The City of God, Volume II

by Aurelius Augustine

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OF

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\_A NEW TRANSLATION.\_

=Edited by the=

REV. MARCUS DODS, M.A.

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VIII. by the Rev. J. J. SMITH.

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THE CITY OF GOD.

BOOK FOURTEENTH.[1]

ARGUMENT.

AUGUSTINE AGAIN TREATS OF THE SIN OF THE FIRST MAN, AND TEACHES

THAT IT IS THE CAUSE OF THE CARNAL LIFE AND VICIOUS AFFECTIONS

OF MAN. ESPECIALLY HE PROVES THAT THE SHAME WHICH ACCOMPANIES

LUST IS THE JUST PUNISHMENT OF THAT DISOBEDIENCE, AND INQUIRES

HOW MAN, IF HE HAD NOT SINNED, WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE WITHOUT

LUST TO PROPAGATE HIS KIND.

1. \_That the disobedience of the first man would have plunged all

men into the endless misery of the second death, had not the

grace of God rescued many.\_

We have already stated in the preceding books that God, desiring

not only that the human race might be able by their similarity of

nature to associate with one another, but also that they might be

bound together in harmony and peace by the ties of relationship, was

pleased to derive all men from one individual, and created man with

such a nature that the members of the race should not have died, had

not the two first (of whom the one was created out of nothing, and

the other out of him) merited this by their disobedience; for by them

so great a sin was committed, that by it the human nature was altered

for the worse, and was transmitted also to their posterity, liable

to sin and subject to death. And the kingdom of death so reigned

over men, that the deserved penalty of sin would have hurled all

headlong even into the second death, of which there is no end, had

not the undeserved grace of God saved some therefrom. And thus it

has come to pass, that though there are very many and great nations

all over the earth, whose rites and customs, speech, arms, and dress,

are distinguished by marked differences, yet there are no more than

two kinds of human society, which we may justly call two cities,

according to the language of our Scriptures. The one consists of

those who wish to live after the flesh, the other of those who wish

to live after the spirit; and when they severally achieve what they

wish, they live in peace, each after their kind.

2. \_Of carnal life, which is to be understood not only of living

in bodily indulgence, but also of living in the vices of the

inner man.\_

First, we must see what it is to live after the flesh, and what to live

after the spirit. For any one who either does not recollect, or does

not sufficiently weigh, the language of sacred Scripture, may, on first

hearing what we have said, suppose that the Epicurean philosophers

live after the flesh, because they place man's highest good in bodily

pleasure; and that those others do so who have been of opinion that in

some form or other bodily good is man's supreme good; and that the mass

of men do so who, without dogmatizing or philosophizing on the subject,

are so prone to lust that they cannot delight in any pleasure save

such as they receive from bodily sensations: and he may suppose that

the Stoics, who place the supreme good of men in the soul, live after

the spirit; for what is man's soul, if not spirit? But in the sense of

the divine Scripture both are proved to live after the flesh. For by

flesh it means not only the body of a terrestrial and mortal animal, as

when it says, "All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind

of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another

of birds,"[2] but it uses this word in many other significations; and

among these various usages, a frequent one is to use flesh for man

himself, the nature of man taking the part for the whole, as in the

words, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;"[3]

for what does he mean here by "no flesh" but "no man?" And this,

indeed, he shortly after says more plainly: "No man shall be justified

by the law;"[4] and in the Epistle to the Galatians, "Knowing that a

man is not justified by the works of the law." And so we understand

the words, "And the Word was made flesh,"[5]--that is, man, which some

not accepting in its right sense, have supposed that Christ had not a

human soul.[6] For as the whole is used for the part in the words of

Mary Magdalene in the Gospel, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know

not where they have laid Him,"[7] by which she meant only the flesh

of Christ, which she supposed had been taken from the tomb where it

had been buried, so the part is used for the whole, flesh being named,

while man is referred to, as in the quotations above cited.

