Excerpts of Theodotus

Theodotus of Ancyra (d. before AD 446)

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Or, Selections from the Prophetic Scriptures

I. Those around Sedrach, Misak, and Abednago in the furnace of fire say as they praise God, ”Bless, ye heavens, the Lord; praise and exalt Him for ever; ”then, ”Bless, ye angels, the Lord; ”then, ”Bless the Lord, all ye waters that are above heaven.” So the Scriptures assign the heavens and the waters to the class of pure powers as is shown in Genesis. Suitably, then, inasmuch as ”power” is used with a variety of meaning, Daniel adds, ”Let every power bless the Lord; ”then, further, ”Bless the Lord, sun and moon; ”and, ”Bless the Lord, ye stars of heaven. Bless the Lord, all ye that worship Him; praise and confess the God of gods, for His mercy is for ever.” It is written in Daniel, on the occasion of the three children praising in the furnace. II. ”Blessed art Thou, who lookest on the abysses as Thou sittest on the cherubim,” says Daniel, in agreement with Enoch, who said, ”And I saw all sorts of matter.” For the abyss, which is in its essence boundless, is bounded by the power of God. These material essences then, from which the separate genera and their species are produced, are called abysses; since you would not call the water alone the abyss, although matter is allegorically called water, the abyss.

III. ”In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth,” both terrestrial and celestial things. And that this is true, the Lord said to Osee, ”Go, take to thyself a wife of fornication, and children of fornication: because the land committing fornication, shall commit fornication, departing from the Lord.” For it is not the element of earth that he speaks of, but those that dwell in the element, those who have an earthly disposition. IV. And that the Son is the beginning or head, Hosea teaches clearly: ”And it shall be, that in the place in which it was said to them, Ye are not my people, they shall be called the children of the living God: and the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered to the same place, and they shall place over them one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great is the day of Jezreel.” For whom one believes, him He chooses. But one believes the Son, who is the head; wherefore also he said in addition: ”But I will have mercy on the sons of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God.” Now the Saviour who saves is the Son of God. He is then the head.

V. The Spirit by Osee says, ”I am your Instructor; ” ”Blow ye the trumpet upon the hills of the Lord; sound upon the high places.” And is not baptism itself, which is the sign of

regeneration, an escape from matter, by the teaching of the Saviour, a great impetuous stream, ever rushing on and bearing us along? The Lord accordingly, leading us out of disorder, illumines us by bringing us into the light, which is shadowless and is material no longer. VI. This river and sea of matter two prophets cut asunder and divided by the power of the Lord, the matter being bounded, through both divisions of the water. Famous leaders both, by whom the signs were believed, they complied with the will of God, so that the righteous man may proceed from matter, having journeyed through it first. On the one of these commanders also was imposed the name of our Saviour.

VII. Now, regeneration is by water and spirit, as was all creation: "For the Spirit of God moved on the abyss." And for this reason the Saviour was baptized, though not Himself needing to be so, in order that He might consecrate the whole water for those who were being regenerated. Thus it is not the body only, but the soul, that we cleanse. It is accordingly a sign of the sanctifying of our invisible part, and of the straining off from the new and spiritual creation of the unclean spirits that have got mixed up with the soul. VIII. "The water above the heaven." Since baptism is performed by water and the Spirit as a protection against the twofold fire,-that which lays hold of what is visible, and that which lays hold of what is invisible; and of necessity, there being an immaterial element of water and a material, is it a protection against the twofold fire. And the earthly water cleanses the body; but the heavenly water, by reason of its being immaterial and invisible, is an emblem of the Holy Spirit, who is the purifier of what is invisible, as the water of the Spirit, as the other of the body.

IX. God, out of goodness, hath mingled fear with goodness. For what is beneficial for each one, that He also supplies, as a physician to a sick man, as a father to his insubordinate child: "For he that spareth his rod hateth his son." And the Lord and His apostles walked in the midst of fear and labours. When, then, the affliction is sent in the person of a righteous man, it is either from the Lord rebuking him for a sin committed before, or guarding him on account of the future, or not preventing by the exercise of His power an assault from without, -for some good end to him and to those near, for the sake of example. X. Now those that dwell in a corrupt body, like those who sail in an old ship, do not lie on their back, but are ever praying, stretching their hands to God.

