievers. Yet it might be understood also as prefiguring the twofold grace of baptism, one that which is given by the baptism of water, the other that which is sought through martyrdom in the outpouring of blood, for both are called baptism. But if you ask further why our Lord is said to have poured forth blood and water from His side rather than from any other member, I imagine that by the rib in the side the woman is signified. Since the fountain of sin and death proceeded from the first woman, who was the rib of the first Adam, the fountain of redemption and life is drawn from the rib of the second Adam.

24. It is written that in our Lord's passion there was darkness over the earth from the sixth hour until the ninth. To this also you will find the Prophet witnessing, "Thy Sun shall go down at mid-day." And again, the Prophet Zechariah, "In that day there shall be no more light. There shall be cold and frost in one day, and that day known to the Lord; and it shall be neither day nor night, hut at evening time there shall be light" What plainer language could the Prophet have used for his words to seem not so much a prophecy of the future as a narrative of the past? He foretold both the cold and the frost. For Peter was warming himself at the fire because it was cold: and he was suffering cold not only in respect of the time (the early hour), but also of his faith. There is added, "and that day shall be known to the Lord; and it shall be neither day nor night." What is "neither day nor night?" Did he not plainly speak of the darkness interposed in the day, and then the light afterwards restored? That was not day, for it did not begin with sun-rise, neither was it complete night, for it did not, when the day was ended, receive its due space from the beginning or prolong it to the end; but the light which had been driven away by the crime of wicked men is restored at evening time. For after the ninth hour, the darkness is driven away, and the sun is restored to the world. Again, another Prophet witnesses of the same, "The light shall be darkened upon the earth in the day-time."

25. The Gospel further relates that the soldiers parted the garments of Jesus among themselves, and cast lots upon His vesture. The Holy Spirit provided that this also should be witnessed beforehand by the Prophets, for David says, "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they did cast lots." Nor were the Prophets silent even as to the robe, the scarlet robe, which the soldiers are said to have put upon Him in mockery. Listen to Isaiah, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, red in his garments from Bozrah? Wherefore are thy garments red, and thy raiment as though thou hadst trodden in the wine-press?" To which Himself replies, "I have trodden the wine-press alone, O daughter of Sion." For He alone it is Who hath not sinned, and hath taken away the sins of the world. For if by one man death could enter into the world, how much more by one man. Who was God also, could life be restored!

26. It is related also that vinegar was given Him to drink, or wine mingled with myrrh which is bitterer than gall. Hear what the Prophet has foretold of this: "They gave Me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty they gave Me vinegar to drink." Agreeably with which Moses, even in his day, said to the people, "Their vine is of the vineyards of Sodom, and their branch of Gomorrah; their grape is a grape of gall, and their cluster a cluster of bitterness." And again, the Prophet upbraiding them says, "Oh foolish people and unwise, have ye thus requited the Lord?" Moreover, in the Canticles the same things are foretold, where even the garden in which the Lord was crucified is indicated: "I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, and have gathered in my myrrh." Here the Prophet has plainly set forth the wine mingled with myrrh which the Lord has given Him to drink.27. Next it is written that "He gave up the ghost." This also had been foretold, by the Prophet, who says, addressing the Father in the Person of the Son. "Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." He is related also to have been buried, and a great stone laid at the door of the sepulchre. Hear what the

word of prophecy foretoldby Jeremiah concerning this also, "They have cut off my life in the pit, and have laid a stone upon Me." These words of the Prophet point most plainly to His burial. Here are yet others, "The righteous hath been taken away from beholding iniquity, and his place is in peace." And in another place, "I will give the malignant for his burial;" and yet once more, "He hath lain down and slept as a lion, and as a lion's whelp; who shall rouse Him tip?"