Since, then, Scripture uses the word flesh in many ways, which there

is not time to collect and investigate, if we are to ascertain what

it is to live after the flesh (which is certainly evil, though the

nature of flesh is not itself evil), we must carefully examine that

passage of the epistle which the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians,

in which he says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which

are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife,

seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings,

and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told

you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit

the kingdom of God."[8] This whole passage of the apostolic epistle

being considered, so far as it bears on the matter in hand, will

be sufficient to answer the question, what it is to live after the

flesh. For among the works of the flesh which he said were manifest,

and which he cited for condemnation, we find not only those which

concern the pleasure of the flesh, as fornications, uncleanness,

lasciviousness, drunkenness, revellings, but also those which, though

they be remote from fleshly pleasure, reveal the vices of the soul.

For who does not see that idolatries, witchcrafts, hatreds, variance,

emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, are vices rather of

the soul than of the flesh? For it is quite possible for a man to

abstain from fleshly pleasures for the sake of idolatry or some

heretical error; and yet, even when he does so, he is proved by this

apostolic authority to be living after the flesh; and in abstaining

from fleshly pleasure, he is proved to be practising damnable works

of the flesh. Who that has enmity has it not in his soul? or who

would say to his enemy, or to the man he thinks his enemy, You have a

bad flesh towards me, and not rather, You have a bad spirit towards

me? In fine, if any one heard of what I may call "carnalities," he

would not fail to attribute them to the carnal part of man; so no

one doubts that "animosities" belong to the soul of man. Why then

does the doctor of the Gentiles in faith and verity call all these

and similar things works of the flesh, unless because, by that mode

of speech whereby the part is used for the whole, he means us to

understand by the word flesh the man himself?

3. \_That sin is caused not by the flesh, but by the soul, and

that the corruption contracted from sin is not sin, but sin's

punishment.\_

But if any one says that the flesh is the cause of all vices and

ill conduct, inasmuch as the soul lives wickedly only because it is

moved by the flesh, it is certain he has not carefully considered

the whole nature of man. For "the corruptible body, indeed, weigheth

down the soul."[9] Whence, too, the apostle, speaking of this

corruptible body, of which he had shortly before said, "though our

outward man perish,"[10] says, "We know that if our earthly house

of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an

house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we

groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which

is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found

naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened:

not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality

might be swallowed up in life."[11] We are then burdened with this

corruptible body; but knowing that the cause of this burdensomeness

is not the nature and substance of the body, but its corruption, we

do not desire to be deprived of the body, but to be clothed with

its immortality. For then, also, there will be a body, but it shall

no longer be a burden, being no longer corruptible. At present,

then, "the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly

tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things,"

nevertheless they are in error who suppose that all the evils of the

soul proceed from the body.

Virgil, indeed, seems to express the sentiments of Plato in the

beautiful lines, where he says,--

"A fiery strength inspires their lives,

An essence that from heaven derives,

Though clogged in part by limbs of clay,

And the dull 'vesture of decay;'"[12]

but though he goes on to mention the four most common mental

emotions,--desire, fear, joy, sorrow,--with the intention of showing

that the body is the origin of all sins and vices, saying,--

"Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears,

Immured in dungeon-seeming night,

They look abroad, yet see no light,"[13]

yet we believe quite otherwise. For the corruption of the body,

which weighs down the soul, is not the cause but the punishment of

the first sin; and it was not the corruptible flesh that made the

soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible.