XI. The ancients were exceedingly distressed, unless they had always some suffering in the body. For they were afraid, that if they received not in this world the punishment of the sins which, in numbers through ignorance, accompany those that are in the flesh, they would in the other world suffer the penalty all at once. So that they preferred curative treatment here. What is to be dreaded is, then, not external disease, but sins, for which disease comes, and disease of the soul, not of the body: "For all flesh is grass," and corporeal and external good things are temporary; "but the things which are unseen are eternal."

XII. As to knowledge, some elements of it we already possess; others, by what we do possess, we firmly hope to attain. For neither have we attained all, nor do we lack all. But we have received, as it were, an earnest of the eternal blessings, and of the ancestral riches. The

provisions for the Lord's way are the Lord's beatitudes. For He said: "Seek," and anxiously seek, "the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you: for the Father knoweth what things ye have need of." Thus He limits not only our occupations, but our cares. For He says: "Ye cannot, by taking thought, add aught to your stature." For God knows well what it is good for us to have and what to want. He wishes, therefore, that we, emptying ourselves of worldly cares, should be filled with that which is directed towards God. "For we groan, desiring to be clothed upon with that which is incorruptible, before putting off corruption." For when faith is shed abroad, unbelief is nonplussed. Similarly also with knowledge and righteousness. We must therefore not only empty the soul, but fill it with God. For no longer is there evil in it, since that has been made to cease; nor yet is there good, since it has not yet received good. But what is neither good nor evil is nothing. "For to the swept and empty house return," if none of the blessings of salvation has been put in, the unclean spirit that dwelt there before, taking with him seven other unclean spirits. Wherefore, after emptying the soul of what is evil, we must fill with the good God that which is His chosen dwelling-place. For when the empty rooms are filled, then follows the seal, that the sanctuary may be guarded for God.

XIII. "By two and three witnesses every word is established." By Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, by whose witness and help the prescribed commandments ought to be kept. XIV. Fasting, according to the signification of the word, is abstinence from food. Now food makes us neither more righteous nor less. But mystically it shows that, as life is maintained in individuals by sustenance, and want of sustenance is the token of death; so also ought we to fast from worldly things, that we may die to the world, and after that, by partaking of divine sustenance, live to God. Especially does fasting empty the soul of matter, and make it, along with the body, pure and light for the divine words. Worldly food is, then, the former life and sins; but the divine food is faith, hope, love, patience, knowledge, peace, temperance. For "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after" God's "righteousness; for they shall be filled." The soul, but not the body, it is which is susceptible of this craving.

XV. The Saviour showed to the believing apostles prayer to be stronger than faith in the case of a demoniac, whom they could not cleanse, when He said, Such things are accomplished by prayer. He who has believed has obtained forgiveness of sins from the Lord; but he who has attained knowledge, inasmuch as he no longer sins, obtains from himself the forgiveness of the rest. XVI. For as cures, and prophecies, and signs are performed by the agency of men, God working in them, so also is Gnostic teaching. For God shows His power through men. And the prophecy rightly says, "I will send to them a man who will save them." Accordingly He sends forth at one time prophets, at another apostles, to be saviours of men. Thus God does good by the agency of men. For it is not that God can do some things, and cannot do others: He is never powerless in anything. No more are some things done with, and some things against His will; and some things by Him, and some things by another. But He even brought us into being by means of men, and trained us by means of men.

XVII. God made us, having previously no existence. For if we had a previous existence, we must have known where we were, and how and why we came hither. But if we had no pre-existence, then God is the sole author of our creation. As, then, He made us who had no existence; so also, now that we are made, He saves us by His own grace, if we show ourselves worthy and susceptible; if not, He will let us pass to our proper end. For He is Lord both of the living and the dead. XVIII. But see the power of God, not only in the case of men, in bringing to existence out of non-existence, and making them when brought into being grow up according to the progress of the time of life, but also in saving those who believe, in a way suitable to each individual. And now He changes both hours, and times, and fruits, and elements. For this is the one God, who has measured both the beginning and the end of events suitably to each one.

