Commentary on Romans

Theodoret of Cyrus (c. AD 393–458)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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Introduction

COMMENTARY OF THEODORET, BISHOP OF CYRUS IN SYRIA, ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. Theodoret was born at Antioch, A.D. 386. His studies were pursued under Theodore of Mopsuista and Chrysostom, from the works of the latter of whom the present commentary is by many esteemed little more than an abridgement. This, however, on comparing the writings of both those Fathers, can hardly perhaps be admitted in its fullest sense, but rather in that in which Theodoret himself represents it, when in his preface to St. Paul's Epistles, speaking not of Chrysostom, or Theodore, who himself also had composed an exposition of those Epistles, but generally, he says, Τὰς ἀφορμὰς ἐκ τῶν μακαρίων συλλέξω πατέρων, συντομίας δὲ ὅτι μάλιστα φροντιῶ. At the death of his parents he distributed his whole inheritance to the poor, reserving nothing for himself. About the year 420 he was, against his own will, appointed to the bishopric of Cyrus, to which diocese he became a great benefactor, both spiritually and temporally; extirpating heresy oftentimes at the risk of his life; in private charity and public improvements expending almost all his church revenues; neither receiving himself, nor permitting his domestics to receive any thing of any man to conciliate favour; but throughout fulfilling the part of a good and active shepherd in all his doings and conduct. Although in those troublous times of mutual accusation and recrimination, suffering awhile under suspicions in the matters of Nestorius, his innocence and orthodoxy were finally established at the council of Chalcedon, under the emperor Marcian, A. D. 451, from whence retiring to his diocese he passed the rest of his life in quiet, engaged in his labours on the holy Scriptures, and at length died A. D. 457.

"Of all the Fathers, who have composed works of different kinds, Theodoret is one of those," says Dupin (tom. iii. part 2,) "who has been very happy in every one of them. There are some who have been excellent writers in matters of controversy, but bad interpreters. Others have been good historians, but bad divines. Some have good success in morality, who have no skill in doctrinal points. And very rare is it for those who have addicted themselves to works of piety to be good critics. Theodoret had all these qualities, and it may be said, that he has equally deserved the name of a good interpreter, divine, historian, writer of controversies, apologist for religion, and author of works of piety. But he has principally excelled

in his compositions upon the holy Scripture, in which, according to the judgment of the learned Photius, be has outdone almost all other commentators. 'He passes over nothing,' says that writer, 'which needs explication, nor can we find any who unfolds all manner of difficulties better, and leaves fewer things obscure.'"

It may be remarked, in conclusion, that the points of divinity which he chiefly urges, and of which indeed he seems never to lose sight, are those connected with that leading mystery of our religion, the divinity and consubstantiality of our Lord, both because this was the specific point on which the heretics of his day chiefly erred, and against the denial of which consequently he directed his arguments: and that he distinctly maintained the procession of the Holy Spirit from the [Greek]. Rom. viii. 11. [Greek]. Answer to Cyril's Anathem. &c. Pearson on the Creed. Art. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

Various and comprehensive is the doctrine which the holy apostle unfolds in the present epistle. Its general scope is this:—worthy of all awe and adoration to the sincere believer as is the mystery of the divine incarnation, clearly manifesting, as it does, the loving mercy of God; they nevertheless who are involved in the darkness of infidelity, and have not admitted the light of intellectual illumination, scorn that which not even the company of angels can worthily celebrate, as the inspired apostle distinctly says in his Epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. i. 18). ”For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to them that are saved it is the power of God.” In this Epistle to the Romans, therefore, he exhibits the indispensable necessity of this saving gospel, together with its utility and advantage to all mankind, Jews or Greeks. In order to which, in the first place he convicts the Greeks of having palpably corrupted the moral sense of good and evil, implanted in their constitution by their Maker, and transgressed the natural law; and secondly, the Jews of having, although in the enjoyment of the written instructions of the divine laws, yet rejected the benefit arising from them, and rendered themselves thereby obnoxious to the heavier retribution. After this, he shows that our God and Saviour came not for the condemnation and punishment of sinners, but to bring pardon for their offences, to promise victory over death, and proclaim eternal life.

Again, perceiving that the Jews clung but too much to the law, and those who savoured of the errors of Marcion and Valentine, with the Manichees, too much altogether undervalued and condemned it, as an expert general surrounded on all sides by his enemies strikes down first one, and then the other, so does the holy apostle break in pieces, by divine grace, the band of the heretics, and all the array of the Jews. For how does he conduct the argument? By neither elevating the law too high, because of the extravagance of the Jews, nor giving any occasion for reproach to the profane heretics, but demonstrating that it taught all that was needful, and brought in the doctrine of justification, although incompetent to convey justification itself by reason of the infirmity of those under it; and showing that faith brings to effect the design of the law, and what it fain would do, but cannot, it perfects through the grace of the thrice holy Spirit. By all which we learn, how con-

tinually regardful of mankind is God our Creator, in that not only did he implant in our nature the power of discriminating between good and evil, but also by the very works of his creation led such as were willing to piety and holiness, for although all were not thus willing to see the truth, they who were had full enjoyment of it, as they desired.

He next further instructs us, that the God of all turned not to this plan of our salvation, as though in a change of council from any of his former designs, but as having long ago foretold it in the ancient prophets; he sets forth the cause of the rejection of the Jews; and admonishes the believing Gentiles not to boast over them; exhorting them to lead the way in the gospel. With these doctrinal lessons he joins recommendations to practical virtue, at once displaying the truth, and reforming the morals. Such then is the general argument of the epistle, all the particulars in which the interpretation of the separate passages will now clearly make known to us.

Chapter I.

1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called an Apostle. Governors and generals superscribe their letters with the designations of their respective dignities, priding themselves thereon, and puffed up in fancied greatness by each fresh tide of honour; the holy apostle is content to call himself ”one born out of due time,” and ”the chief of sinners,” and to pronounce himself ” unworthy the apostleship;” while yet, for the benefit of such as should receive his epistles, he prefixes to them the appellations which by grace he had obtained, that so, by seeing the honours belonging to the writer, they might the more readily and zealously welcome them. And he begins by Paul, not as having been so named of old by his parents, but as preferred to it after his call, as was Simon to that of Peter, and the sons of Zebedee to those of Sons of Thunder, Jacob to that of Israel, and Abram to that of Abraham. Next, servant of Jesus Christ, whom infidels reviled as dead and crucified, and a mere carpenter’s son, and yet whose service the apostle notwithstanding chose above any sovereignty.

Then he speaks of himself as called, alluding to his divine call, and adds the name an apostle, teaching us that this also he had gained. For since our Lord gave this designation to the twelve, so the holy apostle here also places it, not as in a presumptuous self-assumption thereof, but as having had it bestowed upon him by his Master himself. ”For depart,” said he unto him, ”because I will send thee for hence unto the Gentiles,” (Acts xxii. 21;) and this be farther proves by what follows, namely; separated unto the gospel of God. I am not self-elected, exclaims he, but have been entrusted with the ministry of the word by God himself. Now it was the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who thus set him apart; for that the Father did so, he himself declares in his Epistle to the Galatians (i. 15, 16). ” It pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me; that I might preach him among the heathen and that, again, the only- begotten Son did this likewise, is evident where the apostle tells us in the Acts (xxiii. 21) how the Lord was seen of him in the temple, commanding him to hasten and go out, because the Jews would not receive his preaching, adding, ”Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.”

And the very same thing he said to Ananias, when he was hesitating and drawing back, (Acts ix. 15;) ”Go thy way, for this man is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.” And so St Luke also tells us, (xiii. 2,) that ”as the prophets were ministering unto the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” Evident therefore from hence is the equality of the Trinity. And so also the gospel he now speaks of as the gospel of God, and a little onward as the gospel of the Son, saying, ” for God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son.” This I have not noted on idly, or to no purpose, but in order to point out how indifferently the teachers of the truth mention the same things, sometimes as those of the Father, and sometimes as those of the Son.

The doctrines also preached he designates as the gospel, because they promise the supply of so many blessings, announcing reconciliation with God, the overthrow of the devil, forgiveness of sins, conquest over death, the resurrection of the deceased, eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven. Having then thus stated that he had been separated to the gospel of God, the holy apostle next proceeds immediately to prove in the first place its antiquity, lest any should be foolish enough to except against it as a novelty, and so reject it; and says, 2. Which he has promised afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures, for the Old Testament is full of predictions concerning the Lord. Nor does he call them holy for no reason, but firstly to show that he acknowledged their inspiration; secondly, as excluding all other writings, for the inspired book alone contains all things we can need. And he adds the nature of the promise,— 3: Concerning his Son, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh. By all the prophets, says he, God has prophesied of the things relating to his Son, who, in his nature begotten of him before all eternity, yet made himself the son of David, inasmuch as he took his human nature, of the seed of David. Having then thus mentioned David, it was necessary that he should subjoin, according to the flesh, lest he should be considered as by nature the son of David, and by grace only the Son of God;

for the addition, according to the flesh, indicates that as to his divinity he is in truth the Son of God the Father. For indeed this phrase we can never find applied to those who simply are such as they appear; as St. Matthew the evangelist witnesses, when saying, Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judah, and so going through the whole genealogy in order, he never yet uses this expression, according to the flesh, seeing that it suited not them which were mere men; and so then the divine incarnate Word of God being not only man, but God also from eternity, the apostle, having mentioned David, necessarily adds according to the flesh, clearly to teach us how he was indeed the Son of God, and how yet made to be of David; 4. And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Before his cross and passion, not only to the other Jews, but even to the apostles themselves, our Lord Christ did not seem to be God; for they were misled by his perfect humanity, when they saw him eating and drinking, and sleeping, and becoming fatigued; nor could even his miracles bring them to this conviction; and thus, for instance, when they beheld the miracle at the sea of Tiberias (Matt. viii. 27,) they cried out, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" In full accordance with which, our Lord said unto them, (John xvi. 12,) "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them yet. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth and again, (Luke xxiv. 49,) "Tarry ye here in this city, until ye shall be endued with power from on high, the holy Ghost coming upon you."

Before his passion, then, such were the ideas they entertained of him; but after his resurrection and ascension to heaven, and the illumination of the thrice holy Spirit, and the various miracles which by the invocation of his sacred name they performed, all the faithful knew that be is God, and the only-begotten Son of God. This then the holy apostle teaches here, that he, who according to the flesh was designated as the son of David, was proved and set forth as the Son of God, in the power exercised by the thrice holy Spirit, after the resurrection from the dead of the same our Lord Jesus Christ; 5. By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name. For he himself sent us forth as teachers, committing to us the salvation of all nations, and giving grace suitable to that preaching, that they who hear it may hearken unto us, and believe the word. 6. Among whom are ye also called of Jesus Christ. Of which nations, whose husbandry is thus entrusted to me, ye are part; for think not that I am appropriating what belongs to another, or seizing on fields allotted to some one else, for the Lord hath constituted me the minister of all the Gentiles; 7. To all that are beloved of God in Rome, called saints.

He at the same time honours them with such high and divine appellations, and represses every rising of arrogance. For, in the first place, instead of making any distinction between them as the masters of the world, and the other nations, he joins them with them; and, secondly, he writes to all, without respect of persons, addressing together, servants, beggars, and working-people; the wealthy, and the powerful; for that there were some of the latter who believed, he shows in the Epistle to the Philippians, (iv. 22,) saying, "They that are of Caesar's household salute you." It is evident, indeed, that he writes not to the unbelieving, but to those already converted, wherefore he calls them both called, and saints, exalting them with such spiritual appellations, and inflaming thereby their love towards their great Benefactor. Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus then he completes the introduction to his letter, ”Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, to all that in Rome are beloved of God, called saints; grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;” the rest which intervenes he threw in between, in order to mark whose messenger be had been constituted, and what were the tidings wherewith he had been entrusted, and to whom he had been commissioned to bring them. And he invokes on them first God’s grace, because by this it was that believers obtained salvation; and next peace, by which he indicates the full establishment of virtue, since he alone has peace with God who has embraced an evangelical course, seeking ever to serve him in all things. And of these gifts he shows that not the Father only, but the Son also is the giver, in saying, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; by which expression he plainly teaches the equality of the Father and the Son. 8. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

The apostle speaks not thus to flatter them, but in strict truth. For it was impossible that what happened at Rome should not be known throughout all the world; since there anciently the Roman emperors had their palaces, and from thence the monarchs proceeded, and the collectors of tribute throughout the different cities, and there resorted all who sought the favour of royalty, by all of whom it was spread abroad, that Rome bad received the doctrine of Christ; which was of the greatest benefit to those who heard it, on which account the holy apostle returns thanks to God for the same. And now, since he had declared that he had been appointed the teacher of all the gentiles, and yet during so long a time had neither come himself unto them, nor instructed them in the truth by letters, he is constrained to speak in his own defence, and calls God to witness his affection towards them. 9. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; 10. Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

There are many kinds of service; for he who prays to God is serving him, and he who fasts; and he who applies himself to the diving oracles; and indeed even he who busies himself in providing hospitality to strangers; and here then the holy apostle speaks of serving God in bringing the gospel of his Son to the gentiles, and serving in the spirit, that is, in the spiritual gift conferred on him; so pleasing to God did he feel was the glory of his Son. And, expressing himself critically, he does not simply say that he begged for this entrance unto them, but according to the will of God, that is, if it so please the Ruler of all things. If then where the salvation of so many thousands was concerned, the apostle yet asked not any thing absolutely, but to his petition joined the Divine will, how inexcusable must ourselves be, if busied about, and praying for, the mere objects of sense, we rest not at once all things concerning us on the Divine good pleasure. 11. For I long to see you, that I

may impart unto you some spiritual gift. What he says is full of humility; his words are not, that I may ”give,” but that I may ”impart; that is, of what I myself have received I may communicate unto you. Inasmuch, moreover, as the great Peter had already conveyed to them the doctrines of the gospel, he necessarily adds, to the end ye may be established;

for I desire, says he, not to bring you some other doctrine, but to confirm that already preached among you, and to water trees already planted. And full of modesty again is what he adds, 12. That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me; for not only do I wish to give, but to receive also from you, for the zeal of the disciple comforts and invigorates the master. 13. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that often times I purposed to come unto you, but was prevented hitherto.

He shows what he had intended, and how Providence had overruled that intention; for Divine grace, says he, orders me even as he will; and having thus thrown in the ”I have hitherto been prevented,” he shows the more clearly on what account he had been anxious to come to them— that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other gentiles. 14. I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise; 15. So that as much as in me lies, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. I have been appointed the teacher of all nations, wherefore I owe the debt of an evangelist not to the Greeks only, but to the Barbarians also. For this was it that the grace of the Spirit conferred on us the gift of other tongues; and it behoves us to discharge our debt both to those who boast in their wisdom, and to those who are unlearned likewise. By wise he means those who prided themselves on their eloquence; by unwise, those who for their ignorance were so denominated by such as were called philosophers, or wise men. And, as not all would receive the preaching of the gospel, fitly has he added, as much as in me lies; for it is mine to preach, but the believing depends on the hearers.

And as he frequently calls this preaching by the name of the gospel, and the gospel contains an account of our Lord’s passion, cross, and death, all which to the unbeliever seemed full of dishonour, he seasonably adds, 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. I look not, says he, to the apparent disgrace, but to the blessing arising therefrom, namely, that from it believers obtain salvation.

And thus of mere outward objects many have their own property bidden within them; as pepper, for instance, has a cold appearance, and to those that are unacquainted with it shows no sign of heat, while he that bites it with his teeth perceives its fiery nature; on which account physicians rank it among hot things as to its quality, as though not looking so, and yet capable of being proved to be such. And thus

also corn may become the root, and the stock, and the ear, which yet it could never seem, until it has been sown in the furrows of the field. Justly then does the holy apostle call the saving gospel the power of God, as exhibiting its power, and bestowing salvation, only on believers. And this he says is offered to all, both Jews and Greeks; and the Jews he puts first, before the Greeks, inasmuch as our Lord Christ sent the holy apostles as preachers to them first; for thus God proclaims by the prophet (Is. xlii. 6,) "I have appointed thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles calling the Jews the people, since of them he sprung according to the flesh. 17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; not to all is it revealed, but to those who have the eyes of faith.

The holy apostle here teaches us how from of old God has thus provided for us, and predicted the same by the prophets; and even before the prophets, had his own determination concerning these things secretly within himself, for this also he states in another place, (Eph. iii. 9,) saying, "The mystery which hath been hidden in God, who created all things; "and again, (1 Cor. ii. 7,) "We speak the wisdom hidden in a mystery, which God foreordained before the world, unto our glory." And here therefore he says not that righteousness is given, but revealed; for that which had been so long hidden is now made known to believers. From faith to faith, says he; for we ought to believe the prophets, and by them be brought to the faith of the gospel. But this may bear another sense also; for he who believes in our Lord Christ, and has received the grace of the most holy baptism, and enjoys the free gift of adoption, is led on to believe in yet further coming blessings; the resurrection of the dead, I mean, eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven. By the righteousness of God, revealed in the gospel, he speaks not only of that which is hereby supplied to us, but that also which is so plainly set forth in the mysterious scheme of this his dispensation. For he effected not our salvation by mere power, nor destroyed the strength of death by his mere voice and command, but by combining pity with justice. For the very only-begotten Word of God, by putting on the nature of Adam, and keeping it free from all sin, obtained this for us, and paying the debt of nature, discharged the common forfeit of mankind.

But all this the holy apostle teaches more clearly below, and it were better for us to follow on our exposition passage by passage. Having then said that this salvation was offered to both Jews and Greeks, provided they were themselves duly disposed towards it, he confirms the assertion by the testimony of Scripture, saying, Even as it is written, The just shall live by faith. This he subjoins for the sake of the Jews, in order to teach them not to cling still to the dispensation of the law, but listen rather to their own prophets, who from of old set forth salvation through faith. And here, quitting his first point—the censure of the Jews, he commences his charge against all the gentile nations, that they had recklessly violated the law implanted in their nature by their Maker. And this blame of them includes a vindication of the Creator; for when he formed them, he suffered them not to live like the irrational creation,

but dignified them with reason, and gave them judgment, and established in them the power of discriminating between good and evil; which position is evidenced by such as, before the coming of the Mosaic law, were illustrious for holiness and virtue, as well as by such as followed the opposite course. For so Adam, the instant he had transgressed the commandment, and eaten the forbidden fruit, attempted to hide himself, under the stings of conscience;

and when called to account, neither denied what had been done, nor pretended ignorance in his defence, but threw the blame of the accusation on the woman; which plainly shows that our nature possessed the power of discerning the true character of things. And thus again Cain, having privily slain his brother, when examined, "Where is thy brother Abel? denied it, and attempted to conceal what had been done, but when convicted, confessed that his punishment was just, and owned the equity of his judge, acknowledging that he had sinned beyond pardon; and a thousand other similar instances are to be found in the holy Scriptures: wherefore the holy apostle adds, 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in ungodliness. For nature taught them both that God was the Maker of all things, and that they ought to avoid unrighteousness, and seek righteousness; but they used not the instructions which it gave as they ought to have done; wherefore he threatened them with future punishment.

He here puts the word revealed, in that disbelievers who hearkened not to those threats were the very persons who should experience the truth of what he said. And vengeance he calls the wrath of God; not that God punishes with any passion of mind, but that by giving it so awful a name he might alarm the gainsayer. And he says, is revealed from heaven, because our God and Saviour will appear from thence, as the Lord himself declares, (Mark xiii. 26,) "Then shall ye see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." 19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them: who then gave them this knowledge? for God hath showed it unto them. 20. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead. Creation, says he, and all things made in that creation, the succession of time, the change of seasons, the alternations of day and night, the labourings of the clouds, the blasts of the winds, the fruitfulness of plants and seeds, and the various other similar phenomena, plainly point out to us, that God is both the Maker of all things, and that He wisely holds the keys of the creation; for He who framed all things of His alone lovingkindness, can never leave neglected what He hath brought into being; wherefore the holy Apostle says not the invisible thing, but invisible things;

that is, His creation, His providence, His just sentence on each person, and all His various dispensations; most unpardonable then are they who, enjoying such

a multitude of teachers, yet have received no improvement from so many lessons, for this he adds, so that they are without excuse, for the works of creation themselves almost cry out against them, that they have nothing to plead in arrest of the threatened evils. 21. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful. For that they were aware of the existence of God, they themselves testify by their continual use of His adorable name, while yet rejecting all suitable sentiments concerning him. But became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, for they followed senseless notions, and welcomed in the darkness of infidelity. 22. Professing themselves wise, they became fools. He increases their reprobation by the very name they gave themselves, in that, while calling themselves wise, they proved by their works that they were void of understanding. 23. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man. For not choosing to perceive that the Maker of all things is superior to decay, and far above all that is seen, they called the likenesses of their own bodies, gods; for indeed it was not intelligences, which are invisible, (ch. i. 23-27,) that their statuaries, sculptors, and painters, endeavoured to convey representations of, but perishable mortal bodies;

nor was this impiety enough, but they must needs, moreover, worship the images of birds, beasts, and creeping things; and while they should rather have considered that some of these men eat as food, some loathe as unclean, and some avoid as noxious, in their excess of madness and folly they made the likeness of these very things —which men thus ate, loathed, or killed—into gods. 24. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. He puts gave them up for permitted; and he means, that, seeing them willing neither by the works of creation to be led up to the Creator, nor by the judgment of reason to choose the better and avoid the worse in practice, he deprived them of his special providence, and suffered them to be carried about like an unsteady vessel, no longer enduring to direct those, who had fallen into the grossest impiety, productive of a lawless life. 25. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. Impiety, he says, was the foundation of their iniquities, and by both they became stripped of the Divine grace. The name ”God” is what he here means by the truth of God, an idol made with hands by a lie; because that when they ought to have worshipped the true God, they offered the adoration belonging to Him to the creature instead.