28. That He descended into hell is also evidently foretold in the Psalms, where it is said, "Thou hast brought Me also into the dust of the death." And again, "What profit is there in my blood, when I shall have descended into corruption?" And again, "I descended into the deep mire, where there is no bottom." Moreover, John says, "Art Thou He that shall come (into hell, without doubt), or do we look for another?" Whence also Peter says that "Christ being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit which dwells in Him, descended to the spirits who were shut up in prison, who in the days of Noah believed not, to preach unto them;" where also what He did in hell is declared. Moreover, the Lord says by the Prophet, as though speaking of the future, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou stiffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." Which again, in prophetic language he speaks of as actually fulfilled, "O Lord, Thou hast brought my soul out of hell: Thou hast saved me from them that go down into the pit." There follows next,-

29. The Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead. The glory of Christ's resurrection threw a lustre upon everything which before had the appearance of weakness and frailty. If a while since it seemed to you impossible that an immortal Being could die, you see now that He who has overcome death and is risen again cannot be mortal. But understand herein the goodness of the Creator, that so far as you by sinning have cast yourself down, so far has He descended in following you. And do not impute lack of power to God, the Creator of all things, by imagining his work to have ended in the fall into an abyss which He in His redemptive purpose was unable to reach. We speak of infernal and supernal, because we are bounded by the definite circumference of the body, and are confined within the limits of the region prescribed to us. But to God, Who is present everywhere and absent nowhere, what is infernal and what supernal? Notwithstanding, through the assumption of a body there is room for these also. The flesh which had been deposited in the sepulchre, is raised, that might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, "Thou wilt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. He returned, therefore, a victor from the dead, leading with Him the spoils of hell.

For He led forth those who were held in captivity by death, as He Himself had foretold, when He said, "When I shall be lifted up from the earth I shall draw all unto Me. To this the Gospel bears witness, when it says, "The graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and appeared unto many, and entered into the holy City," that city, doubtless, of which the Apostle says, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the Mother of us all. As also he says again to the Hebrews, "It became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, Who had brought many sons into glory, to make the Author of

their salvation perfect through suffering. Sitting, therefore, on the right hand of God in the highest heavens, He placed there that human flesh, made perfect through sufferings, which had fallen to death by the lapse of the first man, but was now restored by the virtue of the resurrection. Whence also the Apostle says, "Who hath raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places. For He was the potter, Who, as the Prophet Jeremiah teaches, "took up again with His hands, and formed anew, as it seemed good to Him, the vessel which had fallen from His hands and was broken in pieces.

And it seemed good to Him that the mortal and corruptible body which He had assumed, this body raised from the rocky sepulchre and rendered immortal and incorruptible, He should now place not on the earth but in heaven, and at His Father's right hand. The Scriptures of the Old Testament are full of these mysteries. No Prophet, no Lawgiver, no Psalmist is silent, but almost every one of the sacred pages speaks of them. It seems superfluous, therefore, to linger in collecting testimonies; vet we will cite some few, remitting those who desire to drink more largely to the well-springs of the divine volumes themselves.

30. It is said then in the Psalms, "I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, because the Lord sustained me. Again, in another place, "Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the groaning of the poor, now will I arise, saith the Lord. And elsewhere, as we have said above, "O Lord, thou hast brought my soul out of hell; Thou hast saved me from them that go down into the pit. And in another place, "Because Thou hast turned and quickened me, and brought me out of the deep of the earth again. In the 87th Psalm He is most evidently spoken of: "He became as a man without help, free among the dead. It is not said "a man," but "as a man. For in that He descended into hell, He was "as a man: but He was "free among the dead. because He could not be detained by death. And therefore in the one nature the power of human weakness, in the other the power of divine majesty is exhibited. The Prophet Hosea also speaks most manifestly of the third day in this wise, "After two days He will heal us; but on the third day we shall rise and shall live in His presence. This he says in the person of those who, rising with Him on the third day, are recalled from death to life. And they are the same persons who say, "On the third day we shall rise again, and shall live in His presence.

But Isaiah says plainly, "Who brought forth from the earth the great Shepherd of the sheep. Then, that the women were to see His resurrection, while the Scribes and Pharisees and the people disbelieved, this also Isaiah foretold in these words, "Ye women, who come from beholding, come: for it is a people that hath no understanding. But as to the women who are related to have gone to the sepulchre after the resurrection, and to have sought Him without finding, as Mary Magdalene, who is related to have come to the sepulchre before it was light, and not finding Him, to have said, weeping, to the angels who were there, "They have taken away the Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him" -even this is foretold in the Canticles: "On my bed I sought Him Whom my soul loveth; I sought Him in the night, and found Him not. Of those also who found Him, and held Him by the feet, it is foretold, in

the same book, "I will hold Him Whom my soul loveth, and will not let Him go. Take these passages, a few of many; for being intent on brevity we cannot heap together more.