XIX. Advancing from faith and fear to knowledge, man knows how to say Lord, Lord; but not as His slave, he has learned to say, Our Father. Having set free the spirit of bondage, which produces fear, and advanced by love to adoption, he now reverences from love Him whom he feared before. For he no longer abstains from what he ought to abstain from out of fear, but out of love clings to the commandments. "The Spirit itself," it is said, "beareth witness when we cry, Abba, Father." XX. Now the Lord with His precious blood redeems us, freeing us from our old bitter masters, that is, our sins, on account of which the spiritual powers of wickedness ruled over us. Accordingly He leads us into the liberty of the Father,-sons that are co-heirs and friends. "For," says the Lord, "they that do the will of my Father are my brethren and fellow-heirs." "Call no man, therefore, father to yourselves on earth." For it is masters that are on earth. But in heaven is the Father, of whom is the whole family, both in heaven and on earth. For love rules willing hearts, but fear the unwilling. One kind of fear is base; but the other, leading us as a pedagogue to good, brings us to Christ, and is saving.

XXI. Now if one has a conception of God, it by no means corresponds with His worthiness. For what can the worthiness of God be? But let him, as far as is possible, conceive of a great and incomprehensible and most beautiful light; inaccessible, comprehending all good power, all comely virtue; caring for all, compassionate, passionless, good; knowing all things, foreknowing all things, pure, sweet, shining, stainless. XXII. Since the movement of the soul is self-originated, the grace of God demands from it what the soul possesses, willingness as its contribution to salvation. For the soul wishes to be its own good; which the Lord, however, gives it. For it is not devoid of sensation so as to be carried along like a body. Having is the result of taking, and taking of willing and desiring; and keeping hold of what one has received, of the exercise of care and of ability. Wherefore God has endowed the soul with free choice, that He may show it its duty, and that it choosing, may receive and retain.

XXIII. As through the body the Lord spake and healed, so also formerly by the prophets, and now by the apostles and teachers. For the Church is the minister of the Lord's power. Thence He then assumed humanity, that by it He might minister to the Father's will. And at all times, the God who loves humanity invests Himself with man for the salvation of men,-in former tithes with the prophets, and now with the Church. For it is fitting that

like should minister to like, in order to a like salvation. XXIV. For we are of the earth.... Caesar is the prince, for the thee being, whose earthly image is the old man, to which he has returned. To him, then, we are to render the earthly things, which we bore in the image of the earthly, and the things of God to God. For each one of the passions is on us as a letter, and stamp, and sign. Now the Lord marks us with another stamp, and with other names and letters, faith instead of unbelief, and so forth. Thus we are translated from what is material to what is spiritual, "having borne the image of the heavenly."

XXV. John says: "I indeed baptize you with water, but there cometh after me He that baptizeth with the Spirit and fire." But He baptized no one with fire. But some, as Heraclius says, marked with fire the ears of those who were sealed; understanding so the apostolic saying, "For His fan is in His hand, to purge His floor: and He will gather the wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire un-quenchable." There is joined, then, the expression "by fire" to that" by the Spirit; "since He separates the wheat from the chaff, that is, from the material husk, by the Spirit; and the chaff is separated, being fanned by the wind : so also the Spirit possesses a power of separating material forces. Since, then, some things are produced from what is unproduced and indestructible,-that is, the germs of life,-the wheat also is stored, and the material part, as long as it is conjoined with the superior part, remains; when separated from it, it is destroyed; for it had its existence in another thing. This separating element, then, is the Spirit, and the destroying element is the fire: and material fire is to be understood. But since that which is saved is like wheat, and that which grows in the soul like chaff, and the one is incorporeal, and that which is separated is material; to the incorporeal He opposes spirit, which is rarefied and pure-almost more so than mind; and to the material He opposes fire, not as being evil or bad, but as strong and capable of cleansing away evil. For fire is conceived as a good force and powerful, destructive of what is baser, and conservative of what is better. Wherefore this fire is by the prophets called wise.