And to the same reproach do they lie open, who call the only-begotten Son of God a creature, and yet worship Him as God; for they ought either, admitting His divinity, to rank Him not with created things, but with God who begat Him; or else, pronouncing Him a created being, not to pay adoration to Him as divine.—But let us pursue the order of our exposition. 26. For this cause, God gave them up to infamous passions, for even their women did change the natural use into that

which is against nature. 27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one towards another, men with men working that which is unseemly. Iniquity walks hand in hand with impiety, so that as they had changed the truth of God into a lie, so did they in like manner exchange the proper object and exercise of the passions for that which was abominable. And receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. For infamy is the severest penalty of such affections. And thus, what not even a victorious enemy had ever attempted to inflict on them, they themselves willingly ran into; and punishment thereby, heavier than that which any judge would impose, do they voluntarily bring on themselves. And what then was the cause of all these evils? 28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

For if they had been willing to know Him, they would have followed the Divine laws; but now, choosing to deny their Maker, they were altogether stripped of his protecting care, whereby they wrecklessly ventured on every kind of wickedness. 29. Being filled with all unrighteousness. By unrighteousness he means that (disposition) which is diametrically opposed to righteousness, for from this springs every kind of reprehensible conduct. And he proceeds to detail its natural fruits. Fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30. Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31. Without understanding, covenant- breakers, without natural affection, faithless, unmerciful. By fornication he signifies intercourse independent of marriage. By wickedness, a savage disposition. By covetousness, the desire of getting more and more, and the carrying off of what does not belong to oneself. By maliciousness, the bent of the mind to evil, and the planning of injury to a neighbour. Full of envy. Bitter is the passion, and unable to bear the prosperity of a neighbour. It is the parent of murder, and conceives deceit. Wounded by envy, and calling in deceit as an helpmate, Cain led his brother forth into the field, and feared not to slay him. By malignant, he means such as exercise their thoughts in laying snares, and designing mischief to those around them. By whisperers, such as privily murmur into the ear abuse of others standing by. By backbiters, such as recklessly indulge in the scandal of the absent.

By haters of God, such as are inimically disposed towards him. By despiteful, such as are given to petulance and insolence. By proud, such as are overmuch elevated by every superiority they possess. By boasters, such as are vainly puffed up, while haying no just cause for so exalted self- complacency. By inventors of evil things, such as not only fearlessly run through all existing ordinary evil, but devise yet further means of ill-doing in addition. Disobedient to parents; and baseness indeed is this, of the grossest kind, nature herself condemning it. Without understanding; for they who have fallen upon so lawless a life have lost all marks of reason.

Covenant breakers; such as have embraced an unsocial and depraved state. Without natural affection; such as will not learn the laws of friendship. Faithless; such as fearlessly break through all engagements. Unmerciful; such as imitate the ferocity of the brute creation. 32. Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in those that do them. We have shown how nature teaches us to choose good, and avoid evil; but these, says he, nevertheless, think it not enough to commit such things, unless they also commend such as do so likewise: which is the last excess of wickedness, seeing that they ought not only to hate the transgressions of others, but with loathing to reprobate even their own.

Chapter II.

He proceeds now in another way to prove our possession of the power of discriminating between good and evil. 1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself for thou that judgest doest the same things. But, although thus situated, if you had received authority from any one to pass sentence, you would punish the transgressors of the law as guilty, so perfect a distinguishment have you between good and its opposite. It becomes you then to be aware, that in the very judgment you pronounce on others as sinners, you involve yourselves in the same condemnation, for you have not hesitated to fall into the same transgressions. 2. But we answer that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things: but it is evident to those who think rightly, that by the divine law all who transgress are obnoxious to punishment. 3. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4. Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering? We know indeed that in His own due time the righteous Judge will inflict vengeance on every sinner, but you, says he, who are so ready to punish others, and to shut your eyes to your own transgressions, imagine that you will escape the divine tribunal. Not so.

God bears with you, and has long-suffering, because He yet waits your repentance, as he subjoins, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. 5. But after thine hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6. Who will render to every man according to his deeds. For since you have an obdurate spirit, and remain still in your iniquity, you are passing against yourself the sentence of punishment, which God in mercy indeed yet delays, but will in the last day set forth, allotting to each a recompense correspondent to their own works.

Well does he adopt the expression, treasurest up unto thyself in order to show, that nothing of ours, whether word or deed, is consigned to oblivion, but that they who love virtue are laying up for themselves a store of good, and the workers of evil-doing the same (of evil). 7. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek

for glory, and honour and immortality, eternal life. He teaches the difficulties of virtue, and displays its crown, for the patient continuance in welldoing is expressive of those difficulties, in that we must persevere in and carry through our virtue, and so expect its crown: but the labour is but for a time, the gain eternal; and this eternal he joins not to the life only, but to the glory, the honour and the immortality also, being desirous to illustrate the reward of our good deeds in as many ways as possible. 8. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9. Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

As with respect to the former party, it was not simply to any chance person, nor to such as follow virtue sluggishly, that he promised those blessings, but to those who are contented to undergo its difficulties and labours, in like manner does he now threaten the heavy denunciations upon sin not to such as are betrayed into it on some chance occasion, but such as determinately pursue it, as is evident from the are contentious, the obey not the truth, and the work evil. Jews and Gentiles equally, says he, he will punish if transgressors, and deem worthy of the crown if zealous after holiness and righteousness. By the Gentiles he means not such as had become converts to the divine preaching, but such as had lived antecedently to our Lord’s incarnation; nor to those among them who were idol-worshippers; but those who, being beyond the Mosaic polity, yet had embraced true piety, and sought after righteousness, does he promise eternal life. 10. But glory, honour, and peace to every man that doeth good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

He speaks thus, not without a distinct design, but with a view to what follows, where he enters upon the accusation of the Jews. 11. For there is no respect of persons with God. 12. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. God, says he, is the Maker of all, and therefore the Judge of all; and the Jews then will he take account of, and condemn, according to the Mosaic code, but those that have never received it, whom he means by the without law, and their sin, He will justly punish according to the knowledge of good and evil implanted in their nature. 13. For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For the law was not sent to us to gratify our ears, but to lead us to the practice of what is right. 14. For when the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves.

For that the divine law demands such a practical obedience they also testify, who, antecedently to the Mosaic code, exercised themselves in holy thoughts, and adorned their lives with virtuous deeds, and became their own lawgivers. 15. Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also being witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.

16. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. He shows that the law of nature was written in their hearts, and that the self-condemnation or self-vindication of conscience was according to truth.

And I think it worth while to illustrate this by some example. When then the admirable Joseph was bringing his plot to bear concerning Benjamin, and attempting to take him for a slave, as if he had stolen the cup, in order to prove the temper of his brethren as it were in the fire, then was clearly manifested the strength of the testimony of conscience. For then they were least inclined to turn their minds to that tragedy, and yet could not but remember the sin themselves had committed two and twenty years before, so that they cried one to another, (Gen. xlii. 21, 22,) that the blood of our younger brother is required at our hands, while Reuben reminded them of his entreaties among them. Agreeably then to this instance may we describe the future judgment and conscience of those who lived beyond the polity of the law, now as pleading their defence, and alleging ignorance, and now again admitting the justice of the accusation, and confessing the equity of the sentence passed upon them. And thus, again, Abimelech, (Gen. xx. 4, 8,) having the testimony of his own conscience, cried to God, ”Lord, wilt thou slay an unconscious and righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister, and she, even she herself said, He is my brother? with an innocent heart have I done this thing.”

Having thus then laid down these matters, the holy apostle now turns his discourse to the Jews, and says, 17. Behold, thou art entitled a Jew, for this title was from of old a general and honourable one, wherefore he says not merely named, but entitled; and restest in the law, for thou weariest not thyself, like him who is a stranger to the law, in searching after what is right and fitting in practice, but hast the law itself teaching thee all things plainly; and makest thy boast of God, as of one, who has honoured thee above all the nations on the earth, dignified thee with his especial providence, bestowed on thee the law, and led thee by the prophets. 18. And knowest the will, that is, the will of God: and discernest the differences, that is, between things which are opposite to each other, righteousness and unrighteousness, justice and injustice, temperance and excess, piety and impiety; Being instructed out of the law, for this it is, which was thy teacher in these matters; 19. And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them in darkness, 20. An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes. He here points out their arrogant self- opinion, and lays bare the superciliousness they exhibited towards proselytes; which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law, for the divine law has furnished thee with the characters of all these things. 21. Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?

thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22. Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idolst dost thou commit sacrilege? 23. Thou that makest thy boast of the law,

through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? He shows that they had drawn no benefit from the establishment of the law among them, but being content to pride themselves on its mere letter, and endeavouring to teach others, while by their deeds contradicting their words, so boasted in the law in vain; and he adds a proof to confirm the accusation, 24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written; not only art thou not the cause of glory being given to God, but through thee many tongues are excited to speak evil of his name, in that when they witness thy wicked life, they openly reproach the God who hath chosen thee for his own.

Having, thus shown that they had taken no advantage from the Mosaic legislation, he turns his discourse to circumcision, and proves that it also is deprived of its object, when separated from the other works belonging, thereto; 25. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. The holy apostle follows in the train of the ancient prophecies, the God of all says by the prophet Jeremiah, (ix. 26;iv, 4.) ”All the Gentiles are uncircumcised in the flesh, but the house of Israel are uncircumcised in their hearts;” and again, ”Circumcise yourselves to God;” adding, in order to show what is the circumcision which he speaks of as pleasing to God, ”take away the hardened foreskin of your hearts.”

Starting from this point, the holy apostle shows that circumcision is idle, if the circumcision of the heart be wanting, for it was instituted in order to that, which if absent the other is of no avail, since it bears but the part of a sign. For where we put gold, or silver, or precious stones, or valuable raiment, we are in the habit of affixing a mark, but, when none of these is within, the inscription of such a mark is idle. 26. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? The law, says he, demands practice; when then thou who art circumcised hast not this, but the uncircumcised has, oughtest not thou justly to be, called a sinner, and he receive thine honourable name instead; no longer, acceding to your reproaches, being named uncircumcised, but rather circumcised, as having cut off the evil of his heart. 27. And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? Worthy of all admiration is the exceeding greatness of the apostle’s wisdom, in that it is not the natural, which he opposes to the written, law, but the despised name to the honoured, uncircumcision to circumcision. And this he says is free from blame, for no one is born so of his own choice, but so the Creator formed his nature, wherefore neither can any injury arise from thence to such as love virtue; while thou hast received from thine ancestors the sign of circumcision, and hast the law teaching thee what thou shouldest do, and yet in thy works actest contrary to all that the law points at.

Having thus demonstrated that circumcision was given for a sign, and had afterwards become idle, he then proves that neither has the name a Jew any advantage, 28. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; 29. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. He falls back here upon the testimony of the prophetic writings, which we have above quoted, for ”Circumcise” says he, ”the hardened foreskin of your hearts.”

Chapter III.

Having thus checked the pride of the Jew, and shown that he boasted in vain in circumcision, and in the law, and in the name of a Jew; lest any one should suppose that he spoke thus from an angry or hostile feeling, he continues, 1. What more then had the Jew, or what profit was there in circumcision? If then, says he, some among heathen and alien nations, who were adorned with piety and virtue, share in the divine favour, to what good did God separate Israel from the Gentiles, and give them the rite of circumcision? for by the more of the Jew he means advantage above the Gentiles. 2. Much in every way. For He chose their ancestors, He freed them from the dominion of the Egyptians, He made them the wonder of nations by miracles of all kinds, He gave the law for their assistance, and set over them His prophets; for this is what he means by much in every way: while yet omitting the specific enumeration of all these, he is content to mention the institution of the law alone—Chiefly that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For this was the highest honour: while the other nations possessed only that knowledge which nature gives, themselves to have received the gift of the law in addition. 3. For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid.

Well knew the God of all, says be, from of old, both who would keep His law, and who would break it. They, therefore, who did not believe, by no means invalidated the divine mercies; nay, for even though all mankind should prove ungrateful towards Him, this their ingratitude could not diminish the glory of God; as he explains in what follows, 4. Yea, let God be true, but every man false. For granting, says he, for argument's sake, that no one soul of man offered to Him the praise and honour due, but all were infected with ingratitude, which is what he means by every man being false, what diminution would God's glory suffer from hence?

And the same thing has the blessed Apostle observed in another place, "For if we believe not," says he, (2 Tim. ii. 13,) "yet He abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself." And here he subjoins the testimony of scripture, as it is written, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou judgest. The word that here denotes not the reason, but the result; for we do not therefore

sin in order that we may set forth the loving-kindness of God, but Himself supplies the streams of His mercies to bring salvation to all; while men being free agents, some prefer the service of God, and some walk in the contrary direction; and so each find their end correspondent with the path they have chosen. But still God's mercies having been extended to them (the latter) also, thus is He fully justified in afterwards judging them, by His previous care bestowed on them. And thus He Himself speaks to Israel, (Micah vi. 3,) "O My people, what have I done unto thee, or how have I grieved thee, or wherein have I wearied thee, testify against Me?" and then enumerates His blessings one by one in order. And thus again in Jeremiah (ii. 5,) does He cry out, "What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they are gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?" and again subjoins a list of His past kindnesses. And here the holy apostle introduces a conclusion in the person of his adversary: 5. But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say, is not God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? I speak as a man. 6. God forbid.

It was necessary that he should bring forward the objection raised by others, and he shows its absurdity by his disavowal of it; for not I, says he, speak thus, but have only stated the position of others, which is what he means by as a man. For then how shall God judge the world? 7. For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my falseness unto His glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? It is one of the most absurd things thus to speak; for the sentence of God is just. Nor can my own unworthiness advance at all the glory arising to God for His kindness, for it were the extremest injustice that they who advanced His glory should yet suffer vengeance from Him, and expect eternal punishment; this indeed is what not even the most unjust of men would do, how far less then He, from whom flow the very fountains of righteousness! 8. And not also, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come? whose damnation is just. None of these things, says he, we ourselves maintain, but are calumniously reported so to speak by others, who will suffer the due reward of their calumny.

For we must know that, as the holy apostles had declared that where sin abounded, grace did yet more abound, some who themselves were zealous in piety, yet uttering false accusations against them, had published, that they had said, Let us do evil that good may come. But not such indeed was the object of the apostolic doctrine, for they laid down exactly contrary rules, that all should abstain from every iniquity, while only exhorting such as came to their thrice-holy instructions to be of good cheer, in the pardon vouchsafed by God for past offences. And here, ceasing from our exposition awhile, and resting our mind, let us laud and magnify Him, from whose gift it cometh, that man hath a mouth to speak withal, or remaineth mute and dumb; and pray to Him that we may fully comprehend the mind of the apostolic doctrines. For He assuredly will grant it, who hath said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. With

whom, to the Father, together with the thrice-holy Spirit, belong glory and majesty, now and for ever, unto endless ages. Amen.

Book II.

We have already said, that the holy apostle was desirous of showing the necessity of the incarnation of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ; on which account he began by speaking of those, who were strangers to, as well as those also who were under, the law, and convicted the former of having transgressed the natural, and the latter the Mosaic, law, and become worthy of the deepest punishment. Herein does he imitate a skilful physician, who first points out to his patients the virulent nature of their disorder, and then so offers the assistance of his healing remedies. For this he also does; having exhibited the sin of both parties, and proved them deserving of, and obnoxious to, punishment, he next produces his medicine of faith, and sets forth the loving-kindness of the divine dispensation, and says, 9. In what then are we better than they? for we have proved before both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin: 10. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues have they used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15. Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16. Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17. And the way of peace have they not known: 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

In the part above explained, where he was comparing the case of the circumcision with that of the uncircumcision, he subjoined, ”What more then had the Jew?” and here, wishing to show the pre-eminence of the grace of the gospel, he says, In what then are we better than they? for we have demonstrated that those without the law, and those within it, have both gone astray, and he adds the testimony of David as exactly adapted to the matter in hand; and he does so, as being particularly studious of brevity, since otherwise he might have called in all the prophets to the condemnation of the Jews, who allege the same, and even worse, things against them; whence he goes on, 19. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law. He words this with the greatest accuracy of expression, in that he puts it not ”concerning” those who are under the law, but to those who are under the law; for it speaks much concerning the Babylonians, and

Persians, and Medes, and Egyptians, and many other nations, but, nevertheless, even these predictions concerning them it addresses to the Jews. That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. And again, he employs the word that according to his favourite idiom, (or use of it,) for the God of all did not therefore bestow laws, and send forth His exhortations among men, in order that He might render them obnoxious to punishment, but consulting for their salvation has He done this; themselves it is who, by pursuing an opposite course, have drawn this vengeance on themselves.

Being now about to enter on the privileges of faith, he first demonstrates that all have need of it, and especially, above others, those who boasted in the law: 20. Because that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. Some of the injunctions of the Mosaic law agreed with the knowledge of nature, such as, ”Thou shalt not commit adultery;” ”Thou shalt do no murder;” ”Thou shalt not steal;” ”Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;” ”Honour thy father and mother and others of this kind: for they who had never received that law, were yet fully aware that each of these was deserving not only of condemnation, but of punishment likewise. And some, again, the Lawgiver imposed on the Jews as suitable to them for that present time only; such, I mean, as circumcision, and the sabbath, and sacrifices, and sprinklings, and the rites respecting the leper, and the seminally unclean, and such-like; which are the symbols of other things, and when fulfilled, are not in themselves sufficient to make the doer just. Wherefore the holy apostle says, therefore by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; and then, lest any one should suppose that he was passing a censure on the law, he adds, For by the law is the knowledge of sin. The law, says he, has given to man a more accurate discrimination of sin, and made the condemnation lying on it the heavier; but for the establishment of virtue it is not competent to be sufficient for men.

Having thus shown that the law was only the teacher of good, he proceeds to exhibit the power of grace: 21. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Who can sufficiently admire the power of the apostle’s wisdom, who shows at once that the law had come to an end, and that it consented to (the covenant of) grace. And aptly does he say manifested, for it has now laid clearly before all the hidden mystery of the dispensation; while in this comparison between grace and the law, by proving that both the law and the prophets were witnesses to the former, he exhibits the greatness of its conquest over the latter: 22. Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe. What had been before put down is here repeated, that what was wanting might be added; for having said the righteousness of God is manifested, and then interrupted the sentence to speak of its character, it was necessary that he should resume the phrase again, and show that it was by faith in the Lord Christ that all who desired to do so enjoyed it,

whether Jews or Greeks; the unto all refers to the Jews, the upon all to the other nations; and this he goes on to set forth more clearly—For there is no difference: 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. He briefly shows that all are guilty, and need (the covenant of) grace: 24. Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For by bringing faith alone, we have received remission of our sins, in that the Lord Christ has offered up His own body for us, to be, as it were, the price of redemption.

25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiatory, through faith in His blood. The propitiatory was a golden plate, which lay over the ark, having at either end the figure of a cherub, (Exod. xxv.) and from thence the mercy of God was manifested to the high priest in his ministrations. The holy apostle here then teaches, that the Lord Christ was the true propitiatory, for that ancient one was but a type of this. This name, however, is applied to Him as man, and not as God; for as God He Himself speaks from the propitiatory; while as man He receives this appellation even as others, such as ”sheep” and ”lamb,” and ”sin” and ”curse,” and the like. (See John i. 29, 36. Acts viii. 32. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13.) And the ancient propitiatory was bloodless in itself, inasmuch as it was also inanimate, and received only the sprinklings of the blood of the victims; but the Lord is God, and propitiatory, and high priest, and lamb, arid in His own blood hath worked out our salvation, demanding faith only from us.—To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past: 25. Through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness. God has both exhibited His own mercy in so long bearing with sinners, and has made manifest His righteousness to all men; for that it was not without any further view that He thus bore with sinners, but as preparing for them this mean of salvation, the next sentence shows—that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. For both these things should we learn from hence, that the God of all has ordered His dispensations concerning ourselves with justice equally as with mercy; and that whosoever believes in the Lord Christ is made partaker of the righteousness which is by faith.

Thus briefly having stated the free gifts conferred by (the covenant of) grace, he returns to his discourse respecting the law, and shows that it yielded the victory to grace. 27. Where is boasting then? This must be read interrogatively, and then comes the answer, It is excluded. He says not destroyed, but excluded; that is, has no longer any place. By boasting he means the haughty self-esteem of the Jews, who exalted themselves as the only possessors of God’s favour; while now, divine grace having appeared abroad, and been shed among all nations, this arrogance had been put out of the question, in that God had given to man a short and easy mean of salvation in faith; for this the apostle continues to show forth in the following sentences also, By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. He calls faith here a law, not from inconsideration, but as recollecting the prophecy of Jeremiah (xxxi. 31, 32,) ”For in those days, saith the Lord, and at that

time, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers."