31. He Ascended into Heaven, and Sitteth on the Right Hand of the Father: from Thence He Shall Come to Judge the Quick and the Dead. These clauses follow with suitable brevity at the end of this part of the Creed which treats of the Son. What is said is plain, but the question is how and in what sense it is to be understood. For to "ascend," and to "sit," and to "come," unless you understand the words in accordance with the dignity of the divine nature, appear to point to something of human weakness. For having consummated what was to be done on earth, and having recalled souls from the captivity of hell, He is spoken of as ascending up to heaven, as the Prophet had foretold, "Ascending up on high He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," those gifts, namely, which Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles, spoke of concerning the Holy Ghost, "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, He hath shed forth this gift which ye do see and hear. He gave the gift of the Holy Ghost to men, because the captives, whom the devil had before carried into hell through sin, Christ by His resurrection from death recalled to heaven. He ascended therefore into heaven, not where God the Word had not been before, for He was always in heaven, and abode in the Father, but where the Word made flesh had not been seated before.

Lastly, since this entrance within the gates of heaven seemed new to its ministers and princes, they say to one another, on seeing the nature of flesh penetrating into the secret recesses of heaven, as David full of the Holy Ghost, declares, "Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lift up ye everlasting gates, and the King of glory shall enter in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord might in battle. Which words are spoken not with reference to the power of the divine nature, but with reference to the novelty of flesh ascending to the right hand of God. The same David says elsewhere, "God hath ascended jubilantly, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. For conquerors are wont to return from battle with the sound of the trumpet. Of Him also it is said, "Who buildeth up His ascent in heaven. And again, "Who hath ascended above the cherubims, flying upon the wings of the winds."

32. To sit at the right hand of the Father is a mystery belonging to the Incarnation. For it does not befit that incorporeal nature without the assumption of flesh; neither is the excellency of a heavenly seat sought for the divine nature, but for the human. Whence it is said of Him, "Thy seat, O God, is prepared from thence forward; Thou art from everlasting." The seat, then, whereon the Lord Jesus was to sit, was prepared from everlasting, "in whose name every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things tinder the earth; and every tongue shall confess to Him that Jesus is Lord in the glory of God the Father;" of Whom also David thus speaks, "The Lord said unto my Lord. Sit Thou on my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." Referring to which words the Lord in the Gospel said to the Pharisees, "If therefore David in spirit calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son?" By which He shewed that according to the Spirit He was the Lord, according to the flesh He was the Son, of David. Whence also the Lord Himself says in another place,

"Verily I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power of God." And the Apostle Peter says of Christ, "Who is on the right hand of God, seated in the heavens." And Paul also, writing to the Ephesians, "According to the working of the might of His power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him on His right hand."

33. That He shall come to judge the quick and the dead we are taught by many testimonies of the divine Scriptures. But before we cite what the Prophets say on this point, we think it necessary to remind you that this doctrine of the faith would have us daily solicitous concerning the coming of the Judge, that we may so frame our conduct as having to give account to the Judge who is at hand. For this is what the Prophet said of the than who is blessed, that, "He ordereth his words in judgment." When, however, He is said to judge the quick and the dead. this does not mean that some will come to judgment who are still living, others who are already dead; but that He will judge both souls and bodies, where, by souls are meant "the quick," and the bodies "the dead;" as also the Lord Himself saith in the Gospel, "Fear not them who are able to kill the body, but are not able to hurt the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."

34. Now let us shew briefly, if you will, that these things were foretold by the Prophets. You will yourself, since you are so minded, gather together more from the ample range of the Scriptures. The Prophet Malachi says, "Behold the Lord Almighty shall come, and who shall abide the day of His coming, or who shall abide the sight of Him? For He doth come as the fire of a furnace and as fuller's soap: and He shall sit, refining and purifying as it were gold and silver. But that thou mayest know more certainly Who this Lord is of Whom these things are said, hear what the Prophet Daniel also foretells: "I saw," saith he, "in the vision of the night, and, behold, One like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came nigh to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before Him; and there was given to Him dominion, and honour, and a kingdom. And all peoples, tribes, and languages shall serve Him. And His dominion is an eternal dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed. By these words we are taught not only of His coming and judgment, but of His dominion and kingdom, that His dominion is eternal, and His kingdom indestructible, without end; as it is said in the Creed, "and of His kingdom there shall be no end. So that one who says that Christ's kingdom shall one day have an end is very far from the faith.