XXVI. Thus also, then, when God is called "a consuming fire," it is because a name and sign, not of wickedness, but of power, is to be selected. For as fire is the most potent of the elements, and masters all things; so also God is all-powerful and almighty, who is able to hold, to create, to make, to nourish, to make grow, to save, having power of body and soul. As, then, fire is superior to the elements, so is the Almighty Ruler to gods, and powers, and principalities. The power of fire is twofold: one power conduces to the production and maturing of fruits and of animals, of which the sun is the image; and the other to consumption and destruction, as terrestrial fire. When, then, God is called a consuming fire, He is called a mighty and resist-less power, to which nothing is impossible, but which is able to destroy.

Respecting such a power, also, the Saviour says, "I came to send fire upon the earth," indicating a power to purify what is holy, but destructive, as they say, of what is material; and, as we should say, disciplinary. Now fear pertains to fire, and diffusion to light.

XXVII. Now the more ancient men did not write, as they neither wished to encroach on the time devoted to attention bestowed on what they handed down, in the way of teaching,

by the additional attention bestowed on writing, nor spent the time for considering what was to be said on writing. And, perhaps convinced that the function of composition and the department of teaching did not belong to the same cast of mind, they gave way to those who had a natural turn for it. For in the case of a speaker, the stream of speech flows unchecked and impetuous, and you may catch it up hastily. But that which is always tested by readers, meeting with strict examination, is thought worthy of the utmost pains, and is, so to speak, the written confirmation of oral instruction, and of the voice so wafted along to posterity by written composition. For that which was committed in trust to the elders, speaking in writing, uses the writer's help to hand itself down to those who are to read it. As, then, the magnet, repelling other matter, attracts iron alone by reason of affinity; so also books, though many read them, attract those alone who are capable of comprehending them. For the word of truth is to some "foolishness," and to others a "stumbling-block; " but to a few "wisdom." So also is the power of God found to be. But far from the Gnostic be envy. For it is for this reason also that he asks whether it be worse to give to the unworthy, or not commit to the worthy; and runs the risk, from his abundant love of communicating, not only to every one who is qualified, but sometimes also to one unworthy, who asks importunately; not on account of his entreaty (for he loves not glory), but on account of the persistency of the petitioner who bends his mind towards faith with copious entreaty.

XXVIII. There are those calling themselves Gnostics who are envious of those in their own house more than strangers. And, as the sea is open to all, but one swims, another sails, and a third catches fish; and as the land is common, but one walks, another ploughs, another hunts,-somebody else searches the mines, and another builds a house: so also, when the Scripture is read, one is helped to faith, another to morality, and a third is freed from superstition by the knowledge of things. The athlete, who knows the Olympic stadium, strips for training, contends, and becomes victor, tripping up his antagonists who contend against his scientific method, and fighting out the contest. For scientific knowledge is necessary both for the training of the soul and for gravity of conduct; making the faithful more active and keen observers of things. For as there is no believing without elementary instruction, so neither is there comprehension without science.

XXIX. For what is useful and necessary to salvation, such as the knowledge of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, and also of our own soul, are wholly requisite; and it is at once beneficial and necessary to attain to the scientific account of them. And to those who have assumed the lead in doing good, lunch experience is advantageous; so that none of the things which appear to be known necessarily and eruditely by others may escape their notice. The exposition, too, of heterodox teaching affords another exercise of the inquiring soul, and keeps the disciple from being seduced from the truth, by his having already had practice beforehand in sounding all round on warlike instruments of music. XXX. The life of the Gnostic rule, (as they say that Crete was barren of deadly animals,) is pure from every evil deed, and thought, and word; not only hating no one, but beyond envy and hatred, and all evil-speaking and slander.