If then the Mosaic law is thus styled a covenant, and the new covenant again bears also the same name, and faith in Christ be the law it enacts, in strict accordance with the phraseology of the prophet does the holy apostle here apply the name of the law to faith. And then he subjoins the conclusion concerning faith: 28. We conclude therefore that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law. By law here he means that of Moses; but at the same time he says not, we conclude that by faith a Jew is justified, but a man, the common name of the whole human race; as he goes on to reason, 29. Is He the God of the Jews only; is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. And then, as a position which cannot be disputed, he confirms it by the assertion, 30. Seeing that it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith. It is one God, who is the God of all; one, who is the Maker of all; nor is it possible that He should be careful for some, and leave others uncared for; wherefore He extends His salvation to all that believe. By circumcision he means the Jews, by uncircumcision the Gentiles. And he next resolves the objection which might be raised, 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law. For of old both the law and the prophets prophesied of the things concerning the faith, and in receiving therefore the faith we confirm the law. He then brings forward evidences of all this, and, while having it in his power to adduce a vast variety of testimonies from the prophets, prefers going at once to the very root of the Jews, and demonstrates that the righteousness of the patriarch Abraham himself was that which is of faith.

Chapter IV.

1. What shall we then say that Abraham our father hath found, as pertaining to the flesh? What righteousness, says he, before he believed in God, have we heard that Abraham our father had as his own by works? for as pertaining to the flesh means that which is of works, inasmuch as it is by our fleshly bodies that works are done. 2. For if Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. The full performance of good works crowns the doers with the prize, but does not exhibit the loving-kindness of God; while faith sets forth both the disposition of the believer towards God, and the loving-kindness of God, who by accepting such faith proclaims him who has acquired it, victorious. And this he confirms by the testimony of Scripture, 3. For what saith Scripture? Abraham believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. For the blessed Abraham obtained not the divine attestation by living according to the law, but enjoyed the riches of justification by believing on Him that called him. 4. Now to him that earneth it by his works the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt. For the doer of righteousness demands his reward, while the righteousness which is of faith is the free gift of the God of all, as is further exhibited in what follows, 5. But to him that earneth it not by his works, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Having thus, in the instance of the patriarch Abraham, demonstrated that faith was older than the law, he now again calls in another trustworthy witness of this,—David the prophet and king, to whom the God of all renewed the promises made to Abraham. For as he had promised to Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 18,) that ”in his seed He would bless all nations,” in like manner did He proclaim to the most excellent David, (Ps. lxxxix. 35, 38,) ”Once have I sworn in my holiness that I will not fail David. His seed remaineth for ever, and His throne as the sun before Me, and as the moon established for ever, and faithful is the witness in heaven:” and again, (v. 25,) ”I will set His hand also in the sea, and His right hand in the rivers:” and again, (Ps. lxxii. 11,) ”Yea all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him:” and such like.

And since then he had shown that the blessed Abraham had obtained justification by faith, but then Abraham lived before the establishment of the law, it was necessary that he should now show that David, who lived under the law, himself also bore witness to (the covenant of) grace; and accordingly he says, 6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7. Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8. Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute sin. The law, says he, brought punishment on such as sinned, but the prophet speaks of the blessedness of those, who have received forgiveness of their sins. It is evident, therefore, that he is speaking of the blessedness of our own condition, and foretelling the free gifts of grace; and this grace be shows is open to all, saying interrogatively, 9. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? And then again he establishes his position by the case of the patriarch Abraham, For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. He proves that faith is older not merely than the law, but than circumcision itself, and that while circumcision was yet unestablished, the patriarch received the testimony of his righteousness, the righteousness which is of faith.

How then could he need circumcision, while having already obtained the righteousness which is of faith? This he clearly explains, 11. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised. Circumcision itself, says he, is not righteousness, but a testimony of righteousness, and a seal and sign of that faith, which he bad exhibited before he was circumcised. That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. 12. And the father of circumcision. Here we must make a full stop. For herein he shows that the patriarch first was the father of such as believed, being uncircumcised, inasmuch as he himself, while uncircumcised, offered to God the tribute of faith; and then of the Jews also, as of those who were sharers with him in the circumcision; and this he lays down again, yet more clearly, in what follows, Not to them only who are of the circumcision, but to them also who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had while yet uncircumcised. For if any one sprung from the Gentiles, and not having received circumcision, should follow in the footsteps of that faith of the patriarch, which he had before his own circumcision, he would not fail of relationship to him;

in that the God of all, foreseeing, as God, that He would hereafter gather together one people of the Gentiles, and the Jews, and extend to them salvation through faith, represented both of old in the patriarch Abraham. And thus then he calls him the father of the Gentiles, in having shown that he had acquired, before his circumcision, the righteousness which is of faith, and after his circumcision, had

not walked under the Mosaic law, but continued under the guidance of the same faith; in order that both Jews and Greeks, looking to him, might in common aim at his faith, neither the one anxious for his circumcision, nor the other his uncircumcision, for it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but faith which the holy Scripture speaks of as (the mean of v. 3, 5, 9, &c. righteousness.

Having thus shown that faith was both older and more excellent than the law, he now also shows that the law was subsequent to the promise given to Abraham, in order thereby to make it manifest that (the covenant of) grace was itself also anterior to the law, seeing that of this it was, that the promises were given to Abraham; for the promise was, that "in his seed all the nations should be blessed," which promise received its accomplishment in Christ. 13. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith: for it was by believing in God, and not by walking according to the Mosaic law, that he received the promise of the blessing of the nations. 14. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect; for if they who live according to the law obtain the promised blessings, in vain did Abraham believe in God, and false and not true were the promises made to him by God. 15. Because the law worketh wrath; for it is the character of the law to punish the transgressors thereof; by wrath he means punishment; for where no law is there is no transgression, for the law punishes the violators of it, for with the law are connected observance and violation; some through zeal for virtue preferring to keep it, and some through love of ease carelessly suffering themselves to violate it.

16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. He puts down the arrogance of the Jews by applying the name, seed of Abraham, to such as imitated the faith of Abraham, however aliens in blood. But if then, while the law punishes transgressors, (the covenant of) grace gives forgiveness of sins, it confirms thereby the promise made by God, in bringing that blessing on the nations. And as He had called Abraham, the father both of the nations, and of the Jews, he supports the expression by testimony from Scripture, 17. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, and then he strengthens this testimony by an evidence, Before Him whom he believed, even God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. For as, says he, God is the Maker of all, and the God, and carer for, all, so did He constitute Abraham, the father of all, not of the Jews only, but of all who believe.

And he (next) exhibits the greatness of Abraham's faith, 18. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, "So shall thy seed be." 19. And not being weak in faith so

as to consider his own body now dead, being about an hundred years old, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; for while he saw that his wife was barren, that the impotency of old age lay upon both, and that there appeared not, according to human calculation, the smallest hope of child-bearing, and was unable to produce a single similar instance from earlier times for his encouragement, he yet welcomed the divine promise with confidence; for against hope means hope from nature; in hope, confidence in the divine promise. 20. But he staggered not at the promise of God, through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God: 21. And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform. For he looked not to the impotence of nature, but trusted, without doubting, in the Creator of that nature. 22. Wherefore also it was imputed unto him for righteousness; that is, faith was.

Having thus shown that faith flourished among those, who were under the law, and those also who lived before it, he turns his discourse to the object proposed. 23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness, 24. But for us also, to whom it shall be reckoned, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Thus then the patriarch, while he saw the womb of his wife dead, yet believed that it was easy for God to fulfil his promise; and thus then we, while we hear the Jews declaring that our Lord Christ is dead, believe that He is risen again; wherefore we, in our turn, gather the fruits of faith, and enjoy the righteousness springing therefrom. For not for nothing were recorded the things which the Lord God did regarding the patriarch Abraham, but that we, beholding them, might exhibit the like faith ourselves. He that raised up our Lord Christ is spoken of His humanity, for, in the nature in which He suffered, in that it was that He arose, and the suffering was of the flesh, and not of the impassible Godhead. 25. Who was delivered up for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; for for our offences He underwent His passion, that He might pay off our debt, and that His resurrection might work out the common resurrection of all; for by it we both gain the means of our own justification, and, being buried with Him in baptism, receive remission of sins.

Having thus shown the power of faith, and displayed the gifts of (the covenant of) grace, he now turns his discourse to exhortation, bidding us also take heed to the practice of virtue; for having said that, when (the covenant of) faith was revealed, the law became superseded, and that the patriarch had attained the righteousness which is of faith, it was necessary that he should add moral counsels, lest such as lived at ease should take occasion from hence to neglect practical virtue, under the plea that faith alone was sufficient for justification.

Chapter V.

1. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2. By whom now we have access, by faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Faith then has given us remission of sins, and made us blameless and just by the regeneration of the baptismal font, and it is incumbent on you to preserve the peace thus effected. For the only-begotten by His incarnation has reconciled you, while you were in hostility with Him, and sin it was that produced this hostility, righteousness therefore it must be which will maintain the peace commenced; and this then we are in every way bound to pursue by the consideration of the hopes held out, and the glory promised by God to be given to us. For the recompense of our labours he calls not payment, but glory, to show the excess of our reward. And as they had at that time to endure many troubles, being beaten, tortured, and subjected to a thousand kinds of death, he most fitly brings forward the sources of consolation connected with these things, 3. And not only so, but we even glory in tribulations. He has displayed brightly his own insuperable magnanimity, for it is not, we patiently endure afflictions, which he says, but we even rejoice in afflictions; we are exalted, he exclaims, and take pride to ourselves, as fellow-sharers with the Lord of sufferings;

but this he says not openly, because they alone could so feel, who with himself had arrived at completeness in the faith; the rest he encourages by what should come hereafter. 4. Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience proof, and proof hope. 5. And hope maketh not ashamed. When misfortunes surround a man, and he bears their attack nobly, he is thereby shown to stand his proof, and leans on the hope of the future; and this is not a fallacious hope, but one based on truth; which is what he means by maketh not ashamed, they who hope, and then are disappointed, being confounded and ashamed.

Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For the grace of the thrice holy Spirit, which we received through baptism, has kindled the love of God within us. And he then sets forth the causes of this love. 6. For when we were yet without strength, in time Christ died for the ungodly. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for

a good man some would even dare to die. For we reflect, that when we were yet transgressors, and suffering under the infection of impiety, the Lord Christ endured that death, which was inflicted on our behalf; and hence we learn the depth of His loving-mercy, for for a just man it might be, that some might face death, but He, through the excess of His love, welcomed the death which was in behalf of sinners; as he also goes on to say, 8. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. God then makes manifest the greatness of His love towards us, in the death of Christ having been undergone, not for such as had been just, but for such as were yet transgressors. For we now have been justified by faith in Him, but, when He undertook that death for us, we were still subject to every kind of sin;

the words, in time, mean, at the fit time, in due time, and this he says also in his epistle to the Galatians, (iv. 4, 5. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." 9. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him. Having encountered that accursed (see Gal. iii. 13) death for the ungodly and transgressors, it is evident that He will free from the future punishment those, that believe in Him; for that future (eternal) punishment is what he here calls wrath. 10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved in His life. If while we were antagonists, and enemies, He thought fit to treat us with so great consideration, as to give up His Son to die for us, how is it possible, now that reconciliation has been effected, that we should not share in everlasting life? And here again he calls the Lord Christ, the Son, who, the same, is both God and man; it must be evident therefore, I apprehend, even to the most determined heretics, as to which nature His passion took place.

11. And not only so, but we joy also in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation. For not only do we expect immortal life, but even as to the present existence, glory in having been brought near unto God, while we reflect upon the things concerning the Lord Christ, who, being our mediator, has effected peace.

From hence he proceeds to explain the mystery of the dispensation, and show the reasons of the incarnation, 12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, in that all have sinned. The Lord God having formed Adam, and dignified him with reason, imposed on him one single law for the exercise of those rational faculties; for indeed it was not meet that one who had received reason, and possessed the power of discriminating between good and its opposite, should live without any law at all. He, having been beguiled, transgressed the command. But, from the first, the lawgiver had to the

command affixed the threat of retribution, and thus, falling under the sentence of death, he so begot Cain, Seth, and the rest. All therefore, as having sprung from him, inherited a mortal nature. Now such a nature has need of many things, food, and drink, and clothing, and houses, and various arts, and the use of these oftentimes excites the passions into excess, and excess begets sin; and therefore the holy apostle says, that Adam having sinned, and become mortal through that sin, both descended to his race, for death came upon all men, in that all have sinned, for not on account of our first father's transgression, but for his own, each receives the sentence of death. 13. For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not reckoned (such) where there is no law. He accuses not, as some suppose, those who lived before the law, but all alike; for the until the law means, not until the commencement of, but until the end of, the law; that is, while the law reigned sin had power, for where there is no law, neither can there be transgression.

14. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the type of Him that would come after. By Moses he means the law, as we also find in the Gospels (Luke xvi. 29,) "They have Moses and the prophets; and so also the holy apostle speaks in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (iii. 15,) " But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their hearts," that is, the law. Death then, says he, reigned from Adam until the manifestation of the Saviour, for then the law received its end, "for the law," says he, "and the prophets, prophesied until John; but from the days of John the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. (Matt. xi. 12, 13. And death, moreover, reigned over those also, who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, for although they had not transgressed that particular commandment, they had nevertheless ventured on other sins. And he calls Adam the type of Christ, for the latter he designates as Him that would come after, on this account, that as Adam first, by his sin, became subject to the sentence of death, and thus the whole race followed their first parent, so the Lord Christ, having fulfilled the most perfect righteousness, destroyed the power of death, and first rising from the dead shall restore the whole race of man to life.

And as he had called Adam the type of Christ, he shows the pre-eminence (of the latter.) 15. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. And how then is this? For if through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. As regards punishment, says he, the Lord God preserved the strict law of justice, and Adam, having sinned, and been given over to death, the whole race followed him; how much more right then that, as regards God's loving-mercy, justice should also be preserved, and all men share in the resurrection of our Lord Christ! He here calls the Lord Christ a man, to show clearly the type in Adam, that as there by one man (came) death, so here by one man the dissolution of death. 16. And not as

it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. The munificence of grace, says he, goes beyond the limits of justice, for then, one having sinned, the whole race received punishment, but now, all mankind having been unholy, and transgressors, it has brought, not punishment but, the free gift of life.

17. For if by one man's offences death reigned by one; much more they which receive the fulness of grace, and of the gift, and of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. If the transgression of one man established the dominion of death, it is evident that they, which enjoy the plenteous gifts of God, shall be conquerors over death, and share with Christ in the imperishable kingdom and life eternal.18. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Doubt not, says he, concerning what I have said, while looking to Adam; for if those things be true, as indeed they are true, and when he had sinned the whole race received the sentence of death; it is plain, that the righteousness of the Saviour gains life to all men. And again he puts the same thing in another form, varying his phrase, and again and again re-stating it, in order the more clearly to open the mystery of the dispensation. 19. For as by one man s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. With great nicety does he here, in the case of those under Adam, and that of those under grace, adopt the word many, for indeed among the former we find some, who were superior to the grosser sins, as Abe1, and Enoch, and Noah, and Melchisedek, and the patriarchs, and even those who became illustrious under the law; and after (the covenant of) grace there are many who embrace a sinful life.

Having thus shewn us, from what took place through Adam, the reasons for the divine incarnation, he brings forward the objection which might arise, and offers a solution. The objection is with regard to the law, which was given in the interim between Adam and the appearance of the Saviour; wherefore the holy apostle says, 20. But the law came in between, that the offence might abound. He means not, by that it might, that such was its object; but uses the words according to his familiar mode of expression. But what he is shewing is, that neither in time past did God leave men neglected, but gave the law to the Jews, and by their means showed forth the light of religion on the rest of the nations also. And aptly has he put intervened, in that Christ was the end of the promise made to the patriarch; for "in thy seed," says He, "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," and the law intervened between Abraham and Christ. And it taught the more clearly how evil a thing sin was, while yet it was incompetent to put a stop thereto, but only the more increased it, seeing that, in proportion as more commandments were given, so many the more became the violations of them. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. It invalidated not, says he, the mercy of God, but rather displayed the vastness of His loving-kindness. 21.

That as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Here he finishes the argument, shewing that as sin, begetting death, had reigned in our mortal bodies, exciting the passions to excess; so grace, conveying to believers the justification which is of faith, has her dominion also, one not coeval with that of sin, but eternal and endless; for the former reigns over our bodies, but at their death ceases from her power, ”for he who is dead,” according to the holy apostle, ”is freed from sin; while, after the resurrection, our bodies having become imperishable, and immortal, grace will reign in them, sin having no longer any place; for when the passions have ceased, there will be no room for sin. And then again he proposes another objection arising from the subject, and with ease resolves it.

Chapter VI.

1. What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. By the reprobation of this, he shows its inconsistency, but the question itself be put down, because of what had been just before said, ”Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Nor is he contented with this bare condemnatory disavowal, but proceeds to treat the subject in another way also:—2. How shall we, that have died to sin, live any longer therein? And how have we died thereto? 3. Know you not, brethren, that as many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into His death? Thou hast renounced sin, and hast become dead to it, and buried with Christ; how is it possible then that thou shouldst admit this same sin? 4. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. The very sacrament of baptism has taught thee to fly from sin, for baptism carries in it the representation of our Lord’s death, for in that thou hast communicated both in the death and in the resurrection of Christ. It becomes thee therefore to lead a new life, as it were, and one suited to Him in whose resurrection thou hast partaken. The divinity of Christ is what he here calls the glory of the Father, for thus also in another epistle he speaks, (Eph.

i. 17,) ”That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory . . . . . and the Lord in the gospels (John ii. 19,) ”Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again. Nay, and if heretics will not receive this interpretation, neither so can they injure the glory of the Only-begotten, for, even granting that it was the Father who raised Him up, as man it was that He raised Him, for as man it was that He also endured the passion. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Since he had called baptism, which places us in a state of salvation, a type of death, by this change of name He plainly points out the resurrection, for whatever is distinctly planted springs up again. 6. Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him, that the body might be rendered inoperative as regards sin, so as that we should no longer serve sin. Not our nature, but our evil inclination, is what He here calls the old man, and this he says has been put to death in baptism, that the body may be idle as regards sin, for this it is which He means by that the body

might be made to cease from sin, so that it should in no wise serve sin. And this He shows more plainly by another similitude:—7.

For he that is dead is freed from sin. For who ever yet saw one that was dead either invading the marriage-bed of another, or imbruing his hands in bloodshed, or committing any other of the catalogue of iniquities? 8. For if we have died with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him. It becomes us, therefore, also, having been buried with Christ, to be dead indeed unto sin, but to await the resurrection. 9. Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him. 10. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Amply, by these words, has he proved his wish to make believers abstain from sin. Once, says he, Christ died; and that He should a second time die were impossible, for He now possesses an immortal body. On this account, therefore, we all also enjoy one baptism; expect not then any second forgiveness by (means of any second) baptism. He has indeed well said that He died unto sin, for He was not subject to death, inasmuch as He had done no sin, but received death for our sin. 11. And thus indeed reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ. And do you, therefore, display your bodies dead to the inworking of sin, but embrace the life which is after Christ, by which you shall obtain the life eternal.

To this advice it behoves us all to take heed, flying from the snares of sin, and calling to our aid Christ who has saved us; for, if called, He will appear, and extend to us His own strength: in conjunction with whom, to the Father, with the thrice-holy Spirit, belong glory and majesty, now and for ever, unto endless ages. Amen.

Book III.

12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. A reign differs from a tyranny in this, that a tyranny is exercised over those who unwillingly submit to it; a reign, over subjects who are consenting thereto. He exhorts us therefore no longer to agree to the government of sin, for the Lord in His incarnation has overthrown its reign; and as one legislating for mere mortals, and such as possess a body liable to passions, he enjoins things consistent with their infirmities, and says, not Let not sin tyrannize, but, let it not reign; for the former is its own property, the latter rests on our will; the motions and tumult of the passions being engendered in us by nature, while the performance of what are forbidden depends on our own volition. And he shows, moreover, the short duration of the warfare by denominating the body mortal, in that when it has undergone the termination of death the attack of the passions ceases likewise. He exhorts us then, not to put a stop to the tyranny of sin, but, not to obey it when intemperately inflaming the desires of the body. 13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. Having spoken of a reign, in strict keeping herewith, he mentions its artillery also, and teaches us the way of victory, for the weapons which sin uses against us are our own members. But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.

And, indeed, just before he had said the very same thing— ”And so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ; that is, ye have been buried with Christ, and have risen again with Him, wherefore ye are dead to sin, and aspire to another life. And your members, as instruments of righteousness, unto God. He shows that the body is not evil, but the work of a God of goodness, for it is competent to serve God, if well and properly governed by the soul; wherefore it is the inclination of our own free will to the worse that offers the members for weapons, as it were, to sin; and again the love arising from our knowledge of good, which prepares the members to obey the divine laws. For thus the tongue of the musician, when he is in the right mind, offers up fitting melody to the God of all, but when he is drunken and disordered, madly sends forth the horrid sounds of impiety; and thus also it is both adorned by the words of truth, and disgraced by falsehoods; and thus the eye likewise can look abroad

both modestly and lasciviously, both savagely and benevolently; and thus also the hand both kills and pities; and, in short, all the members of the body become the instruments of holiness when the Spirit is so minded, and of sin, on the reverse, when it has embraced the governance of sin.