Yet it behoves us to know that the enemy is wont to counterfeit this salutary advent of Christ with cunningfraud in order to deceive the faithful, and in the place of the Son of Man, Who is looked for as coming in the majesty of His Father, to prepare the Son of Perdition with prodigies and lying signs, that instead of Christ he may introduce Antichrist into the world; of whom the Lord Himself warned the Jews beforehand in the Gospels, "Because I am come in My Father's Name, and ye received Me not, another will come in his own name, and him ye will receive. And again, "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand. Daniel,

therefore, in his visions speaks very fully and amply of the coming of that delusion: but it is not worth while to cite instances, for we have enlarged enough already; we therefore refer any one who may wish to know more concerning these matters to the visions themselves. The Apostle also himself says, "Let no than deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above everything that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as though himself were God.

And soon afterwards, "Then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And again, shortly afterwards, "And therefore the Lord shall send unto them strong delusion, that they may believe a lie, that all may be judged who have not believed the truth. For this reason, therefore, is this "delusion" foretold unto us by the words of Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, lest any one should mistake the coming of Antichrist for the coming of Christ. But as the Lord Himself says, "When they shall say unto you, lo, here is Christ, or lo, He is there, believe it not. For many false Christs and false prophets shall come and shall seduce many. But let us see how He hath pointed out the judgment of the true Christ: "As the lightning shineth from the east unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. When, therefore, the true Lord Jesus Christ shall come, He will sit and set up his throne of judgment. As also He says in the Gospel, "He shall separate the sheep from the goats," that is, the righteous from the unrighteous; as the Apostle writes, "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every man may receive the awards due to the body, according as he hath done, whether they be good or evil.

Moreover, the judgment will be not only for deeds, but for thoughts also, as the same Apostle saith, "Their thoughts mutually accusing or else excusing One another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men. But on these points let this suffice. Next follows in the order of the faith,-

35. And in the Holy Ghost. What has been delivered above somewhat at large concerning Christ relates to the mystery of His Incarnation and of His Passion, and, by thus intervening, as belonging to His Person, has somewhat delayed the mention of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, if the divine nature alone be taken into account, as in the beginning of the Creed we say "I believe in God the Father Almighty," and afterwards, "In Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord," so in like manner we add, "And in the Holy Ghost." But all of these particulars which are spoken of above concerning Christ relate, as we have said, to the dispensation of the flesh (to His Incarnation). By the mention of the Holy Spirit, the mystery of the Trinity is completed. For as one Father is mentioned, and there is no other Father, and one only-begotten Son is mentioned, and there is no other only-begot-ten Son, so also there is one Holy Ghost, and there cannot be another Holy Ghost. In order, therefore, that the Persons may be distinguished, the terms expressing relationship (the properties) are varied,

whereby the first is understood to be the Father, of Whom are all things, Who Himself also hath no Father, the second the Son, as born of the Father, and the third the Holy Ghost, as proceeding from both, and sanctifying all things. But that in the Trinity one and the same Godhead may be set forth, since, prefixing the preposition "in" we say that we believe "in God the Father," so also we say, "in Christ His Son," so also "in the Holy Ghost." But our meaning will be made more plain in what follows. For the Creed proceeds,-

36. "The Holy Church; The Forgiveness of Sin, the Resurrection of This Flesh." It is not said, "In the holy Church," nor "In the forgiveness of sins," nor "In the resurrection of the flesh." For if the preposition "in" had been added, it would have had the same force as in the preceding articles. But now in those clauses in which the faith concerning the Godhead is declared, we say "In God the Father," and "In Jesus Christ His Son," and "In the Holy Ghost," but in the rest, where we speak not of the Godhead but of creatures and mysteries, the preposition "in " is not added. We do not say "We believe in the holy Church," but "We believe the holy Church," not as God, but as the Church gathered together to God: and we believe that there is "forgiveness of sins;" we do not say "We believe in the forgiveness of sins;" and we believe that there will be a "Resurrection of the flesh;" we do not say "We believe in the resurrection of the flesh." By this monosyllabic preposition, therefore, the Creator is distinguished from the creatures, and things divine are separated from things human.