And though from this corruption of the flesh there arise certain

incitements to vice, and indeed vicious desires, yet we must not

attribute to the flesh all the vices of a wicked life, in case we

thereby clear the devil of all these, for he has no flesh. For though

we cannot call the devil a fornicator or drunkard, or ascribe to

him any sensual indulgence (though he is the secret instigator and

prompter of those who sin in these ways), yet he is exceedingly

proud and envious. And this viciousness has so possessed him, that

on account of it he is reserved in chains of darkness to everlasting

punishment.[14] Now these vices, which have dominion over the devil,

the apostle attributes to the flesh, which certainly the devil has

not. For he says "hatred, variance, emulations, strife, envying" are

the works of the flesh; and of all these evils pride is the origin

and head, and it rules in the devil though he has no flesh. For

who shows more hatred to the saints? who is more at variance with

them? who more envious, bitter, and jealous? And since he exhibits

all these works, though he has no flesh, how are they works of the

flesh, unless because they are the works of man, who is, as I said,

spoken of under the name of flesh? For it is not by having flesh,

which the devil has not, but by living according to himself,--that

is, according to man,--that man became like the devil. For the devil

too, wished to live according to himself when he did not abide in the

truth; so that when he lied, this was not of God, but of himself, who

is not only a liar, but the father of lies, he being the first who

lied, and the originator of lying as of sin.

4. \_What it is to live according to man, and what to live according

to God.\_

When, therefore, man lives according to man, not according to God,

he is like the devil. Because not even an angel might live according

to an angel, but only according to God, if he was to abide in the

truth, and speak God's truth and not his own lie. And of man, too,

the same apostle says in another place, "If the truth of God hath

more abounded through my lie;"[15]--"my lie," he said, and "God's

truth." When, then, a man lives according to the truth, he lives

not according to himself, but according to God; for He was God who

said, "I am the truth."[16] When, therefore, man lives according to

himself,--that is, according to man, not according to God,--assuredly

he lives according to a lie; not that man himself is a lie, for

God is his author and creator, who is certainly not the author and

creator of a lie, but because man was made upright, that he might not

live according to himself, but according to Him that made him,--in

other words, that he might do His will and not his own; and not to

live as he was made to live, that is a lie. For he certainly desires

to be blessed even by not living so that he may be blessed. And what

is a lie if this desire be not? Wherefore it is not without meaning

said that all sin is a lie. For no sin is committed save by that

desire or will by which we desire that it be well with us, and shrink

from it being ill with us. That, therefore, is a lie which we do in

order that it may be well with us, but which makes us more miserable

than we were. And why is this, but because the source of man's

happiness lies only in God, whom he abandons when he sins, and not in

himself, by living according to whom he sins?

In enunciating this proposition of ours, then, that because some live

according to the flesh and others according to the spirit there have

arisen two diverse and conflicting cities, we might equally well

have said, "because some live according to man, others according to

God." For Paul says very plainly to the Corinthians, "For whereas

there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk

according to man?"[17] So that to walk according to man and to be

carnal are the same; for by \_flesh\_, that is, by a part of man, man

is meant. For before he said that those same persons were animal whom

afterwards he calls carnal, saying, "For what man knoweth the things

of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things

of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received

not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that

we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which

things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth,

but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with

spiritual. But the animal man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit

of God; for they are foolishness unto him."[18] It is to men of this

kind, then, that is, to animal men, he shortly after says, "And I,

brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto

carnal."[19] And this is to be interpreted by the same usage, a part

being taken for the whole. For both the soul and the flesh, the

component parts of man, can be used to signify the whole man; and so

the animal man and the carnal man are not two different things, but

one and the same thing, viz. man living according to man. In the same

way it is nothing else than men that are meant either in the words,

"By the deeds of the law there shall no \_flesh\_ be justified;"[20]

or in the words, "Seventy-five \_souls\_ went down into Egypt with

Jacob."[21] In the one passage, "no flesh" signifies "no man;" and

in the other, by "seventy-five souls" seventy-five men are meant.

And the expression, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth," might

equally be "not in words which fleshly wisdom teacheth;" and the

expression, "ye walk according to man," might be "according to the

flesh." And this is still more apparent in the words which followed:

"For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos,

are ye not men?" The same thing which he had before expressed by "ye

are animal," "ye are carnal," he now expresses by "ye are men;" that

is, ye live according to man, not according to God, for if you lived

according to Him, you should be gods.