But in another way also does the holy apostle demonstrate the easiness of the victory: 14. For sin shall no longer have dominion over you, says he. For nature no longer fights singly, but has for her assistant the grace of the Spirit; for this he adds, for ye are not under the law, but under grace. He shows that before the coming of (the covenant of) grace, the law taught only what was to be done, but afforded no help to those under it, while (the covenant of) grace, in addition to the imposition of duties, extends assistance also, on which account the legislative constitution of grace is also more complete than the law, as removing the impediments by this succour. And here again he answers an objection arising. 15. What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? He notes this objection because of the gainsayers, and first reprobates it, pointing out its absurdity, and says, God forbid, and then more at length demonstrates the contrary. 16. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Whomsoever ye choose to submit yourselves unto, his commands you are bound to comply with, for it is not possible at the same time to obey two lords, but righteousness and sin are diametrically opposed to each other; and this also the Lord says in the holy gospels, (Matt.

vi. 24,) ”No man can serve two masters.” 17. But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. He both points out the change in themselves, and exhibits the joy arising therefrom, giving praise to God; for ye were, says he, the servants of sin, but by your own voluntary choice you have shaken off its sovereignty, and embraced the divine polity. 18. Having then been freed from sin, ye were made servants of righteousness. Ye have cast away the slavery of sin, and taken upon you the yoke of righteousness; it is not possible therefore that bearing the latter you should yield to the commands of the former. 19. I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh. I suit my exhortations to your nature, for I am well aware of the passions which contend in a mortal body. For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness. By this also be shows that it is not the (natural, see ver. 13,) body that deserves reprobation, but the disposition that leads it astray. And he demands indeed from us nothing impossible, but that what we did give to sin, the same we should afford to righteousness; and to the former we subjected ourselves while it enjoined iniquity, the latter, if we obey it, will bring us to holiness. 20.

For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness, for ye fulfilled its precepts only, while as to the laws of righteousness ye received not them at all. And then again, in another way, he exhibits the difference. 21. What fruit had ye then from those things? Tell me yourselves the gains of sin; or rather it were idle to ask, for in silence you confess its injury, for ye are covered with shame, as he adds, whereof ye are now ashamed; for although any one be barefaced indeed, he yet cannot but experience shame, when his enjoyment is over. And he subjoins, in addition to this, the greater and more bitter fruit of sin —for the end of those things is death. Death, he means not the present, which is merely temporal, but that which is eternal. 22. But now having been freed from sin, and made servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. In these words he opposes God to sin, holiness to shame, and life everlasting to everlasting death. 23. For the wages of sin is death. As (according to the metaphor throughout adopted, be had said that) it formerly reigned, and now tyrannizes, and he had called its weapons our own badly-disposed members, consistently also does he denominate the reward wages, for so he was in the habit of naming the pay of soldiers; as in the epistle to the Corinthians, he says, (1 Cor.

ix. 7,) ”Who goeth a warfare at any time on his own wages? But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Here he says, not reward, but free gift, for eternal life is the gift of God; for though any one should carry through the highest virtue, still those eternal blessings could not justly be weighed as a requital for such present labours. Having said these things to them that lived under (the covenant of) grace, respecting the obligation lying on them to avoid sin, he again turns his discourse to the comparison between the (covenant of) law and grace, and shows the strength of the latter and the weakness of the former, and teaches that on the entrance of the one, the other ceased.

Chapter VII.

1. Know you not brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man, as long as he liveth? You well know, says he, you I mean who have been brought up in the law, that the law has its authority over those who are yet alive; and he adduces an example also in accordance with this proposition. 2. For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is made to cease from the law of her husband. And then he shows this yet more clearly: 3. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she is called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. The law, says he, calls her an adulteress, not who after the death of her husband is united to another, but, who while her husband is yet alive, joins herself to any one else, for such an one it orders to be punished as insolently rebelling against the law of matrimony; it is evident, therefore, that when her husband has brought his life to an end, the widow not illegally, but with the distinct permission of the law, may marry another.

Nor indeed was the holy apostle ignorant, that the law gave permission to the living also to dissolve a marriage when it should be no longer agreeable, but he was mindful of our Lord’s assertion, which declared that Moses gave them that law on account of the hardness of the heart of the Jews, but that the law of nature had added no such terms, for one man, says he, and one woman did God make, establishing the law concerning marriage in their very creation: wherefore leaving this unnoticed, he passed on to the law as regarded the dead, and subjoins, 4. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead. It would have been indeed in strict consistency with the example adduced, to have said, ”the law is dead,” that is, has ceased, but in consideration of the spiritual weakness of the Jews, for they greatly exalted the law, and from a desire not to afford an opportunity of finding fault with it to the heretics who denounced the Old Testament, he avoids saying that the law had ceased, but declares that we have become dead to the law by baptism which saveth us, and then rising again have been united, to Him who hath Himself risen from the dead, that is Christ.

And as he had called the faith which is in the Lord a marriage and union, in strict keeping herewith does be show the fruits also arising from marriage, that we should bring forth fruit unto God, says he. What then is this fruit-bearing? That our members become the instruments of righteousness. And most aptly does he show that the law itself leads us to be joined to Christ, for it forbade not, says he, a woman to be married to a second husband after the death of the first. And then he goes on to point out the difference. 5. For when we were in the flesh, that is, under the polity of the law, for the legislative ordinances concerning the flesh, as of foods and drinks, of leprosy, and such like, are what he here calls the flesh; the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members. He says not "in" the law but by the law, for it does not itself bring about sin, but it condemns sin, while that, which was good, sin uses for evil; neither indeed do our members themselves bring about sin, but only by our members has the inclination of the soul to the worse brought its operations to effect. And what then springs from hence? To bring forth fruit unto death.

In these words he has taught us that before the coming of (the covenant of) grace, while we were living under the polity of the law, the attacks of sin to which we were subjected were the more powerful, in that the law showed indeed what ought to be done, but offered no help to do it. 6. But now we are made to cease from the law. He still continues in the same cautious mode of expression, and says not, "the law is made to cease," but we are made to cease from the law, that is, it is inoperative as regards ourselves, we are no longer under its polity. And how are we made to cease from it? Being dead to that wherewith we had been held. For when we were subjects of the law we came to baptism, and dying with Christ, and with Him rising again, we were united to our Lawgiver, and no longer need the polity of the law, for we have received the very grace itself of the Spirit, as what follows proves, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. He here puts the spirit in opposition to letter, and the new against the old, that by the word letter he might point out the law, and by the old its having come to a conclusion.

For indeed by Jeremiah (xxxi. 31, 32) God says, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt so that the difference was shown even by the prophet; and on the appearance of the new covenant, the old must yield. Having thus spoken, and foreseeing as one honoured with the gifts of the Spirit, that some of the heretics would understand this in derogation of the old covenant, and conceive that the old law came from some other than the one same God, the holy apostle necessarily states the objections and subjoins the answers to them. 7. What shall we say then? Is the law sin?

He had in the former parts of this epistle laid down many positions, which might have given an opportunity of finding fault with the law, to such as were desirous of speaking evil of it, unless he had offered the present solution of such questions, (as) ”the law entered in between that the offence might abound; and ”the law worketh wrath; and ”by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; and the like; wherefore, for the resolution of these very things he proposes the objection. And first he shows that the interrogation is profane, and adds the expression of disavowal, God forbid, and then he teaches the utility of the law. Nay but I should not have been aware of what was sin, but by the law. Not only, says he, is the law not the teacher of sin, God forbid, but on the contrary it is the condemner of sin, for I should not have known what was evil, unless it had shown me. For I should not have known that lust was, except the law had said Thou shall not lust. The words I should not have been aware, and I should not have known, are not here indicative of a total ignorance, but mean this, that I received from the law a knowledge more complete than the mere discrimination of nature. 8. But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.

In every way he endeavours to show that it was free from blame, for having said that by the imposition of the law sins had been increased, lest any one should suppose that the law had been the cause, he most seasonably sets forth its way, that sin making use of the imposition of the law as a mean for battle, beat down the weaker powers of judgment. For without the law sin were dead, for where there is no law pointing out what should be done, and forbidding What should not be done, sin has no place. And he makes this evident by an example; 9. For I was alive without the law once, for Adam before his transgression had no fear of death, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. For when God had imposed the commandment respecting the trees, immediately the devil came to the woman in the serpent, and uttered those deceitful speeches, and she being enticed, and beholding the beauty of the fruit, was overcome by desire and broke the commandment. And with Adam she immediately received the sentence, for he also had shared in that food.

10. And the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. In every way he vindicates the law, and the commandment, but proves the evil of sin; for the commandment, says he, was the minister of life, but the turning aside to evil begot death, wherefore he most properly says, found, to show that the intention of the law, and the end brought about by sin, were widely different things. 11. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. The same thing he had said before, only in different words. 12. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. It is the Mosaic which he here speaks of as the law, and that given to Adam as the commandment. And the reason why he honours the latter with the greater praises, is that it commonly meets with the greater censures. For they who live in idle ease, and will not

undergo the labours of virtue, cry out even against God Himself, for imposing this commandment. For if He were ignorant, say they, of what would happen, how can He be God who foreknows not the future? but if while foreseeing the transgression, He yet imposed the commandment, Himself is the cause of the transgression! But such should be aware, that the power of discriminating between good and its opposite is the property of those that are gifted with reason, for the nature of the irrational creatures possesses no such faculty of distinguishment of these things;

for the wolf is ravenous, and the lion feasts on its prey while scarce dead, and bears and leopards follow in the same train; and they have no sense of sin, nor a conscience to be pricked at what has been done; while men, though no one be present at their actions, are ashamed and afraid on account of what they have dared to commit, for conscience supplies the accusation. How then were it possible that they who possess such a nature, should yet live without any law at all? Wherefore God enjoined the commandment, that man might thereby learn to understand his own nature, and to fear his Lawgiver. And well indeed may we perceive the loving-kindness of that Lawgiver, for He enjoined, not some law which was difficult of observation, but one which could have been easily kept. He allowed to him the enjoyment of all the trees, of one alone He forbade him the use; not that He grudged him that one, for how could He do so, who had already given him power over all? but in order to teach him the terms of submission, and to render him well-affected towards his Creator, and afford a mean for the exercise of his rational faculties. And if then, by not keeping the commandment he came under sentence of death, this can be no cause for blame to the Lawgiver, but to him who transgressed the law.

For so neither, when a physician orders his patient to abstain from cold drinks, does he do this because he invidiously grudges them to him, but in order to bring about his health; and if he not observing the injunction will take water, he draws the injury on himself, but the physician is free from blame altogether. But indeed the Lord God has treated with every possible consideration and kindness, both Adam himself and all his race, and, to pass by all other, and come at once to the noblest instance, for him, and his race, the only-begotten Word became incarnate, and put an end to the power of death, which from him had received its beginning, and promised the resurrection, and prepared the kingdom of heaven: so that He both foreknew his transgression, and made ready before-hand the mean of remedy to follow; wherefore the holy apostle calls the commandment holy, just, and good; holy, as teaching what we ought to do; just, as rightly pronouncing judgment on the transgressors; good, as appointing life to such as observed it. And then again he states the objection that might arise, 13. Did then that which is good become death unto me? and again according to his wont he denies it, God forbid, and shows us the cause of these evils, but sin, that it might appear to be (indeed) sin, in its

working death to me by that which is good. There is an obscurity here, arising from the extreme brevity made use of;

what he means is this, that by that which is good, to wit the law and commandment, sin is made apparent to me, namely, as being bad and evil; and how is it so made apparent? by its working unto death, for from the fruit I know the tree, and seeing death I hate its parent; but of all this is the law the teacher; it is not then the law, which thus instructs, that is evil, but sin, which brings death; and it is the inclination of our own free will to the worse, that is the author of sin. That sin might by the commandment become exceeding sinful. For though nature points out sin, its excessive turpitude the law has more clearly manifested. The expression that it might become is incomplete, the word ”apparent” being understood, for so also we explained it in the preceding sentence, ”but sin, that it might be seen to be sin indeed by its working out death to me by that which is good, that sin might by the commandment become exceeding sinful,” that is, that it might become by the commandment ” apparent” that sin is exceeding sinful, that is evil. And then, like some skilful painter, he portrays the contest between nature and sin. 14. For we know that the law is spiritual. Again be crowns the law with praise, for what can be more holy than this designation? for it was written, says he, by divine inspiration, being a partaker of this grace the blessed Moses indited the law.

But I am carnal, sold under sin. He brings before us the man who lived before the coming (of the covenant) of grace, beset by his passions, for by carnal he means one who had not yet received the spiritual help (offered in that new covenant, see verse 5 ad fin. and ch. vi. 14 ad fin. &c.); but the sold under sin we shall understand by comparing it with that passage of the prophet, (Isaiah 1. 1,) ”For your iniquities have you sold yourselves. And the same thing does he here say, I have delivered myself up to sin, and sold myself to it.

15. For that which I do I know not: for he who is overcome by pleasure, and indeed he also who is intoxicated by the passion of anger, has no clear perception of sin, but after such passion has subsided receives a knowledge of the evil. For what I would that I do not, but what I hate that I do. This is the perfection of the law, to point out what is evil and implant a hatred of it in the soul. The words what I would not and what I hate do not denote compulsion, but weakness; for we sin not because driven thereto by some necessity or force, but being beguiled by pleasure we fall into those things which yet we cannot but hate and denounce as wicked. 16. If then I do that which I would not, I content unto the law that it is good. For the very hatred I have for sin, I have received from the law, wherefore I bear testimony to the law, and acknowledge its excellence. 17. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. This needs elucidation somewhat more at length. The body then after the transgression of the commandment becoming mortal received passions and appetites, since by these it is that our present state of existence is

carried on. For thus it needs desire, not only for the provision thereby of food, but for the procreation of children also, and for agriculture's sake, and the various other arts, none of which could exist were desire altogether wanting. Thus it also contributes to our perseverance in well-doing, for nothing but such an affection for and desire of virtue could qualify us to bear its attendant difficulties. And so also does it work within us the Divine love.

The proper measure of desire then is an auxiliary to good, but its disorder brings forth intemperance, in that it leads us to lay snares against the marriage-bed of others, and to covet what does not belong to us, and to steal, and to break open tombs (in order to spoil the dead), and to commit manslaughter, and become guilty of other the like crimes; wherefore has the God of all added side by side to it (an uncalculating) impetuosity, that the latter might repress the extravagance of the others, while itself also needing a check on its own excesses. As then we dilate with what is too cold, that which is hot, and again correct what is too cold by what is hot, even so has God our Creator, by implanting in us these two passions directly opposed to each other, taught us to check each reciprocally by the other. For over them He has placed the mind, like a charioteer over his horses, and imposed the yoke of submission on them, enjoining both to bear it evenly together; if then it happen that desire springs forward beyond the line, He bids her goad up impetuosity, that this rushing onward may again bring the yoke straight; and, if that admit the overworkings of its own temper, again in its turn He orders desire to be pressed forward, that it may correct the excess of impetuosity.

The mind then, if watchful and prudent, thus keeps under and directs them, while if negligent, and letting the reins go, she becomes the means of her horses breaking away, and is herself dragged onward, and with them falls into pits and down precipices. This then is what the holy apostle means by now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me, by sin intending the enslavement of the mind, and the usurpation of the passions; and he then doeth it not, for he hates what is done, but this usurpation of the passions is the author of the action.18. For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. He speaks of the dominion of the passions, which the mortality of the body introduced, and the indolence of the mind has strengthened. For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, for, as regards a willingness towards that which is good, this I have received from the teaching of the law, but at the same time, as regards action I am impotent from want of further help. 19. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. 20. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

He makes the same assertion, only in a clearer manner. 21. I find then the law with me in wishing to do what is right,—here we must put a stop,— (and yet) that evil is present to me. Again he has stated this obscurely through brevity: what he means

is, that the law appears to me to be good, for I approve all that it recommends, as being right and excellent; and in unison with it I also love all good, and hate its opposite; but nevertheless evil is ever at hand with me, that is, sin, by reason of my possessing a mortal body, one subject to passions and appetites, as well as through the indolence and weakness of the soul. And thence he proceeds to describe more clearly the conflict between the mind and the passions. 22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. By the inward man he means the mind. 23. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. By the law of sin he means sin itself, and this works within me by the passions of the body leaping about at pleasure, while the soul is unable to restrain them, in consequence of the sluggishness fallen into at first by her; she having cast off her own freedom, and allowed herself to be subjected to them;

while yet not the less does she, even though thus obeying them, hate that servitude, and approve that (the law) which condemns it. Having thus laid down all this, in order to show us what we were before receiving grace (through the new covenant), and what we have become since that grace; and personating, as it were, the character of those besieged by sin before grace appeared; he now, as one in the midst of his enemies, taken captive and compelled to obey, while perceiving help from no other quarter, groans bitterly, and cries out, proving that the law could not succour him, and says, 24. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank my God through Jesus Christ our Lord. He calls it a body of death, as being bom subject to death; that is, mortal, for the soul is immortal. Christ alone, says he, has freed us from this bitter bondage, by putting an end to death, and promising us immortality, and that life which is without either labour or pain, and apart from warfare and sin; the full enjoyment whereof we shall receive in the existence to come; while in the present we are blessed with the grace of the thrice holy Spirit, and thereby not only do we set ourselves against the passions, but by the possession of such an Helper are enabled to triumph over them.

And then he brings forward the resolution of all that had been said, So then I myself, the same person, with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Chapter VIII.

1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: for our passions can no longer get the mastery over us without our own consent, now that we have received the grace of the Spirit of God. 2. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. As he had just before called sin ”the law of sin,” so now does be call the life-giving Spirit, the law of the spirit of life. His grace, says he, by faith in Christ has bestowed on you a double freedom; for not only has it overthrown the power of sin, but put an end also to the tyranny of death, and he shows how He has thus overthrown it 3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh. The law then was not evil, but good, though impotent; and that weakness arose from its injunctions being given to those encumbered with a mortal nature, for now by the thrice-holy baptism we have received the pledge of immortality. God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful fleshy and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. He says not in the likeness of flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, for He received actually the human nature, but human sin he received not;

wherefore that which He thus assumed, he calls not the likeness of flesh, but the likeness of sinful flesh, because though He had the same nature with ourselves, He yet had not the same character or disposition. He means, then, that the law having been unable to bring to effect its own design, by reason of the weakness of those beneath its covenant, possessing as they did a mortal nature, and one obnoxious to infirmities and passions; the only-begotten Word of God, becoming incarnate, by that human flesh overthrew sin, in having fulfilled all righteousness, and admitted no taint of sin; and by enduring the death of sinners, as though Himself a sinner, manifested the injustice of sin, in that it delivered up to death a body over which death had no just claim. And this then both overthrew it and put an end to death; for in thus submitting to death through the unjust sentence of sin, while not at all obnoxious to it, in that He never committed sin, did He become the price of redemption of those justly subjected unto death, as one free among the dead: for so he also teaches in what follows, 4. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For He has paid,

says he, our debt, and fulfilled that which the law aimed at: and what then was this? to render them righteous that had received that law.

If then the dispensation of Christ Jesus has brought to effect the intention of the law, the law deserves not blame, but praise.

And having thus touched upon the subject of righteousness, he goes on to an exhortation to it, and having said, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, adds, 5. For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit; and in like manner in another place, (Gal. v. 25,) "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit," meaning here by the Spirit, the grace of the Spirit, and teaching that he who follows it, both thinks and does the things agreeable thereto, and he that is enslaved to the flesh, that is, to the passions of the body, has deprived himself of his freedom. 6. For the inclination of the flesh is death. He says not the flesh, but the inclination of the flesh, that is, the breaking forth of the passions, for the recompense of sinners is death; but the inclination of the Spirit is life and peace, for he who lives after the Spirit gains peace with God; 7. Because the inclination of the flesh is enmity against God. Again he condemns the inclination of the flesh, that is, the tyranny of the passions which he declares are at variance with God. For they are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; for how is it possible that he who has admitted the tyranny of the passions, should embrace the service of God, while yet choosing to serve sin? 8.

So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. He does not bid us go out of the body, but be freed from the inclination of the flesh, as is shown by what follows: 9. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. For it is evident that they who received these his instructions were not devoid of the body itself, but what he means is, that they were conquerors over the fleshly passions, and enjoyed the grace of the thrice-holy Spirit resident within them; and so in a similar sense does our Lord say that His disciples are "not of the world," (John xv. 19,) not that they came from elsewhere, but that they were dead to the world.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. As he had said if so be that, which implies an alternative, he aptly subjoins that he who is wanting in this grace, has no fellowship with Christ And as this was enough to warn and alarm them that received this Epistle, he proceeds again to re-assure them, 10. And if Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead, with regard to sin, but the spirit is life, as regards righteousness. He makes clear what had been ambiguous, and shows that it was not the mere flesh itself that he is condemning, but sin; for he bids the body be dead to sin, that is not to commit sin; and the soul is what he here speaks of as the spirit, in its having become already spiritual; here he enjoins to follow after righteousness, whose exceedingly desirable fruit is life. 11. But if the Spirit of Him

that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. He invigorates them by hope of the future, and inspires them with willing readiness, sufficient for present contests; for ere long, says be, your bodies will be immortal, and superior to the passions that now molest them; and this will He do, the same, the (rod of all, who now so liberally bestows on us the earnest of the Spirit.