This then is the Holy Ghost, who in the Old Testament inspired the Law and the Prophets, in the New the Gospels and the Epistles. Whence also the Apostle says, "All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for instruction." And therefore it seems proper in this place to enumerate, as we have learnt from the tradition of the Fathers, the books of the New and of the Old Testament, which, according to the tradition of our forefathers, are believed to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, and have been handed down to the Churches of Christ. 37. Of the Old Testament, therefore, first of all there have been handed down five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Then Jesus Nave, (Joshua the son of Nun), The Book of Judges together with Ruth; then fourbooks of Kings (Reigns), which the Hebrews reckon two; the Book of Omissions, which is entitled the Book of Days (Chronicles), and two books of Ezra (Ezra and Nehemiah), which the Hebrews reckon one, and Esther; of the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; moreover of the twelve (minor) Prophets, one hook; Job also and the Psalms of David, each one book. Solomon gave three books to the Churches, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles. These comprise the books of the Old Testament.

Of the New there are four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; the Acts of the Apostles, written by Luke; fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, two of the Apostle Pete, one of James, brother of the Lord and Apostle, one of Jude, three of John, the Revelation of John. These are the books which the Fathers have comprised within the Canon, and from which they would have us deduce the proofs of our faith. 38. But it should be known that there are also other books which our fathers call not "Canonical" but "Ecclesiastical:" that is to say, Wisdom, called the Wisdom of Solomon, and another Wisdom, called the Wisdom of the

Son of Syrach, which last-mentioned the Latins called by the general title Ecclesiasticus, designating not the author of the book, but the character of the writing. To the same class belong the Book of Tobit, and the Book of Judith, and the Books of the Maccabees. In the New Testament the little book which is called the Book of the Pastor of Hermas, [and that] which is called The Two Ways, or the Judgment of Peter; all of which they would have read in the Churches, but not appealed to for the confirmation of doctrine. The other writings they have named "Apocrypha." These they would not have read in the Churches.

These are the traditions which the Fathers have handed down to us, which, as I said, I have thought it opportune to set forth in this place, for the instruction of those whoare being taught the first elements of the Church and of the Faith, that they may know from what fountains of the Word of God their draughts must be taken. 39. We come next in the order of belief to the Holy Church. We have mentioned above why the Creed does not say here, as in the preceding article, "In the Holy Church."They, therefore, who were taught above to believe in one God, under the mystery of the Trinity, must believe this also, that there is one holy Church in which there is one faith and one baptism, in which is believed one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, and one Holy Ghost. This is that holy Church which is without spot or wrinkle. For many others have gathered together Churches, as Marcion, and Valentinus, and Ebion, and Manichaeus, and Arius, and all the other heretics. But those Churches are not without spot or wrinkle of unfaithfulness. And therefore the Prophet said of them, "I hate the Church of the malignants, and I will not sit with the ungodly." But of this Church which keeps tim faith of Christ entire, hear what the Holy Spirit says in the Canticles, "My Glove is one; the perfect one of her mother is one." He then who receives this faith in the Church let him not turn aside in the Council of vanity, and let him not enter in with those who practise iniquity.

For Marcion's assembly is a Council of vanity in that he denies that the Father of Christ is God, the Creator, who by His Son made the world. Ebion's is a Council of vanity since he teaches that, while we believe in Christ, we are withal to observe the circumcision of the flesh, the keeping of the Sabbath, the accustomed sacrifices, and all the other ordinances according to the letter of the Law. Manichaeus' is a Council of vanity in regard of his teaching; first in that he calls himself the Paraclete, then that he says that the world was made by an evil God, denies God the Creator, rejects the Old Testament, asserts two natures, one good the other evil, mutually opposing one another, affirms that men's souls are co-eternal with God, that, according to the Pythagoreans, they return through divers circles of nativity into cattle and animals and beasts, denies the resurrection of our flesh, maintains that the passion and nativity of the Lord were not in the verity of flesh, but only in appearance. It was the Council of vanity when Paul of Samosata and his successor Photinus afterwards taught, that Christ was not born of the Father before the world, but had His beginning from Mary, and believed not that being God He was born man, but that of man He was made God.