5. \_That the opinion of the Platonists regarding the nature of

body and soul is not so censurable as that of the Manichæans,

but that even it is objectionable, because it ascribes the

origin of vices to the nature of the flesh.\_

There is no need, therefore, that in our sins and vices we accuse

the nature of the flesh to the injury of the Creator, for in its own

kind and degree the flesh is good; but to desert the Creator good,

and live according to the created good, is not good, whether a man

choose to live according to the flesh, or according to the soul,

or according to the whole human nature, which is composed of flesh

and soul, and which is therefore spoken of either by the name flesh

alone, or by the name soul alone. For he who extols the nature of

the soul as the chief good, and condemns the nature of the flesh as

if it were evil, assuredly is fleshly both in his love of the soul

and hatred of the flesh; for these his feelings arise from human

fancy, not from divine truth. The Platonists, indeed, are not so

foolish as, with the Manichæans, to detest our present bodies as an

evil nature;[22] for they attribute all the elements of which this

visible and tangible world is compacted, with all their qualities,

to God their Creator. Nevertheless, from the death-infected members

and earthly construction of the body they believe the soul is

so affected, that there are thus originated in it the diseases

of desires, and fears, and joy, and sorrow, under which four

perturbations, as Cicero[23] calls them, or passions, as most prefer

to name them with the Greeks, is included the whole viciousness of

human life. But if this be so, how is it that Æneas in Virgil, when

he had heard from his father in Hades that the souls should return

to bodies, expresses surprise at this declaration, and exclaims:

"O father! and can thought conceive

That happy souls this realm would leave,

And seek the upper sky,

With sluggish clay to reunite?

This direful longing for the light,

Whence comes it, say, and why?"[24]

This direful longing, then, does it still exist even in that boasted

purity of the disembodied spirits, and does it still proceed from the

death-infected members and earthly limbs? Does he not assert that,

when they begin to long to return to the body, they have already been

delivered from all these so-called pestilences of the body? From

which we gather that, were this endlessly alternating purification

and defilement of departing and returning souls as true as it is most

certainly false, yet it could not be averred that all culpable and

vicious motions of the soul originate in the earthly body; for, on

their own showing, "this direful longing," to use the words of their

noble exponent, is so extraneous to the body, that it moves the soul

that is purged of all bodily taint, and is existing apart from any

body whatever, and moves it, moreover, to be embodied again. So that

even they themselves acknowledge that the soul is not only moved to

desire, fear, joy, sorrow, by the flesh, but that it can also be

agitated with these emotions at its own instance.

6. \_Of the character of the human will which makes the affections

of the soul right or wrong.\_

But the character of the human will is of moment; because, if it is

wrong, these motions of the soul will be wrong, but if it is right,

they will be not merely blameless, but even praiseworthy. For the

will is in them all; yea, none of them is anything else than will.

For what are desire and joy but a volition of consent to the things

we wish? And what are fear and sadness but a volition of aversion

from the things which we do not wish? But when consent takes the form

of seeking to possess the things we wish, this is called desire; and

when consent takes the form of enjoying the things we wish, this

is called joy. In like manner, when we turn with aversion from that

which we do not wish to happen, this volition is termed fear; and

when we turn away from that which has happened against our will, this

act of will is called sorrow. And generally in respect of all that

we seek or shun, as a man's will is attracted or repelled, so it is

changed and turned into these different affections. Wherefore the

man who lives according to God, and not according to man, ought to

be a lover of good, and therefore a hater of evil. And since no one

is evil by nature, but whoever is evil is evil by vice, he who lives

according to God ought to cherish towards evil men a perfect hatred,

so that he shall neither hate the man because of his vice, nor love

the vice because of the man, but hate the vice and love the man. For

the vice being cursed, all that ought to be loved, and nothing that

ought to be hated, will remain.