And He has given us also a pledge of this resurrection, in the resurrection of Christ. And he teaches by all this, the unity of nature in the Godhead, for he calls the thrice-holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; not that, as the infamous heretics say, He was created of the Father by the Son, but that He is of one substance with the Father and the Son, and proceeds from the Father, according to the teaching of the gospels. His grace it is, that is extended by Christ to such as are worthy. And he continues showing how we ought to triumph over the fleshly passions. 12. Therefore we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for having received salvation of Christ Jesus, and been made partakers of the grace of the Spirit, to Him we owe the debt of service. 13. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; after the flesh, that is, following the passions of the flesh: the death he means is that which is eternal; but if ye through the Spirit do put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. This superiority has (the covenant of) grace over (that of) the law, that the latter points out what is right; the former has the grace of the Spirit in addition, as an helpmate.

And here indeed the holy apostle, foreseeing the corruptions of Marcion, Valentine, and Manes, uses the greatest accuracy of expression in his instructions, saying not, put to death the body, but the deeds of the body, that is, the desires of the flesh, the burstings forth of the passions, for ye have for an assistant the grace of the Spirit, and the fruit of victory is life. 14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, for they who live under the Spirit obtain the privilege of adoption; and here he strikes at the Jews, teaching them not to think too highly of themselves, forasmuch as that they also had been called sons, for they are wanting in the glory of the thrice-holy Spirit, being aliens from grace.

15. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption. Again, he compares (the covenants of) grace and the law, and calls the institutions of the latter, bondage, while at the same time showing that it was written by the grace of the Spirit. Not, therefore, the thrice-holy Spirit itself does he here call the spirit of bondage, but the imposition of the law as effected by that holy Spirit; for had be by the spirit of bondage meant the thrice-holy Spirit itself, then truly must there have been another Spirit, of adoption; but not so is it, for the thrice-holy Spirit is One, while different and varying are His gifts; ”for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit and so forth. And

having shown that in truth we have received the privilege of adoption, he subjoins, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

For when we offer up to the Lord the prayer of the initiated, we are bidden to address Him as our Father, and we say, "Our Father which art in heaven and he has added the word, Abba, to point out the confidence wherewith we call upon Him, for so little children, using the greater boldness towards their parents, in that they have not as yet a clear knowledge of the difference between them and themselves, the oftener and oftener go on lisping out the same word towards them; and so in like manner we, by reason of His unspeakable kindness, and immeasurable goodness, call the Maker of all our Father, as we are commanded, while yet we are unconscious how great is the difference between Him and ourselves, not understanding our own selves clearly, and of His nature being altogether ignorant. 16. For the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. By the Spirit he means the Holy Ghost himself, by our spirit, the grace (or spirit of adoption) given to us, for both are here expressed by the same common word, and what he means is, that we put forth this prayer, (thus claiming sonship therein) as led by the teaching of the Spirit, and in so doing then we cannot be blameworthy, in that we do it according to the divine law. 17. And if children, then heirs.

Nor was it enough that we should have been freed from bondage and enjoyed the grace of liberty, but moreover have we been blessed with the privilege of the adoption; nay, and not only are we called sons, but heirs also of God, and joint heirs with Christ, for so he subjoins, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Since not every son becomes the heir of his father, well has the holy apostle joined the heirship with the sonship; and since frequently even a servant receives some portion from his master, and yet is not left an equal partner with the child itself, it was necessary, in order to point out the ineffable magnitude of the divine love, that he should subjoin, joint heirs with Christ,—if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For not all who have been blessed by baptism, which places us in a state of salvation, will enjoy these good things, but they, who in addition thereto, have undergone their share of suffering with their Saviour. And this he subjoins not without a distinct object, but for the support of those to whom his letters were addressed; for they were subjected to the attacks of temptations of all sorts, being beaten, tortured, and imprisoned, and exposed to a thousand kinds of death; wherefore he sends them comforting words, supporting them by the future, and exhorting them to bear the present with fortitude. 18.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to he compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. The crowns exceed the contests; the reward cannot be put in the same scale with the afflictions; small is the affliction, but vast the looked for gain; wherefore he calls the things thus hoped for, not payment, but glory. 19. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the

manifestation of the sons of God. Perceive ye not, says he, the heaven, the earth, the sea, the air, the sun, the moon, the whole visible creation, and besides these, such as are invisible—angels, archangels, powers, dominions, principalities? all these are waiting for your full perfection. 20. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Corruption is what he here speaks of as vanity, for so he teaches presently, ”because that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. And he declares that the whole visible creation had obtained a mortal nature, because the Maker of all had foreseen Adam’s transgression, and the sentence of death, which would be passed on him. For neither was it fit nor right, that what was created for him should possess an incorruption, and yet himself, for whose sake all these were made, be mortal, and a prey to passions and sufferings; but the rather, by the resurrection receiving immortality, they in like manner inherit incorruption.

Wherefore he says that the visible creation waits for such a change of things, for it was made changeable not of its own accord, but in submission to the decree of the Creator, and beholding the care exhibited in our behalf has a hope of such change, that itself also, the creation, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption; to which mutability of the universe the holy David also witnesses, when, mentioning the heaven and the earth he adds, (Ps. cii. 26,) ”they shall perish, but Thou remain.” 21. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For when these latter appear such as now they are called, and in their immortality are manifested to be the sons of God, the former also will obtain a total release from corruption. And all this he says, not meaning that the visible creation really was gifted with reason, but by a prosopopoeia, as was common with the prophets, so that one represents the pines as groaning, and another the woods as rejoicing, and the mountains leaping, and the rivers exulting.

22. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. Here he includes the invisible creation also, for the whole creation, says he. But for the clearer understanding of the passage, I must bring to remembrance what the gospels state, for there the Lord declared, (Luke xv. 10. that ”even the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner that repenteth; if then they joy over penitent sinners, then must they also of a truth be cast down on beholding our transgressions. 23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first- fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves. And what wonder if creation is so affected on our account? for even ourselves who have already received many pledges of the future, and above all others the grace of the Spirit, groan in our longings after freedom; as what follows shows that he means, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. He had said, indeed, that we have received the spirit of adoption; but without infringement thereof, he here shows us more precisely that now we have obtained the name, but then shall be made partakers

of the full reality, when our bodies shall have been released from corruption, and have put on immortality; while by the word first- fruits, he points out that in the future life, we shall receive a far larger measure of the grace of the Spirit;

since if what is now offered is called first-fruits, and earnest, manifest is it that that shall far exceed it in greatness. 24. For we are saved by hope, for not yet have we attained unto the resurrection, but having received the promise are comforted by our hopes; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, how doth he yet hope for? 25. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Be not cast down, says he, while looking on (present) distresses, for we have brought you no false promises, in that we said you must yet awhile wait, ere you should enjoy these good things, but good things thus expected are not seen with the bodily eyes, since if seen they would cease to be expected, while if expected, we should be content in confidence to wait for them, and never throw away the anchor of hope. And he shows that in addition to all this, there is also another source of help given, 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, we have a sufficient assistance in the grace of the Spirit, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. Ask not, says he, to be delivered from affliction, for ye know not what is profitable to you, as does God your Governor. Resign yourselves into His hands, who holds the helm of all things;

for He, though you should ask nothing, but groan only as moved by the Spirit dwelling in you, wisely orders every thing relating to you, and will grant that which shall prove to your advantage; as he subjoins, 27. For He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because it maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. By the Spirit here he means not the Holy Ghost himself, but the grace given to the faithful: for stirred up by this we pray the more earnestly, and with sighings inexpressible by words implore God our Saviour. And this the holy apostle writes from what himself had experienced, for he himself not once only or twice, but even thrice, had besought release from his own trials, and beseeching had failed of obtaining his prayer; for he heard in reply, (2 Con xii. 8, 9,) ” My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness,” and having learned this, he welcomed what he had before sought to be delivered from, and says, ” most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called in accordance with (their own) disposition. They work not together with all, but with those that love Him, nor simply work with them, but work with them for good, for if any ask for what would not be profitable to him, he fails of his petition, because it is to his advantage not to gain it. And with the fittest accuracy of expression does he join the disposition with the call, for the

call is not irrespective, but to those who possess this disposition; wherefore He said to the apostle in Corinth, (Acts xviii. 9,10,) ”speak and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city and forbade him to preach the word in Mysia (ch. xvi. 6, 7); and as to Asia, at first restrained, and afterwards commanded him to do it; wherefore he also said to him in Jerusalem, (ch. xxii. 18,) ”make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony; and wherefore he here also says, to those that are called in accordance with (their own) disposition, agreeably to what follows. 39. For whom He had foreknown, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; for He did not irrespectively predestine, but predestined in his foreknowledge of them.

And speaking with the strictest accuracy of expression, he says not conformed to His Son, but to the image of His Son; and this he has even more plainly put in the Epistle to the Philippians (ch. iii. 20), where, having said that ”our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,” he adds, ”Who shall change our vile body, that it may be conformed to His glorious body. For our body will not be made to resemble His divinity, but His glorified body,—and so here also he calls those who now obtained the privilege of the call conformed to the image of His Son, that is, to the body of His Son; for the divine nature being invisible, and the body visible, by the body as an image (or shadow) is He adored; that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and this the truth of the doctrine testifies, for it is as man that He is called the first-born, as God being the Only-begotten, seeing that as God He has not brethren, but as man designates as brethren them which believe. Of these He is the firstborn, being yet no other than the Only-begotten; but He, the same, both Only-begotten and firstborn. 30. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Those whose (suitable) disposition he had foreknown, those in the beginning He predestinated; and predestinating, also called;

and calling, justified by baptism; and justifying, glorified by designating them sons, and endowing them with the grace of the Holy Spirit. But let no one say that such foreknowledge is the cause of these things; for foreknowledge made them not such as they are, but God as God, foresaw from of old all that would be. For so neither if seeing a violent horse seizing the bit in its teeth, and not heeding its rider, I should predict that nearing a precipice it would fall over it, and the event were to happen as I said, should I have cast the horse down that precipice, but merely have foretold what was itself about to take place, while using the evidence of the fierceness of the horse himself as my guide. But (and so likewise) the God of all, from of old knows all things as God, not that He imposes on any one a necessity for his establishment in virtue, or on another for his performance of vice; for if He exercised force towards either, He could not with justice praise and reward the

former, or adjudge punishment to the latter. If then God be just, as indeed He is just, He exhorts indeed to what is right, and denounces its opposite; He approves the doers of good, and avenges Himself on those who from their own will embrace wickedness. 31. What shall we then say to these things? If God he for us, who can be against us?

Having God as our ally, shall we be afraid of men? He comprehends all things at once under the word who; whether kings, or generals, or people, or their leaders; the whole world at once. And then he brings forward the crowning blessing of blessings. 32. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? He has given us the greater, and shall He not give also the less? His own Son has He bestowed, and will He deprive us of what we have gained? But here we must remember, that the Person of the Son is (but) one; for the human nature was delivered up in our behalf by the divinity; for (so) "the bread," says He, (John vi. 31,) "that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world; and (ch. x. 18,) "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again." 33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34. Who is he (then) that condemneth? Having said that while God helps, who can injure us? he adds, that God, having rendered us justified, who can condemn? Christ it is that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. What more than all this seek ye?

in our behalf the Lord Christ died, and having risen again sits by the Father; nor even thus has He ceased His care for us, but pointing to the first-fruits which He took from us, and showing its immaculate purity to the Father, by it He asks for salvation to ourselves. And this indeed he says as regards the humanity, for as God He asks not, but (Himself) grants. Nay, and even if the heretics should declare, that so the Son does as regards His divinity, neither so could they prove His glory to be the less. For let us suppose two kings to be equal in honour, and to have the same authority, and when some deputy or general has offended against both, the one of these having earliest received the prayer of the culprit to beg of the partner of his kingdom to admit him to reconciliation, does this at all diminish the dignity, of him that makes this request? By no means. But in the present case we cannot grant even so much as this, for whatsoever seems good to the Son, pleases the Father also, and the will of both is the same. The passage therefore is figuratively expressed by the apostle, through his desire to set forth the greatness of (Christ's) zeal and watchfulness for us. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? 36. As it is written (Ps.

xliv. 22,) For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. The witness adduced is exactly correspondent to the subject in

hand, for it was spoken in the persons of those who had the same object, for the thrice-holy Spirit wrote this psalm by the inspired David, concerning the admirable Maccabees. 37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Opposing the love which God bears us to all these things, we rise superior to afflictions; for we reckon that it were most absurd for our Lord Christ to have undergone death for sinners, and yet ourselves not most readily to embrace martyrdom for Him. 38. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other such creation, could be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Having weighed the whole creation at once against the love of God, and added to such as are visible, such as are perceptible only by the mind—angels, and powers, and dominions; and to the present, hoped for, blessings; as well as threatened punishments also; for by depth, as I apprehend, he signifies hell, and by height the kingdom (of heaven); and moreover everlasting life and eternal death; and seeing that even then this scale is lightest in the reckoning, he seeks for somewhat else to be cast in;

and finding nothing, he frames into his account another such and as varied an universe; and neither so does he find all these together fit to be weighed against the love of God. For it behoves us, says he, not to love Him on account of His promises of blessings, but to desire them on His. For (so) neither if a man be sincerely well affected towards one who is rich, does he love him for the abundance of his wealth; but from his very affection towards him, loves also the possessions belonging to him; and in like manner the holy apostle declares, I would not choose to inherit the kingdom of heaven, and all visible and invisible creation, and as many such again twice or thrice multiplied, apart from the love of God; but rather were any one to lay before me present and future distresses, present and eternal death, and the most protracted punishment in hell, together with the love of Him, readily and welcomely would I choose these in preference to the former splendid and glorious and unspeakable objects, devoid of love to Him. Which therefore that ourselves may also possess, let us both pray and strive, so that following in the footsteps of the apostles, we may be made sharers thereby in the (eternal) habitations of the apostles, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom, to the Father, together with the thrice-holy Spirit, belong glory and majesty, now and ever, unto endless ages. Amen.

Book IV.

That the incarnation of our God and Saviour both was necessary, and was productive of unspeakable blessings to believers, the holy apostle has clearly shown. For he has proved the Jews to be obnoxious to the greater condemnation by reason of the imposition of the law, and all others to be transgressors of the law of nature; and having set forth the threat of punishment, he has subjoined the gifts of the grace in the gospel (covenant), and pointed out the salvation offered through faith; while, at the same time, lest the Jews should be offended, imagining the law censured; or the heretics, hostile to the ancient covenant, gain an opportunity of accusation against the law by the comparison thus instituted, he has necessarily exhibited the usefulness of the law, and honoured it with many praises. And as, again, the Jews, bringing forward the patriarch Abraham, and the promises made by God to him, endeavoured to prove that the preaching of the apostles, being extended to the Gentiles beyond the divine promise, was contrary to these, he is constrained to treat of these objections also; and most wisely does he answer them, by adducing scripture testimonies, and ancient examples, applicable to the case, and demonstrating plainly the truth of the divine promises. Being about then to denounce the infidelity of the Jews, he first displays the love he bore them, and says,

Chapter IX.

1. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost. He proves that what he was about to say should be free from all falsehood, and dignified with perfect truth, for be calls the grace of the Holy Spirit to witness with his conscience; in every way persuading them not to disbelieve his account. 2. That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. The composition of the sentence is incomplete, for it should have been added that the continual sorrow was caused by the rejection, or infidelity of the Jews; but through caution he omits these distinct words, and is content to teach in the sequel that he so meant. For thus he speaks: 3. For I could pray to be myself anathema from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. The word anathema has two significations, for that which is consecrated to God is called an anathema, and that which is separated from Him has the same name, and this second meaning the holy apostle has taught us in the Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 22), ”If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema”—the first being explained even by common custom, for so we designate whatever is offered to God an anathema—and the God of all things Himself, in commanding the town of Jericho to be made an anathema (Joshua vi. 17).

Here then the blessed apostle uses it in its second meaning, to manifest the feelings he entertained towards his brother Jews, and he says not I could desire, but I could pray to be separated from Christ, provided that they who are my kindred in the flesh, being united to Him, should reap salvation; and most aptly does he introduce the ”even I myself” recalling to their recollection what he had just before stated of his love to Christ, and as it were saying, that I, whom ”neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other such creation, could separate from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus,” would gladly be alienated from Him, for the sake of the salvation of the Jews. But it is evident that he speaks not this as preferring them to the Saviour, but as indicating his love and anxiety for them, being most desirous that all should submit themselves, and joyfully receive the saving gospel. And to persuade them of the truth of what he says, he points out both their former high descent and eminence, and the riches of the divine gifts conferred on them, and says, 4. Who are Israelites? For most celebrated was this

name, imposed by God Himself on their forefather, (Gen. xxxv. 10) and transmitted as an heirloom to his descendants; To whom pertaineth the adoption. And this name also they had obtained, for ”Israel,” says he, ”is My son, my firstborn” (Exod iv. 22);

And the glory, for they had been illustrious through miracles; And the covenants, not the old only, but the new also had He promised to bestow on them, ”for I will make,” says He, ”a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers” (Jer. xxxi. 31, 32), but this they themselves were not willing to accept; And the giving of the law, for to them had He given the Mosaic law; And the service of God, for, honouring them above other nations, to them He had taught the ritual ministrations of the law; And the promises, both those made by God to their fathers and those promulged by the prophets.

(To be continued.)

Introduction

5. Whose are the fathers, the renowned, the celebrated, of whom God was called the God (Exod. iii. 15); and then in the last place he adduces the greatest of the blessings, And of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. And, indeed, the addition of the concerning the flesh had been enough to evidence the divinity of the Lord Christ, yet, as in the opening of the epistle having said, ”who was of the seed of David according to the flesh,” he subjoined, ”and was declared to be the Son of God with power,” so here also after the concerning the flesh, he adds, who is over all, God blessed for ever; both exhibiting thereby the difference of the natures, and teaching how just reason he had for his lamentation, since while of them according to the flesh was He who was God over all, they had fallen from their height, and become aliens from that relationship. And herein he imitates the female mourners, who introduce into their funeral songs the beauty of the person, and the flower of the age, and the illustriousness of the ancestry, and the wealth, and the power, of the deceased over whom they lament. Having then thus displayed the love he bore the Jews, he then begins his proposed design; 6. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.

I indeed, says he, not only could desire, but could also even pray, to he separated from Christ, if it were possible that by this separation of mine the Jews should gain the blessings held out, but nevertheless should they still prove gainsayers, and refuse to receive salvation, the promises made to the fathers would still remain true. How then? For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. For God seeks not the relationship of nature, but of virtue; and then he teaches this yet more plainly; 7. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, that is of God, as he shows just below, —But in Isaac shall thy seed be called; and having thus stated the promise of God, he now explains it, and renders the saying clear by his exposition thereof. 8. That is, not they which are the children of the flesh are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. By the children of the flesh, he means those that were horn after the ordinary course of nature, but of the promise, those that were given by grace. 9. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. For nature

having failed, he was constituted a father by the divine bounty; and this shows that Ishmael also was a son to Abraham—aye, and his firstborn son; and wherefore then boastest thou, O Jew, of being alone called the seed of Abraham?

But if thou dost imagine that he was rejected from the relationship, as being on one side a bondsman, then thinkest thou not rightly, for Scripture is wont to calculate descent not from the mother's, but the father's side. And so the holy Apostle might have brought forward the children sprung from Keturah, and shown that they also, though born of a free woman, yet were not reckoned as the seed of Abraham; and easy had it been for him to have pointed out the twelve sons of Jacob, born of different mothers, four of them being bondsmen on one side, and yet all called Israel, and receiving no injury from the slavery of their mothers; but contenting himself with fewer instances, all this he has omitted, and beats them down by the ample evidence left. For having mentioned that which had been said by God to Abraham, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, he shows that neither were the whole of his race partakers of this blessing, seeing that of his own sons the one inherited the privilege, and the other failed of it; for so he subjoins, 10. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac: 11. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good, or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, 12. It was said unto her, that the elder shall serve the younger.

If thou thinkest, says he, that, on account of (his birth from) Sarah, Isaac was preferred before Ishmael, and Abraham's other children whom he had by Keturah, what wilt thou say to the case of Rebecca? For here were there the same father and the same mother, and the same one single conception, the children being twins; for this is what he means by having conceived by one, that is conceived both at the same time; but the one nevertheless was beloved of God, and the other unworthy the divine regard; and God waited not for the evidence of events, but while yet they were in the womb predicted the difference between them; and He predicted it from foreknowing their dispositions, for election is not arbitrary, but in accordance to the disposition of men; and then he adduces the testimony of the prophet, (Mal. i. 3,) 13. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. He heeds not, therefore, the (bare descent of) nature, but virtue only is it that He requires; for this he confirms by many instances.