XXXI. In length of days, it is not on account of his having lived long that the man is to be regarded happy, to whose lot it has also fallen, through his having lived, to be worthy of living for ever. He has pained no one, except in instructing by the word the wounded in heart, as it were by a salutary honey, which is at once sweet and pungent. So that, above all, the Gnostic preserves the decorous along with that which is in accordance with reason. For passion being cut away and stript off from the whole soul, he henceforth consorts and lives with what is noblest, which has now become pure, and emancipated to adoption. XXXII. Pythagoras thought that he who gave things their names, ought to be regarded not only the most intelligent, but the oldest of the wise men. We must, then, search the Scriptures accurately, since they are admitted to be expressed in parables, and from the names hunt out the thoughts which the Holy Spirit, pro-pounding respecting things, teaches by imprinting His mind, so to speak, on the expressions; that the names used with various meanings, being made the subject of accurate investigation, may be explained, and that that which is hidden trader many integuments may, being handled and learned, come to light and gleam forth. For so also lead turns white as you rub it; white lead being produced from black. So also scientific knowledge (gnosis), shedding its light and brightness on things, shows itself to be in truth the divine wisdom, the pure light, which illumines the men whose eyeball is clear, unto the sure vision and comprehension of truth.

XXXIII. Lighting, then, our torch at the source of that light, by the passionate desire which has it for its object, and striving as much as possible to be assimilated to it, we become men full of light, Israelites indeed. For He called those friends and brethren who by desire and pursuit aimed after likeness to the Divinity. XXXIV. Pure places and meadows have received voices and visions of holy phantasms. But every man who has been perfectly purified, shall be thought worthy of divine teaching and of power. XXXV. Now I know that the mysteries of science (gnosis) are a laughing-stock to many, especially when not patched up with sophistical figurative language. And the few are at first startled at them; as when light is suddenly brought into a convivial party in the dark. Subsequently, on getting used and accustomed, and trained to reasoning, as if gladdened and exulting for delight, they praise the Lord.... For as pleasure has for its essence release from pain; so also has knowledge the removal of ignorance. For as those that are most asleep think they are most awake, being under the power of dream-visions very vivid and fixed; so those that are most ignorant think that they know most. But blessed are they who rouse themselves from this sleep and derangement, and raise their eyes to the light and the truth.

XXXVI. It is, therefore, equally requisite for him who wishes to have a pupil who is docile, and has blended faith with aspiration, to exercise himself and constantly to study by himself, investigating the truth of his speculations; and when he thinks himself right, to descend to questions regarding things contiguous. For the young birds make attempts to fly in the nest, exercising their wings. XXXVII. For Gnostic virtue everywhere makes man good, and meek, and harmless, and painless, and blessed, and ready to associate in the best way with all that is divine, in the best way with men, at once a contemplative and active divine image, and turns him into a lover of what is good by love. For what is good, as there it is contemplated

and comprehended by wisdom, is here by self-control and righteousness carried into effect through faith: practising in the flesh an angelic ministry; hallowing the soul in the body, as in a place clear and stainless.

XXXVIII. Against Tatian, who says that the words, "Let there be light," are supplicatory. If, then, He is supplicating the supreme God, how does He say, "I am God, and beside me there is none else? " We have said that there are punishments for blasphemies, for nonsense, for outrageous expressions; which are punished and chastised by reason. XXXIX. And he said, too, that on account of their hair and finery, women are punished by the Power that is set over these matters; which also gave to Samson strength in his hair; which punishes the women who allure to fornication through the adornment of their hair. XL. As by the effluence of good, people are made good; in like manner are they made bad. Good is the judgment of God, and the discrimination of the believing from the unbelieving, and the judgment beforehand, so as not to fall into greater judgment-this judgment being correction.

XLI. Scripture says that infants which are exposed are delivered to a guardian angel, and that by him they are trained and reared. "And they shall be," it says, "as the faithful in this world of a hundred years of age." Wherefore also Peter, in the Revelation, says: "And a flash of fire, leaping from those infants, and striking the eyes of the women." For the just shines: forth as a spark in a reed, and will judge the nations. XLII. "With the holy Thou wilt be holy." "According to thy praise is thy name glorified; "God being glorified through our knowledge, and through the inheritance. Thus also it is said, "The Lord liveth," and "The Lord hath risen." XLIII. "A people whom I knew not hath served me; " -by covenant I knew them not, alien sons, who desired what pertained to another. XLIV. "Magnifying the salvations of His king." All the faithful are called kings, brought to royalty through inheritance.