7. \_That the words love and regard\_ (amor \_and\_ dilectio) \_are in

Scripture used indifferently of good and evil affection.\_

He who resolves to love God, and to love his neighbour as himself, not

according to man but according to God, is on account of this love said

to be of a good will; and this is in Scripture more commonly called

charity, but it is also, even in the same books, called love. For the

apostle says that the man to be elected as a ruler of the people must

be a lover of good.[25] And when the Lord Himself had asked Peter,

"Hast thou a regard for me (\_diligis\_) more than these?" Peter replied,

"Lord, Thou knowest that I love (\_amo\_) Thee." And again a second time

the Lord asked not whether Peter loved (\_amaret\_) Him, but whether he

had a regard (\_diligeret\_) for Him, and he again answered, "Lord, Thou

knowest that I love (\_amo\_) Thee." But on the third interrogation the

Lord Himself no longer says, "Hast thou a regard (\_diligis\_) for me,"

but "Lovest thou (\_amas\_) me?" And then the evangelist adds, "Peter was

grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou (\_amas\_)

me?" though the Lord had not said three times but only once, "Lovest

thou (\_amas\_) me?" and twice "\_Diligis me?\_" from which we gather

that, even when the Lord said "\_diligis\_," He used an equivalent for

"\_amas\_." Peter, too, throughout used one word for the one thing,

and the third time also replied, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou

knowest that I love (\_amo\_) Thee."[26]

I have judged it right to mention this, because some are of opinion

that charity or regard (\_dilectio\_) is one thing, love (\_amor\_)

another. They say that \_dilectio\_ is used of a good affection, \_amor\_

of an evil love. But it is very certain that even secular literature

knows no such distinction. However, it is for the philosophers to

determine whether and how they differ, though their own writings

sufficiently testify that they make great account of love (\_amor\_)

placed on good objects, and even on God Himself. But we wished to

show that the Scriptures of our religion, whose authority we prefer

to all writings whatsoever, make no distinction between \_amor\_,

\_dilectio\_, and \_caritas\_; and we have already shown that \_amor\_

is used in a good connection. And if any one fancy that \_amor\_ is

no doubt used both of good and bad loves, but that \_dilectio\_ is

reserved for the good only, let him remember what the psalm says, "He

that loveth (\_diligit\_) iniquity hateth his own soul;"[27] and the

words of the Apostle John, "If any man love (\_diligere\_) the world,

the love (\_dilectio\_) of the Father is not in him."[28] Here you have

in one passage \_dilectio\_ used both in a good and a bad sense. And

if any one demands an instance of \_amor\_ being used in a bad sense

(for we have already shown its use in a good sense), let him read

the words, "For men shall be lovers (\_amantes\_) of their own selves,

lovers (\_amatores\_) of money."[29]

The right will is, therefore, well-directed love, and the wrong will

is ill-directed love. Love, then, yearning to have what is loved,

is desire; and having and enjoying it, is joy; fleeing what is

opposed to it, it is fear; and feeling what is opposed to it, when

it has befallen it, it is sadness. Now these motions are evil if

the love is evil; good if the love is good. What we assert let us

prove from Scripture. The apostle "desires to depart, and to be with

Christ."[30] And, "My soul desired to long for Thy judgments;"[31]

or if it is more appropriate to say, "My soul longed to desire Thy

judgments." And, "The desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom."[32]

Yet there has always obtained the usage of understanding desire

and concupiscence in a bad sense if the object be not defined. But

joy is used in a good sense: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice,

ye righteous."[33] And, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart."[34]

And, "Thou wilt fill me with joy with Thy countenance."[35] Fear is

used in a good sense by the apostle when he says, "Work out your

salvation with fear and trembling."[36] And, "Be not high-minded, but

fear."[37] And, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled

Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from

the simplicity that is in Christ."[38] But with respect to sadness,

which Cicero prefers to call sickness (\_ægritudo\_), and Virgil pain

(\_dolor\_) (as he says, "\_Dolent gaudentque\_"[39]), but which I prefer

to call sorrow, because sickness and pain are more commonly used to

express bodily suffering,--with respect to this emotion, I say, the

question whether it can be used in a good sense is more difficult.