14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. The divine decision, says he, has nothing unjust in it, but is graced with perfect equity. And this indeed, though having it in his power to point out and teach clearly, that it is not the custom with God to pay attention to bare birth, but that He looks for the best disposition, as well as to remind them that oftentimes they had been delivered up to many enemies, without being at all spared for the sake of their forefathers, seeing that they imitated not their virtue; and that the whole nation

had been allowed to be taken captive by the Babylonians, while Abimelech, on the other hand, though a slave and an Ethiopian, had been saved through his piety; he yet refrains from so doing, as not wishing too much to cast them down; but shows instead that the divine dispensations exceed the reckonings of man, and while many commit iniquity, yet not all are made to suffer vengeance for it; for so in the wilderness the greater part worshipped, for God, the image of the calf, yet not of all was punishment exacted, but some being made to suffer, others by those sufferings of their's were reformed; and so in avenging himself on Pharaoh, He brought by him great benefit to many; and these instances, accordingly, the holy Apostle places before them; and thus he speaks, 15. For he saith to Moses, (Exod. xxxiii. 10,) I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. These words God spake concerning the making of the calf. And it was necessary that he should mention Moses's name here, in order to show the trustworthiness of what he was alleging, by the testimony of Him who spoke, and him who heard; and then he draws the conclusion, 16. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. And he brings not yet the resolution of all this, but continues still the whole question by the addition of what follows, 17. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, (Exod. ix. 10,) Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth. And then again he adds as a deduction, 18. Therefore hath he mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Unquestionable, says he, are these scriptures, for what I advance is collected from thence, and from thence only. Thou hast heard God Himself declaring, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," and His again are the things spoken concerning Pharaoh. He, passing by Ishmael and the children by Keturah, chose Isaac;

and He again preferred Jacob to Esau, although both received their being at the same time, in the same womb; why wonderest thou then, if he hath exactly so done now also, and received those among you who have believed, and rejected those that will not admit that light? But this indeed he does not yet lay down, but continues still adding to the difficulties of the subject, and says, 19. Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? For, if "He hath mercy on whom He will, and whom He will hardeneth," man's disposition must depend on His will (say you): and, if so, He cannot with justice inflict punishment on the offenders, for it is not possible for any to resist whatever he thinks fit. Having thus increased the difficulties of the subject by the variety of doubts, and proposed all the objections arising from it, he subjoins, 20. Nay but, O man, who art thou, that repliest against God? Since thou hast asked, says he, "who has resisted His will," tell me what thou art; art thou not a man? How then dost thou reply against, and over-curiously inquirest into the divine dispensations? for if thou wert not a free

agent, nor couldest choose by thine own free will what thou wouldest do, but wert enslaved to the compulsion of the divine will, thou wouldest, like the inanimate creation, have been silent, and acquiesced in His dispensations;

but since thou art dignified by reason, (therefore it is that) thou both sayest and doest what thou thyself pleasest, and lovest not what has been done, but inquirest into the causes of the divine dispensations. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? Look at the clay of the potter, which is devoid of rational discrimination; it answers not against its maker, but although set apart for the structure of some base vessel, it receives in silence what is done; but thou opposest and findest fault; therefore art thou not bound by physical necessity, nor transgressest against thine own inclination, but voluntarily embracest vice, and of thine own free choice undergoest the difficulties of virtue. Right, therefore, and just is the sentence of the God of all things, since with equity does he punish sinners as daring so to act of their own will. And in justice also is His loving-kindness, in that when He receives from us an opportunity, He extends His mercy to us. Some, however, interpret the Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? as spoken in rebuke; for so, say they, having first chidden those who are impertinently curious about divine matters, and shown their meanness, for man's nature differs not from the clay, does he proceed to the reply; and the reply is this—22. What then if?

Here we must place a stop, for he means, if thou art desirous to know this, namely, why, when the majority sin, some of them He punishes, and some through their means He benefits; and when many pursue virtue, some of them He renders illustrious, and to some by them sets forth the hopes of the future; hear what follows: God willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, 23. And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory; 24. Even us whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. God, says he, was not the author of Pharaoh's wickedness, but exercised long-suffering towards him as He is wont, but he conceived that long-suffering weakness, and through it increased his own obstinacy; while at the same time the Governor of all things, in His wisdom both justly inflicted punishment on him, and from his very wickedness drew a preventive medicine to the rest. And thus, as physicians do not themselves make vipers, but from them prepare drugs profitable to men, so God preferred that Pharaoh should not suffer punishment, but, inasmuch as he had fallen into so great brutishness, brought on him retributions of every kind, and manifested at the same time His own power to all men;

wherefore He says, ”even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth the I have raised thee up meaning, I have permitted thee to obtain the throne, and while able to prevent, prevented thee not, foreseeing the advantage that would thence arise to others. And those whom he calls vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, are they, who, by their own free will, have become so, for the same thing also has he written to Timothy, (2 Tim. ii. 20) ”But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood, and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour; and, teaching how every one becomes the one or the other of his own free will, he subjoined, ”if a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work; and to the Corinthians, in like manner, he writes (1 Cor. iii. 12), ”Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble,” —clearly teaching the free agency of man. So here does he call those who are worthy of the divine loving-kindness, vessels of mercy.

And the hath before prepared unto glory displays the divine foreknowledge, for so had he also said before, ”for whom He had foreknown He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son; for the object of the apostle is to prove, that the God of all things alone knows who are worthy of salvation, while among men not a soul. And having stated that He hath called us not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, he confirms the representation by the testimony of scripture, and says, 25. As he saith also in Osee (ch. ii. 23, and i. 10), I will call them My people, which were not My people, and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26. And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not My people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. And this God spake not of the Gentiles, but of the Jews themselves; for having commanded Hosea to marry an harlot, and indeed even an adulteress, thus did He order the children born from her to be called, the one not a people (Loammi), and the other not beloved (Loruhamah) (ch. i. 9, 6), foretelling what should happen to the Jews; while at the same time He promised them good things again, that the not people should be called a people, and the not beloved, beloved.

Observe therefore, says he, that even you have not always enjoyed the same things, but at one time have been reckoned a people, and then not a people, and then a people again; and at one time beloved, and then not beloved, and then beloved again. Nothing then improbable has taken place at present, for you have been cast off in due consistency with all this; but and so if yet you again will it, you shall be reckoned a people, and beloved; for so also the Gentiles who were not a people, now are reckoned a people. And he adduces another witness also to this account: 27. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant (only) shall be saved. 28. For a short word will the Lord make upon the earth (ch. x. 22, 23). Most opportunely has he

brought forward this evidence, to show that, of old, the God of all foresaw both those who had attached themselves to the faith, and those who had sunk beneath the disease of infidelity. For as the Jews alleged that but few of them had accepted the gospel, and all the rest had turned away from it as a deception, he proves that all this had long ago been predicted, and that although they should exceed the power of numbers in multitude, and equal the sand of the sea, not all, but such (only) as were furnished with faith, should obtain salvation.

For faith is what he calls the short word, because what the law taught in many commandments, while yet unable to afford complete salvation, that confession in Christ has accomplished, while engendering faith. And this is short, and needs not multiplied periods, being evidenced by the disposition of the heart, and published by the tongue. 29. And as Esaias had said before (ch. i. 9), Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrah. Those whom above he spoke of as a "remnant," the same he here calls a seed, through whom the prophet declares that the Jews suffered not the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, for they had undergone a total destruction. Having thus taught that the God of all things looks not to the mere relationship of birth, but seeks for a community of faith, he shows yet more clearly by what means the Jews had fallen from their ancestral excellence, and the Gentiles on the other hand had obtained salvation. 30. What shall we say then? We must read this interrogatively, putting a stop here: and then what follows as the answer. That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness.

Know, says he, that faith is the cause of these blessings to the Gentiles, for it has rendered them meet to receive the righteousness which is of grace, them who formerly wandered about in error, and neither possessed, nor even wished to seek after, righteousness; while Israel, on the other hand, although possessing the law, and following after the righteousness which is of the law, hath failed of the mark, and not obtained righteousness. And then, again, interrogatively, 32. Wherefore? the reason of this, says he, do you desire to know? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. They imagined that the living under the law was sufficient to secure righteousness to them, and they despised faith; wherefore they neither obtained the gifts of faith, nor gained the righteousness arising from living under its covenant. And then he teaches through what cause they enjoyed not the blessings of faith; For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone. 33. As it is written (Isa. viii. 28), Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. They are wont to stumble who turn their attention elsewhere, and do not choose to look at their path. This had been the case with the Jews. For, being intent on the veriest minutiae of the law, they chose not to see the stone foretold by the prophets, although they

had distinctly predicted, that whosoever trusted in Him should obtain the greatest blessings;

for this is what he means by shall not be ashamed, such as hope, and then fail in their expectations being ashamed. Having thus gently touched them, again he exhibits the feelings he entertained towards them, lost his arguments should assume the appearance of arising from hostility, for he has kept the heavier censures for the last.

Chapter X.

1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might he saved. An ardent wish is what he here calls a desire, for I ardently wish, says he, and pray, that they may obtain salvation. 2. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. He mingles his censure with praise, hiding as it were the hook beneath a bait, that the benefit of what he says might be accepted by them. 3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Their unreasonable adherence to the law is what he here calls their own righteousness, for they are zealous still to observe it, though it has now come to an end; and that which is of grace, through faith, what he speaks of as the righteousness of God; for so he goes on to say, 4. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For faith in the Lord is not contrary to the law, but most agreeable therewith, seeing that the law itself has directed us to the Lord Christ. he, then, that trusts in Christ, fulfils the intention of the law. And well again does he say, to every one that believeth, for the whole race of mankind has been comprehended, so that whether it be Greek or barbarian, if he believe, he shall obtain salvation. And then he again sets forth the difference between the law and grace, and introduces Moses the lawgiver, as the teacher of both; 5. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. Whosoever has observed all things enjoined by the law, has life as the reward of such obedience, but any one transgression entails punishment.

6. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise; (Deut. xxx. 12,) that is, but concerning the righteousness which is of faith, not Moses himself, but the God of all, through Moses, speaks thus, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above; 7. Or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. 8. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. These things the God of all spake indeed concerning the law, teaching the Jews, that without labour on their own part they had received the knowledge of what they ought to do, and needed neither an ascent into heaven, nor a descent into Hades. The word is nigh

thee, for the knowledge of what thou shouldest do has been given unto thee; but the holy apostle has transferred them to this account of faith, teaching us that we should not over- curiously inquire into the dispensation in Christ Jesus, or question that the only-begotten Son of God did become incarnate, and having endured the passion, brought in the resurrection; but by faith reap the salvation (offered). For the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; and then he adds, that is, the word of faith, which we preach. What Moses once said of the injunctions of the law, that we now say of faith: 9.

That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For both are necessary, a sound and firm faith, and a confession uttered with boldness; that both the heart may be adorned with a certain persuasion of faith, and the tongue dignified with a fearless proclamation of the truth. And then again he adduces the testimony of Scripture. 11. For the Scripture saith, (Isa. xxviii. 10,) Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed: and he explains the whosoever, 12. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. 13. For (Joel iii. 5,) whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. The salvation of men is what he here calls the riches of God, for he well knew the loving-kindness of the Lord; and most aptly does he suit his testimonies to the heart, and to the tongue; to the heart, the whosoever believeth on Him shall not he ashamed; to the tongue, the whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

And then he shows that the Jews had voluntarily deprived themselves of salvation, by not choosing to receive the gospel offered, while yet he puts not forth this proof nakedly, but brings about the argument in a different way. 14. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15. And how shall they preach, except they be sent? First, says he, must a person believe, and then call upon God; but it is impossible for any one to believe who has not enjoyed instruction, and this no one can obtain without there being teachers, and these again commission constitutes. Having laid down these positions as it were in vindication of the Jews, by them he increases the blame lying on them. And that which is first, (in order of time) namely, the sending forth of preachers, he puts last, as being about to show, that of old all this had been foretold; for it would have been in the common course to have set forth this before saying the rest, it being necessary first that preachers be appointed, then that they should preach, then that men should hear their preaching, and lastly believe. Therefore he adduces the prophecy of Isaiah, (lii. 7,) and says, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

for the Lord bade His apostles, when entering into a house to say, ”Peace be to this house” (Luke x. 5), for they were proclaiming the divine reconciliation, and bringing glad tidings of the enjoyment of good things. The feet of such then he calls beautiful, as running a goodly course; as washed by the hands of the Lord Himself. And having thus brought forward the evidence concerning the preachers, he says interrogatively, 16. But they have not all obeyed the gospel? and then again in reply, Esaias saith, (liii. 1,) Lord, who hath believed our report? Nor has Scripture been silent on this point either, but of old God predicted all this by Isaiah; and then as drawing his conclusion, 17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; wherefore, whosoever disbelieves, disbelieves the divine oracles, and whosoever believes, receiving the divine words, brings forth faith as the fruit of his hearing.

18. But, I say, have they not heard? And this again is to be read interrogatively, and then as the answer, Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. For how was it possible that the Jews should not have heard, when the nations spread over the whole earth had heard? For to them first the preachers of the truth brought their tidings, for so the Lord Himself enjoined them, (Matt. x. 6,) ”But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and in the Acts of the Apostles, (ch. xiii. 40,) ”It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you. And the holy apostle continues in the same form of argument, making his positions clearer by question and answer, for so again we must read interrogatively, 19. But, I say, did not Israel know? and then what follows as the reply, First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you (Deut. xxxii. 21). We, it is, whom he called foolish, pointing out the folly we laboured under before our conversion to the faith, for so also the holy apostle speaks, (Tit. iii. .3,) ”for we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

By this God grievously vexed the Jews, for neither the captivity, nor the dispersion, nor the destruction of the temple, so much distresses them, as do the religion and eminence of the Gentiles. 20. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought Me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me (lxv. 11). He shows at once the prophecy of the revelation of divine knowledge to the Gentiles, and the bloodthirstings of the Jews, as the expression is very bold testifies; he feared not, says he, the mad and murdering Jews, but with great boldness predicted the salvation of the Gentiles, and foretold the infidelity of the Jews: as what follows shows, 21. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. All day long means without ceasing, for so Symmachus and Aquila interpret the every day. Having thus pointed out that the inspired prophets both condemned the Jews, and foreshowed the faith of the

Gentiles, he seems indeed in what follows to bring comfort to them, while in truth adding fresh censures on the disbelievers.

Chapter XI.

1. I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. And then while able to adduce proof of this from many other quarters, and bring forward the three thousand who believed in Jerusalem, (Acts ii. 41,) and the many myriads of whom the great James spake, (Acts xxi. 20,) and those of the Jews spread over the face of the land who had accepted the gospel, instead of all these he instances himself; and says, For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2. God hath not cast away His people, which he foreknew. For if He had cast them off, I also had been one of the condemned, seeing that I also have sprung from that root, and glory in Abraham as my forefather, and Benjamin as the head of my tribe, and boast myself in the name of Israel. And well has he added the which he foreknew, that is, those that are worthy of the divine knowledge, having welcomed the light of faith; for so he presently after shows, Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel (1 Kings xix. 14). 3. Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life? 4. But what saith the answer of God unto him? (v. 13,) I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

And at that time also, says he, were there many of Israel, and all were called Israel, and yet the God of all things designated Himself the God of seven thousand (only), and all the rest He rejected; for I have left unto Myself, said He, seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal; and this indeed the prophet knew not, but imagined that in himself alone was preserved what remained of true piety. No new nor inconceivable thing then is it, if you also know not those among you who have fixed their faith in the Saviour, whom the God of all things acknowledges as His people. And most opportunely does he bring forward the great Elias making this accusation against them, that not only had they slain the prophets, but even overthrown the altars from their foundations; for granting, says he, that they were evilly-disposed towards the prophets, as denouncing bitter things against them, what had they to allege against the divine altars? Rather then by such daring impieties did they manifest that their hatred was against the God thereof. And here the holy apostle, leaving these scripture testimonies, resumes

the thread of his own discourse, and says, 5. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.

But if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. As at that time, says he, among countless myriads, seven thousand only were left who were free from impiety, even so now also have the greater number disbelieved, and the smaller are they who have believed and enjoyed the divine grace, for it is not the polity of the law that has justified them, which is what is here meant by of works, but the grace of God has saved them; wherefore also salvation itself is called grace, because it proceeds from the divine loving-kindness; and this also he said in speaking concerning the patriarch Abraham, (ch. iv. 4,) ”but to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” 7. What then? Here we must place a stop, for it is put interrogatively, that is, what shall we say to this? and then the rest as the reply, Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were hardened. By the election he signifies those that had believed; and what he means is this, Israel by his adherence to the law has failed of the mark, for now contrary to the (spirit of the) law, he still observes the law, and reaps no righteousness, but such among them as have believed have obtained it, but the rest were hardened, that is, their infidelity has yet more hardened their heart;

and he shows that this also was foretold from of old; 8. As it is written, (Isa. vi. 10, xxix. 10,) ”God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day. Gave them, as ”gave them up,” (i. 24,) that is, permitted them (to fall into), for God did not incline them to disbelief, for how were it possible for Him to have inflicted infidelity on them, and Himself demanded vengeance for the same? And this the prophet has yet more clearly shown, (ch. vi. 10, LXX., as also so cited Matt. xiii. 15, Acts xxviii. 27,) ”for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed. Not another then has blinded them, but themselves have closed their eyes, and have not chosen to see the light. And by the spirit of slumber, he means a fixed and obdurate mind; that as he who enjoys a sound and healthy sleep is open to no change for the worse, so he who has surrendered himself up entirely to evil, admits no alteration for the better. 9. And David saith, (Ps. lxviii. 22,) Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them; 10. Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. By the word table he speaks of their luxurious living, which he prophesied would be exchanged for the reverse. 11.

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid, but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. For to them first, such as believed among them brought the saving gospel, and when

they set themselves against it, and refused to receive their teaching, then to the Gentiles did they offer the divine gospel; but they that believed obtained salvation. And this was suited to prick in heart the gainsayers among the Jews, and excite them to emulation, and so gain for them a participation in that salvation, for those that have been last they see made first.

12. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For if, when the greater number disbelieved, those that were converted among them brought the riches of the divine knowledge to the Gentiles, most manifest is it, that if all believed, they would become the means of yet greater blessings to all mankind, for all would the more readily believe, when these no longer opposed, but joined with us instead in preaching, the truth. Thence he turns his exhortations to those among the Gentiles who had believed, and counsels them to entertain a chastened view of themselves; aiming at once at a double point, on the one hand to pull down all self-sufficiency on their part, and lead them to fear; and on the other, to bring the Jews to a participation of their ancestral inheritance; and thus he begins, 13. For I speak unto you, Gentiles; inasmuch indeed as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office, 14. If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and may save some of them. Since God sent me forth as the minister of the Gentiles, necessarily do I labour after the salvation of the Gentiles, and direct my discourses in their behalf, and point out the holy prophets of old predicting these things; and this, that so I may excite the Jews to rivalry, and induce some of them to share in that salvation;

for by his flesh he means the Jews, as those that in spirit were distant, and related to him only by the affinity of kindred, 15. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if, says he, on their disbelief the Gentiles were received in, and freed from their former ignorance, manifest is it, that if all these were willing to believe, nothing else would then remain to be accomplished, but the resurrection of the dead; for so the Lord also said, ”and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all nations for a witness unto them, and then shall the end come,” (Matt. xxiv. 14). And all this we must recollect the holy apostle says, from a desire to suit his matter exactly to the subject in hand, and teach humility to those among the Gentiles that had believed, hold out the offer yet to the disbelieving among the Jews, and point out the salvation that would arise from their change of mind; as what follows teaches yet more clearly, 16. For if the first- fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 17. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18. Boast not thyself against the branches.

By the first-fruit he means the Lord Christ in his human nature; by the root, the patriarch Abraham; by the branches of the olive, the Jewish people as sprung from thence; and by the richness of the olive, the doctrines of religion. He admonishes those among the Gentiles who believed, not to be puffed up against the disbelieving Jews; for these are they whom he speaks of as branches broken off. Observe rather, says he, that you, born of another race, have been grafted into this, and have received of the richness of the holy root. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee; and consider this also, that the root bears thee, not thou the root, and thou needest it, not it thee. 19. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. Infidelity has rendered them aliens from the root, and faith has connected thee with the root, and made thee to share in its richness; it behoves thee therefore not to become self-sufficient, but to fear and tremble.—Wherefore? 21. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. For if the connexion of nature profited them not at all, because they retained not the same character and disposition, much more thou, if thou preservest not that grace, shalt become an alien from the root. 22.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. Behold now how God has cut them off, because they followed not the faith of their forefathers, and how He has conferred on thee the blessing of his loving-kindness, and made thee to share in a root not appertaining to thee, from which thou wilt be altogether severed again, if thou keepest not the gift bestowed on thee. 23. And they also, if they abide not in unbelief shall be grafted in. For it becomes the righteousness of God, both to sever again from the root thee, who contrary to hope wert blessed with the privilege of that root, if thou thereafter preserve not the grace given; and to join them again to it, if they renounce their infidelity. And aptly does he use the words grafted in as regards them also, infidelity having altogether severed them from, and faith exactly, as in the case of the Gentiles, connecting them with, the root. For God is able to graft them in again. By mentioning the power of God, he shows the ease with which this would be done; and gives an instance, not one removed far from them, and of ancient times, but one which comes home, and was recent, for he calls themselves as witnesses to this; and says, 24.