It was the Council of vanity when Arius and Eunomius taught as their determinate opinion that the Son of God was not born of the very substance of the Father, but was created out of

nothing, and that the Son of God had a beginning, and is inferior to the Father: moreover they affirm that the Holy Ghost is not only inferior to the Son, but is also a ministering Spirit. Theirs also is a Council of vanity who confess indeed that the Son is of the substance of the Father, but distinguish and separate the Holy Spirit, while yet the Saviour shews in the Gospel that the power and Godhead of the Trinity are one and the same, saying, "Baptize all nations in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. and it is plainly impious for man to put asunder what God bath joined together. That also is the Council of vanity which a pertinacious and wicked contention formerly gathered together, affirming that Christ assumed human flesh indeed, but not a rational soul withal, since Christ conferred one and the same salvation on the flesh, and the animal soul, and the reason and mind of man. That also is the Council of vanity which Donatus drew together throughout Africa, by charging the Church with traditorship (delivering up the sacred books), and with which Novatus disturbed men's minds by denying the grant of repentance to the lapsed, and condemning second marriages, though contracted possibly of necessity.

All of these then avoid as congregations of malignants. Those also, if such there be, who are said to assert that the Son of God does not see or know the Father, as Himself is known and seen by the Father; or that the kingdom of Christ will have an end; or that the flesh will not be raised in the complete restoration of its substance; these also who deny that there will be a just judgment of God in respect of all, and affirm that the devil will be absolved from the punishment of damnation due to him. To all these, I say, let the believer turn a deaf ear. But hold fast by the holy Church, which confesses God the Father Almighty, and His only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Holy Ghost, of one concordant and harmonious substance, believes that the Son of God was born of the Virgin, suffered for man's salvation, rose again from the dead in the same flesh in which he was born; and, lastly, hopes that He will come the Judge of all, through Whom also both the Forgiveness of Sins and the Resurrection of the Flesh are preached.

40. As to the Forgiveness of Sins, it ought to be enough simple to believe. For who would ask the cause or the reason when a Prince grants indulgence? When the liberality of an earthly sovereign is no fit subject for discussion, shall man's temerity discuss God's largess? For the Pagans are wont to ridicule us, saying that we deceive ourselves, fancying that crimes committed in deed can be purged by words. And they say, "Can he who has committed murder be no murderer, and he who has committed adultery be accounted no adulterer? How then shall one guilty of crimes of this sort all of a sudden be made holy? But to this, as I said, we answer better by faith than by reason. For he is King of all who hath promised it: He is Lord of heaven and earth who assures us of it. Would you have me refuse to believe that He who made me a man of the dust of the earth can of a guilty person make me innocent? And that He who when I was blind made me see, or when I was deaf made me bear, or lame walk, can recover for me my lost innocence? And to come to the witness of Nature-to kill a man is not always criminal, but to kill of malice, not by law, is criminal. It is not the deed then, in such mailers, that condemns me, because sometimes it is rightly done, but the evil intention of the mind.

If then my mind which had been rendered criminal, and in which the sin originated, is corrected, why should I seem to you incapable of being made innocent, who before was criminal? For if it is plain, as I have shewn, that crime consists not in the deed but in the will, as an evil will, prompted by an evil demon, has made me obnoxious to sin and death, so the will prompted by the good God, being changed to good, hath restored me to innocence and life. It is the same also in all other crimes. In this way there is found to be no opposition between our faith and natural reason, while forgiveness of sins is imputed not to deeds, which when once done cannot be changed, but to the mind, which it is certain can be converted from bad to good.

41. This last article, which affirms the Resurrection of the Flesh, concludes the sum of all perfection with succinct brevity. Although on this point also the faith of the Church is impugned, not only by Gentiles, but by heretics likewise. For Valentinus altogether denies the resurrection of the flesh, so do the Manicheans, as we shewed above. But they refuse to listen to the Prophet Isaiah when he says, "The dead shall rise, and they who are in the graves shall be raised," or to most wise Daniel, when he declares, "Then they who are in the dust of the earth shall arise, these to eternal life, but those to shame and confusion." Yet even in the Gospels, which they appear to receive, they ought to learn from our Lord and Saviour, Who says, when instructing the Sadducees, "As touching the resurrection of the dead: have ye not read how He saith to Moses in the Bush, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob? Now God is not the God of the dead but of the living." Where in what goes before He declares what and how great is the glory of the resurrection, saying, "But in the resurrection of the dead they will neither marry or be given in marriage, but will be as the angels of God." But the virtue of the resurrection confers on men an angelical state, so that they who have risen from the earth shall not live again on the earth with the brute animals but with angels in heaven-yet those only whose purer life has fitted them for this-those, namely, who even now preserving the flesh of their soul in chastity, have brought it into subjection to the Holy Spirit, and thus with every stain of sins done away and changed into spiritual glory by the virtue of santification, have been counted worthy to have it admitted into the society of angels.