8. \_Of the three perturbations, which the Stoics admitted in the

soul of the wise man to the exclusion of grief or sadness,

which the manly mind ought not to experience.\_

Those emotions which the Greeks call εὐπαθείαι, and which Cicero

calls \_constantiæ\_, the Stoics would restrict to three; and,

instead of three "perturbations" in the soul of the wise man, they

substituted severally, in place of desire, will; in place of joy,

contentment; and for fear, caution; and as to sickness or pain,

which we, to avoid ambiguity, preferred to call sorrow, they denied

that it could exist in the mind of a wise man. Will, they say, seeks

the good, for this the wise man does. Contentment has its object in

good that is possessed, and this the wise man continually possesses.

Caution avoids evil, and this the wise man ought to avoid. But sorrow

arises from evil that has already happened; and as they suppose that

no evil can happen to the wise man, there can be no representative of

sorrow in his mind. According to them, therefore, none but the wise

man wills, is contented, uses caution; and that the fool can do no

more than desire, rejoice, fear, be sad. The former three affections

Cicero calls \_constantiæ\_, the last four \_perturbationes\_. Many,

however, call these last \_passions\_; and, as I have said, the Greeks

call the former εὐπαθείαι, and the latter πάθη. And when I made a

careful examination of Scripture to find whether this terminology was

sanctioned by it, I came upon this saying of the prophet: "There is

no contentment to the wicked, saith the Lord;"[40] as if the wicked

might more properly rejoice than be contented regarding evils, for

contentment is the property of the good and godly. I found also

that verse in the Gospel: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do

unto you, do ye even so unto them;"[41] which seems to imply that

evil or shameful things may be the object of desire, but not of

will. Indeed, some interpreters have added "good things" to make the

expression more in conformity with customary usage, and have given

this meaning, "Whatsoever good deeds that ye would that men should

do unto you." For they thought that this would prevent any one from

wishing other men to provide him with unseemly, not to say shameful,

gratifications,--luxurious banquets, for example,--on the supposition

that if he returned the like to them he would be fulfilling this

precept. In the Greek Gospel, however, from which the Latin is

translated, "good" does not occur, but only, "All things whatsoever

ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," and,

as I believe, because "good" is already included in the word "would;"

for He does not say "desire."

Yet though we may sometimes avail ourselves of these precise

proprieties of language, we are not to be always bridled by them; and

when we read those writers against whose authority it is unlawful

to reclaim, we must accept the meanings above mentioned in passages

where a right sense can be educed by no other interpretation, as in

those instances we adduced partly from the prophet, partly from the

Gospel. For who does not know that the wicked exult with joy? Yet

"there is no \_contentment\_ for the wicked, saith the Lord." And how

so, unless because contentment, when the word is used in its proper

and distinctive significance, means something different from joy? In

like manner, who would deny that it were wrong to enjoin upon men

that whatever they desire others to do to them they should themselves

do to others, lest they should mutually please one another by shameful

and illicit pleasure? And yet the precept, "Whatsoever ye \_would\_ that

men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," is very wholesome

and just. And how is this, unless because the will is in this place

used strictly, and signifies that will which cannot have evil for its

object? But ordinary phraseology would not have allowed the saying,

"Be unwilling to make any manner of lie,"[42] had there not been also

an evil will, whose wickedness separates it from that which the angels

celebrated, "Peace on earth, of good will to men."[43] For "good" is

superfluous if there is no other kind of will but good will. And why

should the apostle have mentioned it among the praises of charity as

a great thing, that "it rejoices not in iniquity," unless because

wickedness does so rejoice? For even with secular writers these words

are used indifferently. For Cicero, that most fertile of orators, says,

"I desire, conscript fathers, to be merciful."[44] And who would be

so pedantic as to say that he should have said "I will" rather than

"I desire," because the word is used in a good connection? Again,

in Terence, the profligate youth, burning with wild lust, says, "I

will nothing else than Philumena."[45] That this "will" was lust is

sufficiently indicated by the answer of his old servant which is there

introduced: "How much better were it to try and banish that love from

your heart, than to speak so as uselessly to inflame your passion still

more!" And that contentment was used by secular writers in a bad sense,

that verse of Virgil testifies, in which he most succinctly comprehends

these four perturbations,--

"Hence they fear and desire, grieve and are content."[46]