XLV. Long-suffering is sweetness above honey; not because it is long-suffering, but in consequence of the fruit of long-suffering. Since, then, the man of self-control is devoid of passion, inasmuch as he restrains the passions, not without toil; but when habit is formed, he is no longer a man of self-control, the man having come trader the influence of one habit and of the Holy Spirit. XLVI. The passions that are in the soul are called spirits,-not spirits of power, since in that case the man under the influence of passion would be a legion of demons; but they are so called in consequence of the impulse they communicate. For the soul itself, through modifications, taking on this and that other sort of qualities of wickedness, is said to receive spirits. XLVII. The Word does not bid us renounce property; but to manage property without inordinate affection; and on anything happening, not to be vexed or grieved; and not to desire to acquire. Divine Providence bids keep away from possession accompanied with passion, and from all inordinate affection, and from this turns back those still remaining in the flesh.

XLVIII. For instance, Peter says in the Apocalypse, that abortive infants shall share the better fate; that these are committed to a guardian angel, so that, on receiving knowledge, they may obtain the better abode, having had the same experiences which they would have had had they been in the body. But the others shall obtain salvation merely, as being injured

and pitied, and remain without punishment, receiving this reward. XLIX. The milk of women, flowing from the breasts and thickening, says Peter in the Apocalypse, will produce minute beasts, that prey on flesh, and running back into them will consume them: teaching that punishments arise for sins. He says that they are produced from sins; as it was for their sins that the people were sold. And for their want of faith in Christ, as the apostle says, they were bitten by serpents. L. An ancient said that the embryo is a living thing; for that the soul entering into the womb after it has been by cleansing prepared for conception, and introduced by one of the angels who preside over generation, and who knows the time for conception, moves the woman to intercourse; and that, on the seed being deposited, the spirit, which is in the seed, is, so to speak, appropriated, and is thus assumed into conjunction in the process of formation. He cited as a proof to all, how, when the angels give glad tidings to the barren, they introduce souls before conception. And in the Gospel "the babe leapt" as a living thing. And the barren are barren for this reason, that the soul, which unites for the deposit of the seed, is not introduced so as to secure conception and generation.

LI. "The heavens declare the glory of God." The heavens are taken in various meanings, both those defined by space and revolution, and those by covenant,-the immediate operation of the first-created angels. For the covenants caused a more especial appearance of angels,-that in the case of Adam, that in the case of Noah, that in the case of Abraham, that in the case of Moses. For, moved by the Lord, the first-created angels exercised their influence on the angels attached to the prophets, considering the covenants the glory of God. Furthermore, the things done on earth by angels were done by the first-created angels to the glory of God. LII. It is the Lord that is principally denominated the Heavens, and then the First-created; and after these also the holy men before the Law, as the patriarchs, and Moses, and the prophets; then also the apostles. "And the firmament showeth His handiwork." He applies the term "firmament" to God, the passionless and immoveable, as also elsewhere the same David says, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength and my refuge." Accordingly, the firmament itself shows forth the work of His hands,-that is, shows and manifests the work of His angels. For He shows forth and manifests those whom He hath made.

LIII. "Day unto day uttereth speech." As the heavens have various meanings, so also has day. Now speech is the Lord; and He is also frequently called day. "And night unto night showeth forth knowledge." The devil knew that the Lord was to come. But he did not believe that He was God; wherefore also he tempted Him, in order to know if He were powerful. It is said, "he left Him, and departed from Him for a season; "that is, he postponed the discovery till the resurrection. For he knew that He who was to rise was the Lord. Likewise also the demons; since also they suspected that Solomon was the Lord, and they knew that he was not so, on his sinning. "Night to night." All the demons knew that He who rose after the passion was the Lord. And already Enoch had said, that the angels who transgressed taught men astronomy and divination, and the rest of the arts.