42. But unbelievers cry, "How can the flesh, which has been putrified and dissolved, or changed into dust, sometimes also swallowed up by the sea, and dispersed by the waves, be gathered up again, and again made one, and a man's body formed anew out of it?" To whom our first answer is in Paul's words: "Thou feel, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body, which shall be, but bare grain of wheat or of some other seed: but God giveth it a body as seemeth good to Him." Did you not believe that which you see taking place every year in the seeds which you cast into the ground will come to pass in your flesh which by the law of God is sown in the earth? Why, pray, have you so mean an opinion of God's power that you do not believe it possible for the scattered dust of which each man's flesh was composed to be re-collected and restored to its own original fabric? Do you refuse to admit the factwhen you see mortal ingenuity search for veins of metal deeply buried in the ground, and the experienced eye

discover gold where the inexperienced thinks there is nothing but earth? Why should we refuse to grant these things to Him who made man, when he whom He made can do so much? And when mortal ingenuity discovers that gold has its own proper vein, and silver another, and that a far different vein of copper, and diverse and distinct veins of iron and lead lie concealed beneath what has the appearance of earth, shall divine power be thought unable to discover and distinguish the component particles belonging to each man's flesh, even though they seem to be dispersed?

43. But let us endeavour to assist those souls which fail in their faith through reasons drawn from nature. If one should mix different sorts of seeds together and sow them indiscriminately in the earth, will not the grain of each several kind, wherever it may have been thrown, shoot forth at the proper time in accordance with its own specific nature so as to reproduce the condition of its own form and its own body. Thus then the substance of each individual flesh, though its particles have been variously and diversely scattered, has within it an immortal principle, since it is the flesh of an immortal soul, and at the time which God in His good pleasure shall appoint, there will be collected from the earth and drawn to it, its own component particles, which will be restored to that form which death had formerly dissolved. And thus it will come to pass that to each soul will be restored, not a confused or foreign body but its own which it had when alive, in order that the flesh together with its own soul may for the conflicts of the present life either be crowned if undefiled, or punished if defiled. And accordingly our Church. in teaching the faith instead of "the Resurrection of the flesh," as the Creed is delivered in other Churches, guardedly adds the pronoun "this"-"the resurrection of this flesh." "Of this," that is, no doubt, of the person who rehearses the Creed, making the sign of the cross upon his forehead, while he says the word, that each believer may know that his flesh, if he have kept it clean from sin, will be a vessel of honour, useful to the Lord, prepared for every good work; but, if defiled by sins, that it will be a vessel of wrath destined to destruction.

But now, concerning the glory of the resurrection and the greatness of the promise by which God has bound Himself, if any one desires to be more fully informed, he will find notices in almost all the divine volumes, out of which, simply by way of bringing them to remembrance, we will mention a few passages in the present place, and then make an end of the work which you have enjoined. The Apostle Paul makes use of such arguments as the following in asserting that mortal flesh will rise again. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. And if Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain and your faith is vain. And presently afterwards, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming, then cometh the end. And afterways he adds, "Behold I shew you a mystery: We shall all rise indeed, but we shall not all be changed; or as other copies read, "We shall all sleep, indeed but we shall not all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

However, whichever be the true text, writing to the Thessalonians, he says, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, as the others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so those also who sleep through Jesus shall God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them that sleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead who are in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