The same author had also used the expression, "the evil contentments

of the mind."[47] So that good and bad men alike will, are cautious,

and contented; or, to say the same thing in other words, good and bad

men alike desire, fear, rejoice, but the former in a good, the latter

in a bad fashion, according as the will is right or wrong. Sorrow

itself, too, which the Stoics would not allow to be represented in

the mind of the wise man, is used in a good sense, and especially in

our writings. For the apostle praises the Corinthians because they

had a godly sorrow. But possibly some one may say that the apostle

congratulated them because they were penitently sorry, and that such

sorrow can exist only in those who have sinned. For these are his

words: "For I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry,

though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made

sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry

after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented

of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For, behold, this

selfsame thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness

it wrought in you!"[48] Consequently the Stoics may defend themselves

by replying,[49] that sorrow is indeed useful for repentance of sin,

but that this can have no place in the mind of the wise man, inasmuch

as no sin attaches to him of which he could sorrowfully repent,

nor any other evil the endurance or experience of which could make

him sorrowful. For they say that Alcibiades (if my memory does not

deceive me), who believed himself happy, shed tears when Socrates

argued with him, and demonstrated that he was miserable because he

was foolish. In his case, therefore, folly was the cause of this

useful and desirable sorrow, wherewith a man mourns that he is what

he ought not to be. But the Stoics maintain not that the fool, but

that the wise man, cannot be sorrowful.

9. \_Of the perturbations of the soul which appear as right

affections in the life of the righteous.\_

But so far as regards this question of mental perturbations, we have

answered these philosophers in the ninth book[50] of this work,

showing that it is rather a verbal than a real dispute, and that they

seek contention rather than truth. Among ourselves, according to the

sacred Scriptures and sound doctrine, the citizens of the holy city of

God, who live according to God in the pilgrimage of this life, both

fear and desire, and grieve and rejoice. And because their love is

rightly placed, all these affections of theirs are right. They fear

eternal punishment, they desire eternal life; they grieve because

they themselves groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption,

the redemption of their body;[51] they rejoice in hope, because

there "shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death

is swallowed up in victory."[52] In like manner they fear to sin,

they desire to persevere; they grieve in sin, they rejoice in good

works. They fear to sin, because they hear that "because iniquity

shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."[53] They desire to

persevere, because they hear that it is written, "He that endureth to

the end shall be saved."[54] They grieve for sin, hearing that "If we

say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in

us."[55] They rejoice in good works, because they hear that "the Lord

loveth a cheerful giver."[56] In like manner, according as they are

strong or weak, they fear or desire to be tempted, grieve or rejoice in

temptation. They fear to be tempted, because they hear the injunction,

"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such

an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also

be tempted."[57] They desire to be tempted, because they hear one of

the heroes of the city of God saying, "Examine me, O Lord, and tempt

me: try my reins and my heart."[58] They grieve in temptations, because

they see Peter weeping;[59] they rejoice in temptations, because they

hear James saying, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into

divers temptations."[60]