LIV. "There are no speeches or words whose voices are not heard," neither of days nor nights. "Their sound is gone forth unto all the earth." He has transferred the discourse to the saints alone, whom he calls both heavens and days. LV. The stars, spiritual bodies, that have communications with the angels set over them, and are governed by them, are not the cause of the production of things, but are signs of what is taking place, and will take place, and have taken place in the case of atmospheric changes, of fruitfulness and barrenness, of pestilence and fevers, and in the case of men. The stars do not in the least degree exert influences, but indicate what is, and will be, and has been. LVI. "And in the sun hath He set His tabernacle." There is a transposition here. For it is of the second coming that the discourse is. So, then, we must read what is transposed in its due sequence: "And he, as a bridegroom issuing from his chamber, will rejoice as a giant to run his way. From heaven's end is his going forth; and there is no one who shall hide himself from his heat; "and then, "He hath set His tabernacle in the sun."

Some say that He deposited the Lord's body in the sun, as Hermogenes. And "His tabernacle," some say, is His body, others the Church of the faithful.

Our Pantaenus used to say, that prophecy utters its expressions indefinitely for the most part, and uses the present for the future, and again the present for the past. Which is also seen here. For "He hath set" is put both for the past and the future. For the future, because, on the completion of this period, which is to run according to its present constitution, the Lord will come to restore the righteous, the faithful, in whom He rests, as in a tent, to one and the same unity; for all are one body, of the same race, and have chosen the same faith and righteousness. But some as head, some as eyes, some as ears, some as hands, some as breasts, some as feet, shall be set, resplendent, in the sun. "Shine forth as the sun," or in the sun; since an angel high in command is in the sun. For he is appointed for rule over days; as the moon is for ruling over night. Now angels are called days. Along with the angels in the sun, it is said, they shall have assigned to them one abode, to be for some time and in some respects the sun, as it were the head of the body which is one. And, besides, they also are the rulers of the days, as that angel in the sun, for the greater purpose for which he before them migrated to the same place. And again destined to ascend progressively, they reach the first abode, in accordance with the past "He hath set: "so that the first-created angels shall no longer, according to providence, exercise a definite ministry, but may be in repose, and devoted to the contemplation of God alone; while those next to them shall be promoted to the post which they have left; and so those beneath them similarly.

LVII. There are then, according to the apostle, those on the summit, the first-created. And they are thrones, although Powers, being the first-created, inasmuch as God rests in them, as also in those who believe. For each one, according to his own stage of advancement possesses the knowledge of God in a way special to himself; and in this knowledge God reposes, those who possess knowledge being made immortal by knowledge. And is not "He set His tabernacle in the sun" to be understood thus? God "set in the sun," that is, in the God who is beside Him, as in the Gospel, Eli, Eli, instead of my God, my God. And what

is above all rule, and authority, and power, and every name that is named," are those from among men that are made perfect as angels and archangels, so as to rise to the nature of the angels first-created. For those who are changed from men to angels are instructed for a thousand years by the angels after they are brought to perfection. Then those who have taught are translated to archangelic authority; and those who have learned instruct those again who from men are changed to angels. Thus afterwards, in the prescribed periods, they are brought to the proper angelic state of the body.

LVIII. "The law of God is perfect, converting souls." The Saviour Himself is called Law and Word, as Peter in "the Preaching," and the prophet: "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." LIX. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making children wise." The covenant of the Lord is true, making wise children; those free from evil, both the apostles, and then also us. Besides, the testimony of the Lord, according to which He rose again after His passion, having been verified by fact, led the Church to confirmation in faith. LX. "The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring for ever." He says that those who have been turned from fear to faith and righteousness endure for ever. "The judgments of the Lord are true,"-sure, and incapable of being overturned; and giving rewards according to what is right, bringing the righteous to the unity of the faith. For this is shown in the words, "justified for the same." "Such desires are above gold and precious stone."

LXI. "For also Thy servant keeps them." Not that David alone is called servant; but the whole people saved is called the servant of God, in virtue of obedience to the command. LXII. "Cleanse me from my secret faults; "-thoughts contrary to right reason-defects. For He calls this foreign to the righteous man. LXIII. "If they have not dominion over me, then shall I be innocent." If those who persecute me as they did the Lord, do not have dominion over me, I shall not be innocent. For no one becomes a martyr unless he is persecuted; nor appears righteous, unless, being wronged, he takes no revenge; nor forbearing ...

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.