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? If thou, being a wild olive—for thou hadst not the law tending thee, nor the prophets, watering, and pruning, and taking all needful care about thee,—hast been detached from unholy ancestors and relations, and made a partaker in the faith of Abraham, and boastest

in him as thy father and ancestor, not by the natural course of the law, but by the divine loving-kindness; much more probable and natural must it be, that they, on believing, should be united again to their own root. And all this, as I before remarked, he says in order to teach humility to the Gentile converts, and exhort to salvation the disbelievers among the Jews; and with this agrees what follows, 25. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits.A mystery is a thing not known to all, but to those only who are entrusted with it. What he means then is, that I wish you to understand the mystery I am aware of as regards these things, that you may not over-estimate your own spiritual knowledge, and hence be puffed up with self-sufficiency. And what is the mystery?

That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. He puts the in part, to show that not all had disbelieved, for many even among them had believed; and he bids them not despair of the salvation of the rest. For when the Gentile nation shall have received the gospel, then they also shall believe, the great Elias having come and brought instruction in the faith to them, for so the Lord also said in the holy gospels (Matt. xvii. 1), ”Elias cometh and shall restore all things and he adds also the testimony of the prophet (Isa. lix. 20,) 26. As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27. For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. If the polity of the law gives forgiveness of sins, that it is, which the speech of the prophet predicted; but if the law punishes those that transgress it, and the Jews ever lay under the accusation of such transgression, it is plain that the sentence points out the forgiveness which arises from baptism. And by all Israel, he means such as believe, whether they were of the Jews, as having a natural descent from Israel, or of the Gentiles, as connected with him by the relationship of faith.28. As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes:

but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. When I look to you, with whose instruction I am entrusted, I consider them as enemies and hateful, as doing all in their power to your injury; but when I turn to their forefathers, and reflect how God chose them from among the whole earth, on their account I love even these. 29. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. All this he says as an incitement to the Jews; for that the blessings which God gives he again resumes, when He sees those that have received them infected with ingratitude, Saul is a proof, who, having enjoyed spiritual grace, was afterwards deprived thereof; and Solomon in like manner, who, having obtained peace through the divine loving-kindness, after his transgression was stripped of that grace; and indeed the Jews themselves, who, ever having enjoyed the fostering care of the prophets, at that present time had been bereaved of this guardianship. And the same he had also, just before threatened to the believers among the Gentiles, ”if

thou continue," says he, "in His goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." 30. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, 31. Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

Remember indeed how for so long a period all of you lived in sin, and yet the merciful Lord looked not to that lengthened and bitter ungodliness, but blessed with his unspeakable loving-kindness such as were willing to receive it, and when these (the Jews) would not believe, called you in their room; nothing inconsistent then were it, that these also, who now gainsay, should be accepted of God whenever willing to believe, and so inherit the divine loving-kindness. And the that he here again uses in the idiom and sense familiar to him, for they did not therefore disbelieve, in order that they might find mercy, but they disbelieved because of the hardness of their hearts, and will find mercy by turning to a change of mind. 32. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all. Concluded he puts for convicted. For he convicted the Gentiles, as having both received natural judgment, and had the creation teaching them the knowledge of God, and yet from neither the one nor the other having derived benefit; and He convicted the Jews likewise, as having enjoyed yet more instruction, in that in addition to nature and the creation, they had received the prophets also teaching what was right, and so become obnoxious to the heavier vengeance; while at the same time both these and those, thus deserving total destruction, has He blessed with the privilege of salvation, provided only they were willing to believe.

Having thus fully gone through these things, and contemplating the profundity of the divine lovingkindness, and how incomprehensible is His wisdom, he cries out, 33. O the depth of the riches, and of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! For of old, and from the beginning, has He foreknown all these things, and foreknowing has wisely disposed, and in that dispensation manifested the riches of His loving-kindness. How unsearchable are his judgments, and His ways past finding out! The scheme of the divine economy surpasses man's understanding; nor even by the invisible powers is the providence of the God of all things fully reached unto. 34. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? 35. Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? These three he puts us answering to the former three, the "riches," and the "wisdom," and the "knowledge:" the who hath known the mind of the Lord, to the knowledge; the who hath been His counsellor, to the wisdom; and the who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again, to the riches. For so immense are the riches of His goodness, that both to them that were not, has He given existence, and on such as are, of His free grace bestowed well- being.

And not as really due to us for any thing we have first given, but of His own free kindness does He confer His blessings, although in mercy condescending to call

each such free gift, the repayment of ourselves. 36. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. For He created all things, and He continues governing all that He thus created. To Him we ought to look, confessing our gratitude for all we already have enjoyed, and begging for His future providence; and to Him we ought to offer up also the praise and honour due.— Now in the words above, the holy apostle shows that he recognised not any difference between the expressions of whom and through whom, as though the former, as indicating some superiority, belonged to the Father; and the latter, as implying some inferiority, were suited to the Son. For he applies both of them to the same Person; whom if, on the one hand, the Arians and Eunomians say is the Father, they will find the through whom joined to the of whom; and if, on the other, they refer it to the Son, they will see then the of whom connected to the through whom.

If then the of whom implies any superiority, and the through whom any inferiority, and yet both are spoken of the same Person, He must in all reason be considered greater than Himself, on account of the of whom, and less than Himself on account of the through whom. Let us then, leaving such (arguers) for the present, magnify our Creator and Saviour, to whom belongs glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Book V.

The knowledge of the nature of God, and faith, and right affections towards Him, are the sum and true foundation of all good; for what the eye is to the body, that faith and the knowledge of divine matters are to the soul. But then she needs also at the same time practical virtue, as the eye does hands and feet, and the other members of the body. Wherefore, the holy apostle adds moral instructions also to his doctrinal course, in order to promote in us the most perfect virtue, for through the Romans does he afford this advantage to all mankind: and thus he opens the subject.

Chapter XII.

1. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God. He lays down laws, and sinking authority puts forth his instructions with intreaties, reminding them of the divine loving-kindness, of which he had before spoken so much at length; and what then dost thou beseech? that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And already before had he exhorted to make "their members instruments of righteousness, and yield themselves to God as those that are alive from the dead," (ch. vi. 13; and here he bids these become also a sacrifice, and calls it a living sacrifice, for it is not to be slain that he commands the body, but to become dead to sin, and not be open to its action; and such sacrifice he speaks of as holy, reasonable, and acceptable, as contrasting it with the oblation of irrational animals, and showing that with this the Lord is pleased. For by ail the prophets, as one may say, he finds fault with the sacrifices of beasts, while he enjoins this; for "sacrifice," says he, "unto God the sacrifice of praise," and "the sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. Ps. 1. (LXX. li. 14, 23; and see also Isa. i. 11-18,) and a thousand other such passages are to be found in the Holy Scriptures. 2. And follow not the fashions of this world.

He speaks of the things of this present world, such as wealth, and power, and other like pomps, by fashions, future things being substances, as alone permanent and satisfying; for so in another place also, (1 Cor. vii. 31,) "for the fashion of this world passeth away. For many from the height of abundance have fallen into the extremest poverty, and others sprung from the lowest parents become entrusted with the noblest offices of authority; and some again who elevated an haughty brow, and enlarged themselves in pride, conceiving themselves superior to everybody, being suddenly carried off, have become ill-savoured dust. The holy apostle therefore desires us not to gape after these things, nor to love the fashion of this world, but to seek those things which advance the life eternal. But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. He exhorts here those also who were inclining to the worse to return again to the better, as the word transformed shews. And he teaches how great is the difference between virtue and mere present objects, by calling them fashions, but virtue a form, for a form indicates actually existing ob-

jects, but a fashion that which quickly melts away. And he points out the freedom of will which the soul possesses, by commanding it both to renew the mind, and to discriminate the better from the worse; for these things are what he says serve God; and he marks out what these are;

and first of all he denounces arrogance, and enjoins humility. 3. For I say. through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think as accords with sobriety. And not himself does he declare thus enjoins, but the grace of the Spirit through him, for its instrument, says he, I am; and by the word sobriety here, he designates the healthy state of the mind, to teach us that arrogance is the sickness of the intellect; and herein, indeed, he imitates his own Master; for so the Lord in the holy gospels (Matt. v. 3) pronounced the first blessing on such as were given to humility. ”Blessed,” says he, ”are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And these instructions he lays on all, both rich and poor, both servants and masters, both men and women, as the words to every one that is among you testify; and he gives the proper measures of our self-opinion, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. Grace it is which he here calls faith, because that by faith comes the gift of grace; and according to the proportion of a man’s faith are the gifts of grace supplied; and he commands each to regulate his own self-estimate by the grace allotted to him. 4. For as we have many members in out body, and all members have not the same office; 5.

So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. The illustration is exactly suited to such an exhortation concerning brotherly love; for as each of the members is not useful to itself alone, but contributes its benefits to the common whole, so, therefore, it becomes him who has been blessed with any grace from above, clearly to understand that he has received that gift for the common advantage; for believers are one body, and each of us fulfils the office of a member; 6. Having gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us. Thus are we to understand this, we are members of each other, having gifts differing according to the grace given to us; and yet, although thus differing, they are nevertheless bestowed by the divine grace for the common good. Whether prophecy according to the proportion of faith; 7. Or ministry that he should wait on ministering, or as a teacher on teaching; 8. Or as an exhorter, on exhortation. According to the faith of each does the Giver of all good proportion the grace. And by prophecy he means not only the foreknowledge of the future, but the understanding hidden things also; and by ministry the office of preaching the gospel; by teaching the instructing in the divine doctrines; by exhortation the inciting to virtue. He that giveth, let him do it with singleness of heart; not seeking after the good opinion of others, but supplying the wants of him that needs;

nor calculating with himself whether he has sufficient by him or not, but trusting in God, and so affording assistance liberally; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9. Let love be without simulation. He bids all things be done with earnestness. And the oversight he orders to be exercised with zeal, that it he not the name without the thing; and to shewing bounty he joins joy, in order to point out the gain that arises from communicating to others; seeing that they who gain are wont to rejoice; for so also he says in his epistle to the Corinthians (2 Ep. ix. 7); ”not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver; and love He commands to be genuine and sincere, and repudiates the mask of pretence. Abhorring that which is evil, clinging to that which is good. Again he says not simply to fly from the former, and follow after the latter, but exhorts us exceedingly to hate sin, and to the performance of good deeds bids us closely be connected, our affections serving thereto as it were a cement. 10. Being kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. Have your regard warm, and such as becomes brethren towards each other; and let each yield the first places to his neighbour, for this is a proof of true and perfect love. 11. Not slothful in ardour: shewing forth a ready promptness towards what is good, and altogether casting away indolence. Fervent in spirit.

By spirit he means the spiritual grace given, and to this, as fuel to the fire, he commands us to bring alacrity as its subject-matter; as he says also in another place (1 Thess. v. 19); ”Quench not the Spirit; for the Spirit is quenched in such as are unworthy of such grace: for, not having the eye of their understanding clear; they take not in that beam; even as with the corporeally blind light itself becomes darkness, and in mid-day they are bound by the blackness of night. Wherefore he bid us be fervent in spirit, and possess a warm desire concerning heavenly things; as he also subjoins, serving the Lord. 12. Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. For he who is fervent in spirit, both readily obeys his Master, and waits for the enjoyment of the blessings looked for, and rises superior to the temptations that befall him, arming himself with steadfastness against their attacks, and ever calling the divine grace to his assistance; as he also subjoins, continuing instant in prayer, that is, incessantly doing so; 13. Communicating with the necessities of the saints. Having mentioned communication he exhorts to liberality; for who would not choose to impart of his wealth, thereby to become a sharer in good deeds? for so also did he say in his Epistle to the Corinthians, ”that your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want. Given to hospitality.

The guests he means are not the saints only, but such also as have come from any quarter whatsoever, and need entertainment, whom he commands us to take care of. 14. Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not. This was a law of our Lord’s, for the Lord enjoined it to the holy Apostles, (Matt. v. 44.) 15. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; 16. Being of the same mind

one toward another. Share with each other both in afflictions and their opposite, for the former is the part of sympathy, and the latter of friendship unsullied by envy. Minding not high things, but condescending to men of low estate. Again he banishes the arrogance of haughtiness, and bids the high come down to the low. Be not wise in your own conceits; that is, be not satisfied with your own judgments, but take the counsels also of others. 17. Recompensing to no man evil for evil; and this indeed is an excellence belonging to virtue in its highest state of perfection, and approaching near to a total emancipation from the passions. Providing things honest in the sight of all men; and he says also elsewhere, ”Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God. (1 Cor. x. 32.) 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Most accurately does he express himself here, in making the addition of the if it be possible, and the as far as lieth in you; let nothing, says he, be done on your part, but try every means for peace. And this is in strict consequence from what he had before said, for what feeling of hostility can he entertain, who ”blesses him that persecutes,” and avenges not himself on him that injures him? 19. Avenging not yourselves, dearly beloved, but rather give ye place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. (Deut. xxxii. 3.).) 20. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shall heap coals of fire on his head. Having pointed out the Judge, and shown his just judgments, for so the Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord, signifies, he bids us generously bear all the injuries offered to us, repaying with the reverse those that do evil to us, and ministering to the wants of those that hate us. For these things weave a crown to such as thus meekly and patiently endure, while they increase the punishment of the injurers.

Not indeed that we are to suppose (that he means) that on this account we are to minister to our enemies, in order that they may suffer the heavier retribution hereafter, for the holy Apostle thus speaks from a wish to repress the anger of the injured party, not from a desire by (his) good to increase (the other’s) evil. For that it is such a patient endurance which he inculcates, what follows shews; Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. For to revenge oneself proves defeat, while the returning good for evil is manifest victory. Having thus disciplined (their) morals, he exhorts them also to render to those in authority the honour due; for he foresaw, as one who had plenteously received of the grace of the thrice holy Spirit, how some, led rather by self-arrogance than any holy zeal for religion, would despise their earthly rulers, as conceiving themselves far superior to them by reason of their (better spiritual) knowledge. And especially does he do this, that he may blot out the opinion prevalent concerning them; for they were falsely represented as destroyers of the common laws; and some said, (Acts xvii. 6,) ”These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; and others that they were in-

troducing ”new customs” (Acts x. 20); wherefore he thought it worth while to lay down his injunctions on this point also.

Chapter XIII.

1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. Whether a man be a priest, or a bishop, or profess a monastic life, let him be subject to those who are invested with authority; evidently if it be consistent with duty to God, for any opposition to the divine laws leaves us not the power of obeying our rulers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. And these come from the providence of God; for He, consulting the general well-being, ordained some to govern, and some to be governed, imposing the fear of the magistrate to serve as a bridle on evil doers. But we must observe, that it is the ordinance of ruling and being ruled, which the holy Apostle derives from the providence of God, and not (so much) the elevation of this or that specific individual to power; for it is not (so much) the sway of the unjust, but the constitution of the office itself which is of God's appointment. And yet, when kindly-disposed towards any, He gives them rulers who respect and keep justice, for "I will give them," says He, "pastors according to Mine heart, which shall feed them with knowledge" (Jer. iii. 15); and again, "I will give your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning" (Isa. i. 26); and when again desirous to chastise transgressors, He suffers them to be governed by evil governors also;

for "I will place over them," says He, "children to be their princes, and scoffers shall rule over them" (Isa. iii. 4); but it is time to return to the rest of the exposition. 2. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. He fitly deters them. And they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment; that is, will become obnoxious to punishment. And then he points out also the use of government. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil; for they chastise those that live in wickedness. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shall have praise of the same; 4. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. He shews that he is worthy of all respect in calling him the minister of God; and he exhorts also to the performance of good deeds, in saying that rulers are applauders of good. But if thou do that which is evil be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. If thou lovest what is good, honour then the government which enjoins these same things; but if thou pursuest

the reverse fear then its judgment, for it is appointed of God for the punishment of the evil. 5. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. By wrath he means punishment;

and on both grounds he bids us be obedient, both from fear of punishment, and that we may fulfil what is our duty; for this is what he means by conscience' sake. 6. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers attending continually upon this very thing. For while thou art asleep he is bearing about him the common care; and while thou sittest at home, he is meeting the war which brings thee peace. 7. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. By tribute he means the taxes arising from land, but by custom the excise or duty from merchandise; nor are these only what he calls dues, but fear and honour also; for these are owing from the ruled to the rulers. 8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another. Not that we are not to pay the debt of love, for this we ought to discharge before any thing else, but that we should increase it by that payment; for such discharge augments the debt, in that it makes love the warmer; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. How, and in what manner? 9. For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

For he who is kindly disposed towards any one, kills not him whom he thus loves, commits not adultery with his wife, steals not any thing belonging to the object of his affectionate regard, nor does any other thing which might give him pain; for so he subjoins, 10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; and then drawing his conclusion, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And so also the Lord, being asked which was the first commandment, mentioned the first, and joined the second to it, (Mark xii. 30,) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself and shews that in the former is established perfect theoretical, and in the second perfect practical virtue; and so, in like manner, the holy Apostle, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law; and then he goes on to say, 11. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time for us to awake out of sleep; that is, especially as this is not a time for sleep, but for arousing ourselves from slumber; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed; for each day we draw nearer to the coming of the Lord (in judgment.) 12. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. By night he means the season of ignorance; by the day the time since the appearance of the Lord among us.

For the Sun of righteousness having arisen, has enlightened the whole world with the rays of divine knowledge. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. By darkness he means ignorance; and by the

works of darkness evil actions; and knowledge is what he calls light; and the performance of good deeds the armour of light. 13. Let us walk honestly, as in the day. By natural things he sets forth spiritual, for so they that embrace a life of sin commit such sin in the night, while in the day time they put on the appearance of orderly conduct. He intends, then, that the night having as it were passed away, and ignorance ceased, we should depart from evil deeds. And what these are he goes on to specify. Not in lasciviousness, and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying. For in their feasts some were wont to act lewdly, and defile their tongues with obscene songs, all of which drunkenness provokes, as it is also the parent of wantonness, and the teacher of strife and quarrelsomeness. 14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Not that they should receive another baptism, but consider the garment wherewith they were already clothed. And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Here he stops the mouths of those heretics who condemned the flesh itself, for he denounces not care for the body, but forbids luxurious indulgence and intemperance;

saying not, make no provision for the body, but make it not for the lusts; that is, prepare it not by luxurious living to play the wanton. Having thus in its turn fully spoken of practical virtue, he now returns again to doctrinal instruction. And here it is first necessary to explain the scope of the Apostle’s arguments, that the exposition of what he says may be more clearly understood. The Gentile believers, then, embraced the polity prescribed by the gospel; while many of the Jews who had become proselytes to the gospel, persisted still in submission to the institutions of the law, keeping still to the observation of particular days, and partaking of such food (only) as the law directed. Hence a disunion arose, and indeed positive quarrels, these latter condemning the Gentile believers for their indiscriminate use of all foods, and the former despising them in their turn on account of their extreme and superfluous adherence to the law. To correct all this, therefore, the holy Apostle offers such admonitions as are suited to both parties; and first he exhorts the Gentile believers to brotherly love.

Chapter XIV.

1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not into distinctions of opinions. By weak he means him who was yet a slave to legal observances. 2. For one believeth that he may eat all things; that is, the Gentile convert; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Some declare that the Jewish proselytes, in order to cast shame on the Gentile converts, abstained not only from swine's flesh, but even from all animal food, under the pretext of self-restraint and temperance; whence the holy Apostle says, he who is weak eateth herbs; for not having a perfect faith, he thought that he would be defiled by such kind of food. 3. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not. For the Gentile converts despised the Jewish, as not possessing a sound faith, and as on this account being unwilling to partake of such kind of food. And let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth. And the Jewish indeed condemned the Gentile converts, esteeming their indiscriminate use of every kind of food transgression. For God hath received him; that is, the Gentile convert; and he goes on in his rebuke of the Jew: 4. Who art thou that judgest another's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Every servant while living is a source of profit to his own Master, and on death again brings him loss; and this man then the Lord of all things has bought, having given His own blood as the price of his purchase;

and having said "to his own Master he standeth or falleth," he necessarily adds, Yea, he shall be holden up; and establishes what he says by the power of God, for God is able to make him stand. Having spoken thus much concerning foods, he transfers his discourse to the matter of days. 5. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike, (for this purpose. For some abstained from the meats forbidden by the law at all times, and some on particular days (only). Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He lays not this down as a principle of universal application; for neither does he so bid us reckon as regards the doctrines of religion, seeing that he passes an anathema on those that permit themselves to preach contrary to the truth, (Gal. i. 9: "For if any one preach unto you," says he, "any other gospel than that ye have received, let him he accursed. Concerning foods, then, only is it that he allows this power to each man's own mind. For so indeed this custom remains in the churches even to the

present day, and one man embraces abstinence, and another without scruple takes of all kinds of food, and neither does the former condemn the latter, nor the latter find fault with the former, but mutually glory in the law of concord. 6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.