44. But that you may not suppose this to be a novel doctrine peculiar to Paul, I will adduce also what the Prophet Ezekiel foretold by the Holy Ghost. "Behold," saith he, "I will open your graves and bring you forth out of your graves." Let me recall, further, how Job, who abounds in mystical language, plainly predicts the resurrection of the dead. "There is hope for a tree; for if it be cut down it will sprout again, and its shoot shall never fail. But if its root have waxed old in the earth, and the stock thereof be dead in the dust, yet through the scent of water it will flourish again, and put forth shoots as a young plant. But man, if he be dead, is he departed and gone? And mortal man, if he have fallen, shall he be no more?" Dost thou not see, that in these words he is appealing to men's sense of shame, as it were, and saying, "Is mankind so foolish, that when they see the stock of a tree which has been cut down shooting forth again from the ground, and dead wood again restored to life, they imagine their own case. to have no likeness to that of wood or trees?" But convince you that Job's words are to be read as a question, when he says, "But mortal man when he hath fallen shall he not rise again?" take this proof from what follows; for he adds immediately, "But if a man be dead, shall he live?" And presently afterwards he says, "I will wait till I be made again;" and afterwards he repeats the same: "Who shall raise again upon the earth my skin, which is now draining this cup of suffering?"

45. Thus much in proof of the profession which we make in the Creed when we say "The resurrection of this flesh." As to the addition "this" see how consonant it is with all that we have cited from the divine books. What else does Job signify in the place which we explained above, "He will raise again my skin, which is now draining this cup of suffering," that is, which is undergoing these torments? Does he not plainly say that there will be a resurrection of this flesh, this, I mean, which is now undergoing the extremity of trials and tribulations? Moreover, when the Apostle says, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," are not his words those of one who in a manner touches his body and places his finger upon it? This body then, which is now corruptible, will by the grace of the resurrection be incorruptible, and this which is now mortal will be clothed with virtues of immortality, that, as "Christ rising from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him," so those who shall rise in Christ shall never again feel corruption or death, not because the nature of flesh will have been cast off, but because its condition and quality will have been changed. There will be a body, therefore, which will rise from the dead incorruptible and immortal, not only of the righteous, but also of sinners;

of the righteous that they may be able ever to abide with Christ, of sinners that they may undergo without end the punishment due to them.

46. That the righteous shall ever abide with Christ our Lord we have proved above, where we have shewn that the Apostle says, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. And do not marvel that the flesh of the saints is to be changed into such a glorious condition at the resurrection as to be caught up to meet God, suspended in the clouds and borne in the air, since the same Apostle, setting forth the great things which God bestows on them that love Him, says, "Who shall change our vile body that it may be made like unto His glorious body. It is nowise absurd then, if the bodies of the saints are said to be raised up into the air, seeing that they are said to be renewed after the image of Christ's body, which is seated at God's right hand. But this also the holy Apostle adds, speaking either of himself or of others of his own place or merit, "He will raise us up together with Christ and make us sit together in the heavenly places. Whence,since God's saints bare these promises and an infinite number like them respecting the resurrection of the righteous, it will now not be difficult to believe those also which the Prophets have foretold, namely, that "the righteous shall shine as the sun and as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom of God.

For who will think it difficult that they should have the brightness of the sun, and be adorned with the splendour of the stars and of this firmament, for whom the life and conversation of God's angels are being prepared in heaven, or who are represented as being hereafter to be conformed to the glory of Christ's body? In reference to which glory, promised by the Saviour's mouth, the holy Apostle says, "It is sown as an animal body; it will rise a spiritual body. For if it is true, as it certainly is true, that God will vouchsafe to associate every one of the righteous and of the saints in companionship with the angels, it is certain that He will change their bodies also into the glory of a spiritual body.

47. Nor let this promise seem to you contrary to the natural structure of the body. For if we believe, according to what is written, that God took clay of the earth and made man, and that the origin of our body was this, that, by the will of God, earth was changed into flesh, why does it seem absurd to you or contrary to reason if, on the same principles on which earth is said to be advanced to all animal body, an animal body in turn should be believed to be advanced to a spiritual body? These things anti many like these you will find in the divine Scriptures concerning the resurrection of the righteous. There will be given to sinners also, as we said above, a condition of incorruption and immortality at the resurrection, that, as God assigns this state to the righteous for perpetuity of glory, so He may assign the same to sinners for prolongation of confusion and punishment. For this also the Prophet's words, which we referred to above, state clearly: "Many shall rise from the dust of the earth, some to life eternal, and others to confusion and eternal shame."

ever. Amen.

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