He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. He says this in condescension to us, in order to produce peace and harmony in the church. The God of all, says he, knows the intention, both of those that eat, and of those that eat not, and he attends not to the bare deed, but inquires into the design of what is done. 7. For none of us liveth to himself, and none of us dieth to himself. 8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. We are not our own lords; we have been bought with a price; and while living, therefore, we are the Lord's, and when dead we are the Lord's; that is, neither art thou his master, nor is he thine; for One we all have for our Lord. 9. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might he Lord, both of the dead and the living. He is the Master of all, who for our sakes gave Himself up to death, who destroyed the power of death, and has promised salvation to us all. To Him, then, are we subject, as from Him having received life. 10. But why dost thou judge thy brother? this he says to the Jew; for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

And then he also establishes what he says on the testimony of Scripture: 11. For it is written, (see Isa. xliii. 10; xlv. 21, 23; xliv. 6, 8, &c.,) As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. He is our judge, He is our sentencer; at that tribunal of His we must stand. And indeed this witness of the prophet proves the completeness of the divinity of the Only-begotten. For having said by the prophet, "I am God before all ages, and I am first, and I am afterwards, and even unto eternity I am God, and before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me, and beside Me there is none, and a just God and a Saviour there is none beside Me," then He adds, "By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that unto Me every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God. But let us proceed on to what remains of our interpretation. 12. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Having pointed out the tribunal of the Lord, most consistently does he exhort them not to judge one another, but to await that judgment; for so he again subjoins, 13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.

Here he directs his rebukes to the Gentile converts, who condescended not to the infirmities of the Jewish proselytes, but esteemed the indifferent use of all kinds of food as the height of virtue and the warmth of zeal. And first, then, he teaches that

none of these things is really impure and unclean; and thus he speaks: 14. I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that in Him there is nothing unclean. It was necessary, by reason of the infirmity of the Jews, that he should add the expression in the Lord Jesus; for it was that they might not say, Who art thou that legislatest in contradiction of Moses? that he brings forward the Lord of Moses; showing that He had put an end to the observances of the law, and permitted us not to consider any food unclean; for the in Him signifies in His institutions in the gospel; for Himself also said to the blessed Peter, "What God hath cleansed that call not thou unclean. (Acts x. 15. But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if a man conceiving such food to be unclean, yet partakes therein, it becomes unclean; not by reason of its own nature, but on account of the opinion of him that thus partakes of it. Having thus distinguished as to these things, he again censures the Gentile converts, who bore not the infirmities of the Jews. 15.

But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. He increases the accusation (by that of want) of charity, to expose him that thus acted; and then even more fully points out the folly of such conduct. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. For him the Lord Christ endured death, while thou art not willing by a mere abstinence in food to gain life for him, but by indulgence contrivest death. 16. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. Again, the accusation is made in conjunction with praise, for faith he calls a good thing. I commend, says he, thy faith, but I would not that it become the cause of injury and reproach. 17. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For imagine not that this is the perfection of excellence, and what will procure the kingdom of heaven; for what procures that is true righteousness, and concord, and zeal as to peace, and love, from which springs joy, as to God. 18. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. For these things the God of all both requires of us, and they also bring advantage to men. Nor must we fail to observe, that he declares the serving Christ is acceptable to the God of all.

If, then, the serving Christ be pleasing to God, so also truly to honour Christ must be pleasing to Him; wherefore likewise to speak evil of Christ, and to attempt to lower His dignity, must be offensive to the God of all. 19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. It behoves us therefore above all to value a profitable concord, and to do all for the mutual advantage of each other. For meat destroy not the work of God. The believing on Him is what our Lord called the work of God; for "this," says He, "is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent," (John vi. 29). Since then it was probable that some of the Jews would fall away from the faith, not enduring the reproaches of the Gentile believers, aptly does he say, for meat destroy not the work of God. And again, that the Jewish proselytes might not hence gain a pretext for insisting on the observance of the law, he provides against

this also, and says, 20. All things indeed are pure; none, says he, of these foods is unclean by its own nature, but it is evil to that man who eateth with offence; but to thee, nevertheless, indulgence therein brings injury, because thou neglectest thy neighbour's interests, and seest him suffer with contempt. 21.

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. And not as regards flesh alone, but wine also, I bid thee never to indulge in either, if this really work any harm to thy neighbour. 22. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. In the full exercise of faith thou keepest the law (of Christian liberty in the gospel, v. 14, and Gal. v. 1, &c. Great is the possession, worthy of praise the excellence, but let it not be to the detriment of thy neighbour. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. The expression insinuates that the Gentile converts were in the habit of compelling the Jews to partake of those things they were averse to; he teaches therefore that the believer indeed derives no injury from the use of them, but that he who eats, while yet making a distinction, partakes in such as unclean, wherefore he pronounces him happy that judges not himself; that is, who makes no such difference (in his own mind); and so he subjoins, in explanation, 23. But he that maketh a distinction is condemned if he eat; and he shews the reason, because he eateth not of faith; but whatsoever is not of faith is sin. For he who believes harmlessly partakes, but he who eats with any such distinction passes sentence on himself.

And that he may prove himself enjoining what is agreeable to God, he offers up a fervent prayer in their behalf; Now to Him that is of power to stablish you; and after what manner to stablish? according to my gospel; and what is his gospel? and the preaching of Jesus Christ; and pointing out the antiquity of that preaching, he adds, according to the revelation of the mystery; for not now is the mystery framed, but now is it made known, having been long concealed; for so he goes on to say, which was kept secret since the world began; and then he brings forward also the witnesses of this preaching, but now is made manifest and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God; for what He had darkly foreshown in the prophets, these things has the Maker of all ages now clearly displayed; and what is the fruit of this preaching? for the obedience of faith, for it behoves them that hear to believe what is preached; and who are they? made known to all nations. Thus it is to be understood, according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, made known to all nations. To God only wise, through Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever, Amen. Having set forth the mystery of the dispensation, of old indeed fore-appointed, and then predicted in the prophets, and afterwards become manifest indeed, he magnifies the wisdom of God, and utters forth a doxology suitable thereto.

But if the heretics should assert that God (the Father) is here called the alone wise, let them know that the Lord Christ is not only so called wise, but wisdom itself. (Prov. iii. 19, &c. And if indeed they think it right to deprive the Son of this name of wise, so neither let them call Him immortal, for the same Apostle says of God, "who alone hath immorlity. (1 Tim. vi. 16). But leaving such to their own folly, let us proceed onwards in our course. Having then thus offered up these supplications for them, the holy Apostle adds exhortations, giving praise to the Gentile converts, and designating them as strong, by reason of their faith.

Chapter XV.

1. We then that are strong ought to hear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2. Let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification:—I know that thou art brought to completeness, and that faith has made thee strong, but I exhort thee to extend a hand to him that is weak, and not to seek thine own (comfort or convenience) alone, but to consult also the advantage of thy neighbour; and he says not merely to please thy neighbour, but for his good to edification, since it is very possible to please a neighbour both to his and our own injury; and then the example, 3. For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written (Ps. lxix. 9), "The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me." For even the Lord Himself sought not his own (convenience), but for our salvation gave Himself up to death. For we heard Him in his passion praying, and saying (Matt. xxvi. 39), "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt and he bore also the blasphemies of the Jews, and those which they had formerly brought upon His Father by their wicked lives, the same they uttered against Him; on which account it is that he here cites that testimony of the prophet. 4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

God, providing for our advantage, has both afforded us a written rule of doctrine, and also preserved in written history the accounts of the saints. 5. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus. Again by the addition of the according to Christ Jesus he shews that he does not indiscriminately beg for a concord of any kind for them, but the concord of godliness: and speaking of patience and comfort, he joins therewith the mention of love; that adorned therewith they might bear the imperfections of their neighbour, and by mutual counsel and comfort lead him on to completeness. 6. That with one mind and one mouth ye may glorify God. even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He calls God our God, but our Lord Jesus Christ's Father, for He who is the God of us all, is His Father. 7. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. And indeed the Lord Christ loved us not as being holy, but receiving us while sinners so justified; we ought therefore

ourselves also to bear the weakness of our brethren, and do all to forward their salvation. And seeing that the Jewish proselytes put forward the circumcision of our Lord, asserting that even Himself also had embraced the polity of the law, the holy Apostle thought it worth while to write what was fitting on this subject also; and he says, 8.

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the Father; 9. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. The God of all things promised to Abraham that in his seed He would bless all nations; and the patriarch himself and all his race received the sign of circumcision; it behoved therefore Him also, who is called "his seed after the flesh," and who shed forth the blessing on the Gentiles, to bear the sign of his kindred, that the truth of the divine promise might be clearly manifested, and the Gentiles receiving that grace might magnify Him, from whom the loving-kindness has flowed to them. And then he adduces scriptural testimonies, shewing that the salvation of the Gentiles had been predicted of old; As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy name (Ps. xviii. 49). 10. And again it saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people, (Deut. xxxii. 13). 11. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud Him, all ye people. (Ps. cxvii. 1). 12. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust. Now these testimonies he cites in order to teach the Jewish converts not to be offended at the salvation of the Gentiles, but believe the prophecies concerning them.

And again he implores a blessing on them, exhibiting the fatherly affection he bore to them. 13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. He had already above said, in the part of this Epistle which we have expounded, that "hope which is seen is not hope"' (ch. viii. 24); wherefore also he calls God the God of hope, as having of old given to the Gentiles the hope of the blessing, and now established that promise by deeds; and this is a pledge of the blessings yet hoped for; for He who promised those things, and then fulfilled them, will altogether fulfil also what He has now promised to us. And he bids us not only hope, but abound in hope, that is, hope sincerely, and expect to behold the blessings that we hope for; and this (confidence) he says the grace of the spirit affords. Having thus recommended these things, and invoked a blessing on them, he goes on to accord praise to them, by this leading them onward to yet greater goodness; 14. And I myself also am persuaded of you, brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish others. I know, says he, that ye need not instruction; for ye both possess sufficiently ample knowledge, and abound in good of every kind, so as even to extend to others also every fitting exhortation. 15.

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God. He displays at the same time the modesty of his own mind in saying he made bold to teach them; and exhibits this grace given to him, in teaching that he writes in subservience to it. And what grace then is this given to thee? 16. That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God. I have been appointed the teacher of the Gentiles, this is the ministry I present to the Lord Christ; and what is the gain arising from thence? That the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I readily undergo any labour that the Gentiles may be established in the faith. I obtain the grace of the Spirit, for by the ministry he means preaching, and by the acceptable offering a sincere and genuine faith. I have done nothing then out of place, says he, if I have at all written somewhat more boldly, and rebuked them that offend. 17. I have therefore whereof I may glory in Jesus Christ, in those things which pertain to God. And then he points out the character of that glorying; 18. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed. 19.

By the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God. My boasting is not in mine own labours, but in the gift bestowed on me by the Lord Christ. For he has given me the grace of the thrice-holy Spirit, to the working of signs and wonders; so that by these means the Gentiles have been rescued unto life, and received the light of divine knowledge. And he shews also to how large a portion of the Gentiles he had preached; so that from Jerusalem and in a circle unto Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. For I have tended not those nations lying in the direct line only, but traversing also in a circle have fully supplied with the doctrines of the gospel the eastern regions also, and those about Pontus, together with portions of Asia and Thrace; for this is what the words in a circle indicate. 20. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation, 21. But as it is written, (Isa. lii. 15), To whom He was not spoken of they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand. This shews the diligent earnestness of his zeal in labouring, in that taking in hand the fields that as yet had been uncultivated, he ploughed them up, and sowed, and converted them into fruitful corn fields, and brought its due fulfilment to the prophecy. 22.

For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. For my engagement among these others has prevented my presence among yourselves. 23. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, 24. Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. He gives two reasons for his coming to them—that the rest had been preached unto, no nation

remaining among which the doctrines of the gospel had not been heard; and his own love towards them. For the former hindrances having ceased, his longing after them excited him to the journey; and he declares that this his affection had been long antecedent to his actual coming, for for these many years, says he, have I earnestly desired to see you; and he tells them before-hand that he will not only see them, but take in Spain also; and that they may not hence conceive that his visit to them was merely by the way, he adds, and by you to be brought on my way thitherward, if first I be somewhat filled with your company; for you are they whom I first wish to see, and after you them. 25. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. By ministering he means the distribution of a pecuniary collection;

and he mentions also the senders thereof; 26. For they of Macedonia and Achaia have been benevolently inclined to make a communication to the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It was indeed under a previously-arranged agreement to this effect with the blessed Apostles, Peter I mean, and James, and John, that the divinely-appointed Barnabas and Paul undertook the teaching of the Gentiles, promising to exhort the converts among the Gentiles to minister to the wants of the faithful in Judaea; and this he clearly teaches in his epistle to the Galatians (ii. 9, 10), for "Peter," says he, "and James, and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision, only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I also was forward to do. This it is he here also speaks of, praising the zeal of Macedonia and Achaia; and this he calls both a benevolence and a debt; 27. They are benevolently inclined verily, and their debtors they are; and whence arose this debt? For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. To them, says he, appertained the Patriarchs as their forefathers; to them the promises were made; their prophets it was who prophesied the blessings now common to both; of them according to His human nature was the Lord Christ;

of them the Apostles the teachers of the whole world; through them have the gifts of the Spirit been shed abroad; it is right then that they who have imparted of the greater, should in return receive of the lesser; wherefore also he above calls the contribution of money a communication, and again afterwards a ministry; by the expression communication shewing it to be a repayment, and by that of ministry a tribute due. 28. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. Having sealed to them this fruit, to the Macedonians and Achaians he means; for I offer the things sent, to the right hand of God through the hands of the saints, and it will keep them sale and uninjured. 29. But I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. By the fulness of the blessing of the gospel he means, the dangers for the gospel's sake which he underwent at Jerusalem; as what follows evinces, 30. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake,

and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31. That I may be delivered from them which do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints. With what praise worthy of it could any crown this blessed, aye, thrice blessed, brow?

For first he both knew what would happen, and foretels it, for so he spoke to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, ”that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, that bonds and afflictions await me” (Acts xx. 2:5); and when Agabus also predicted the same things, and all were weeping and endeavouring to detain him, the holy man cried out, ”What, mean ye to weep and break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts xxi. 13); and here he predicted that he would see both the Romans and Spaniards; and he adds that he would even come”in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. And then, as fully contemplating the madness of the Jews, he begs also for their prayers not only as respected the disbelievers, but the believers also; for neither were they affectionately disposed towards him, because esteeming him a violator of the law; on which account he added, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints. With a thousand labours had he collected these offerings, using every argument of exhortation with the disciples thereto, and yet he fears concerning those who should receive them, lest their dislike to himself should have greater weight with them than their own wants. 32. That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

Not even what is good does he wish to obtain, unless it be in accordance with the will of God. 33. Now the God of peace be with you all, Amen. Not without cause does he here speak of God, as the God of peace; but both as himself needing it, by reason at once of those that openly opposed him and those that regarded him with suspicion; and as imploring it for them, on account of the differences they had between themselves, respecting legal observances.

Chapter XVI.

1. I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, 2. That ye receive her in the Lord as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you, for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. 3. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus. Cenchrea is a very large village of Corinth. Well then may we admire the power of the gospel, in that in so short a time it had filled with true godliness not the towns only but even the villages also; and so great was the body of the church at Cenchrea, as to have a woman acting as deaconess; and her a celebrated and illustrious person; for so largely did she abound in good works as to have obtained praises like the above from the tongue of an apostle; for she has been a succourer, says he, of many, and of myself also, by succour meaning, as I conceive, hospitality and kind attention. And he repays her with far greater honours in return; for she, it seems, received him into one house, and for a short time; that, it is plain, which he spent at Corinth; while he has opened the whole world to her, and in every land and sea is that woman become celebrated, so that not the Romans only and the Greeks have known her, but even every barbarian nation.

And yet she next mentioned has surpassed even her, for Priscilla, or Prisca, for both names are to be found in the Bible, and Aquila, he calls fellow-helpers; and he adds the in Christ Jesus, lest any one should imagine that he alluded to a community of employment, seeing that they also were tent-makers; and he mentions also another trial (undergone by them on his account) of the greatest kind; 4. Who have for my life laid down their own necks. And to his private he subjoins the public (debt to them) unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; and he commemorates also another praiseworthy virtue on their part, for he salutes, 5. Likewise the church that is in their house. The expression shews the greatness of their piety, for they instructed, it appears, all their household in the highest virtue, and gladly performed within their walls all the sacred rites of religion; and of these the holy Luke also takes notice, and shews how they led Apollos to the truth. (Acts xviii. 20). Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ. For he was the first, it seems, of the whole nation that believed, on which account it was that he here receives the appellation

of the first fruits. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. Another woman, again, crowned for her individual labours. 7.

Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Many at once are the encomia here; and first that they had been partakers in the dangers of the holy Paul, for he calls them fellow-prisoners as having shared with him in his sufferings; and next he says that they are of note, not among the disciples, but the teachers; nor among ordinary teachers, but the Apostles; and he extols them also on account of the date of their faith, for he says, who were in Christ before me, for I myself was called subsequently to them; and I (Theodoret) am every where amazed at the humble-mindedness of the divine Apostle (lit. head.) 8. Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Nor is this slight praise, for it is in the Lord that he calls him beloved; and this is demonstrative of his excellences. 9. Salute Urbanus our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. With even yet greater praises does he honour Urbanus, for he calls him a helper both in the preaching, and in the labours and sufferings, for Christ's sake. 10. Salute Apelles proved in Christ. A testimony of the highest virtue, for to have no alloy of dross is the summit of excellences. 11. Salute them which are of Arislobulus's household, and Herodion my kinsman, and those of the household of Narcissus. It is evident that they were believing families;

but of those of Narcissus he says, who are in the Lord, as there being, forsooth, some who had not yet become so. 12. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Again, from their labours come the crown; and that labour the words shew to have been one either of hospitality or fasting, or other such virtue. Salute Persis the beloved which laboured much in the Lord. Ampler is her praise, for her zeal in labouring was ampler. 13. Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. And most enviable also is this encomium, for many are called but few chosen; and his mother he praises as adorned with many noble acts of virtue, for not otherwise could she have been deemed worthy of being called the mother of Paul; for of Rufus indeed nature made her the mother, but of the holy Paul respect for her virtue. 14. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Thermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. This was another society of the faithful worthy of Paul's greeting. 15. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympus, and all the saints which are with them. And these again living together, on account of the virtue they possessed obtained the Apostle's salutation. Having thus greeted these by name, he then bids them all salute each other, for, 16. Salute one another, says he, with an holy kiss.

For, as being absent he could not himself salute them, he does it through them, enjoining them to salute one another, and to salute with an holy kiss, chaste, modest, sincere, and true, and void of all deceit. All the churches of Christ salute you. From the whole world, so to speak, he salutes the Empress of the world. 17. Now I be-

seech you, brethren, to mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. He alludes in these words to the evil advocates of the law, whose precepts he bids them to avoid, while praising the teaching of the chief of the Apostles; for the expression causing such contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned is that of one who greatly admires the doctrine they had already obtained. 18. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. And from hence it is plain that it is of the Jews that he is thus speaking, for he is perpetually condemning their gluttony, and so elsewhere he says, ”whose God is their belly. And by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. By fair speeches he means praise (flattery); and he hints that some had already been seduced by them, for they deceive, says he, the hearts of the simple; not depravity of disposition indeed, but simplicity does he allege as the cause. And then again he excites them with praises, 19.

For your obedience is come abroad unto all men, that you gladly received the apostolic doctrines.

I am glad therefore, says he, on your behalf; and yet while praising he still continues to instruct, but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and harmless concerning evil. And this rule also the Lord gave to the Apostles, saying, ”Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves. And this saying of our Lord signifies, that we are to put away from us the snares brought in by our enemies, and least of all to revenge ourselves on those that injure us. 20. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Since he had commanded them to be on their guard against their enemies, most opportunely does he beseech God to confound the teacher of all snares, and cast him beneath the feet of the believers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Having pointed out the enemy, he next points out the Helper, for they that have obtained the divine grace possess that which is invincible. 21. Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius and Jason, and Sosipater my kinsmen salute you. The first has the glory of a participation in works, the others relationship; but the fellow-worker is far more honourable than the relation; and this is the same Timothy whom in Lystra he circumcised (Acts xvi. 3), and to whom he wrote those two epistles. And of Jason also the history of the Acts makes mention (ch. xvii.) 22. I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

And he also was one of those who had been thought worthy to enjoy the instructions of the Apostle, wherefore receiving the outpourings of his holy spirit through the tongue he was commanded to commit them to paper. 23.Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. And this also is the greatest testimony of praise, to have opened one’s house to the nurselings of the faith, and together with all others to have ministered even to the very teachers of the whole world; for by host he means entertainer. And he was a Corinthian, as the holy Apostle also teaches us in his epistle to the Corinthians, ”I thank my God,” says he, ”that I baptized none of

you but Crispus and Gaius. (ch. i. 14). Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother. He calls him not the treasurer of the church, but of the city, as one fully entrusted with some charge; and he makes mention of him who in the epistle to Timothy, thus speaking, (2 Ep. iv. 20), ”Erastus abode at Corinth, but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.” 21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen. Again he imparts to them the spiritual benediction, and surrounds them with the grace of the Lord as with a wall of adamant, for this he made the beginning of his epistle, and this he places as its end. In this grace let us also become partakers, that we may rise superior to all snares;

that by it enlightened we may without turning aside tread the strait road, and following in the Apostolic footsteps be deemed worthy to behold the teacher himself, and by his means enjoy the favour of the Lord, and obtain the promised blessing, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom, to the Father, together with the thrice-holy Spirit, belong glory and majesty, now and ever, and unto endless ages. Amen.

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