And not only on their own account do they experience these emotions,

but also on account of those whose deliverance they desire and whose

perdition they fear, and whose loss or salvation affects them with

grief or with joy. For if we who have come into the Church from among

the Gentiles may suitably instance that noble and mighty hero who

glories in his infirmities, the teacher (\_doctor\_) of the nations in

faith and truth, who also laboured more than all his fellow-apostles,

and instructed the tribes of God's people by his epistles, which

edified not only those of his own time, but all those who were to be

gathered in,--that hero, I say, and athlete of Christ, instructed

by Him, anointed of His Spirit, crucified with Him, glorious in

Him, lawfully maintaining a great conflict on the theatre of this

world, and being made a spectacle to angels and men,[61] and pressing

onwards for the prize of his high calling,[62]--very joyfully do we

with the eyes of faith behold him rejoicing with them that rejoice,

and weeping with them that weep;[63] though hampered by fightings

without and fears within;[64] desiring to depart and to be with

Christ;[65] longing to see the Romans, that he might have some fruit

among them as among other Gentiles;[66] being jealous over the

Corinthians, and fearing in that jealousy lest their minds should

be corrupted from the chastity that is in Christ;[67] having great

heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for the Israelites,[68]

because they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about

to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves

unto the righteousness of God;[69] and expressing not only his

sorrow, but bitter lamentation over some who had formally sinned and

had not repented of their uncleanness and fornications.[70]

If these emotions and affections, arising as they do from the love

of what is good and from a holy charity, are to be called vices,

then let us allow these emotions which are truly vices to pass under

the name of virtues. But since these affections, when they are

exercised in a becoming way, follow the guidance of right reason,

who will dare to say that they are diseases or vicious passions?

Wherefore even the Lord Himself, when He condescended to lead a

human life in the form of a slave, had no sin whatever, and yet

exercised these emotions where He judged they should be exercised.

For as there was in Him a true human body and a true human soul, so

was there also a true human emotion. When, therefore, we read in the

Gospel that the hard-heartedness of the Jews moved Him to sorrowful

indignation,[71] that He said, "I am glad for your sakes, to the

intent ye may believe,"[72] that when about to raise Lazarus He

even shed tears,[73] that He earnestly desired to eat the passover

with His disciples,[74] that as His passion drew near His soul was

sorrowful,[75] these emotions are certainly not falsely ascribed

to Him. But as He became man when it pleased Him, so, in the grace

of His definite purpose, when it pleased Him He experienced those

emotions in His human soul.

But we must further make the admission, that even when these affections

are well regulated, and according to God's will, they are peculiar

to this life, not to that future life we look for, and that often we

yield to them against our will. And thus sometimes we weep in spite

of ourselves, being carried beyond ourselves, not indeed by culpable

desire, but by praiseworthy charity. In us, therefore, these affections

arise from human infirmity; but it was not so with the Lord Jesus, for

even His infirmity was the consequence of His power. But so long as we

wear the infirmity of this life, we are rather worse men than better if

we have none of these emotions at all. For the apostle vituperated and

abominated some who, as he said, were "without natural affection."[76]

The sacred Psalmist also found fault with those of whom he said, "I

looked for some to lament with me, and there was none."[77] For to

be quite free from pain while we are in this place of misery is only

purchased, as one of this world's literati perceived and remarked,[78]

at the price of blunted sensibilities both of mind and body. And

therefore that which the Greeks call ἀπάθεια, and what the Latins would

call, if their language would allow them, "impassibilitas," if it be

taken to mean an impassibility of spirit and not of body, or, in other

words, a freedom from those emotions which are contrary to reason

and disturb the mind, then it is obviously a good and most desirable

quality, but it is not one which is attainable in this life. For the

words of the apostle are the confession, not of the common herd, but

of the eminently pious, just, and holy men: "If we say we have no sin,

we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."[79] When there

shall be no sin in a man, then there shall be this ἀπάθεια. At present

it is enough if we live without crime; and he who thinks he lives

without sin puts aside not sin, but pardon. And if that is to be called

apathy, where the mind is the subject of no emotion, then who would not

consider this insensibility to be worse than all vices? It may, indeed,

reasonably be maintained that the perfect blessedness we hope for shall

be free from all sting of fear or sadness; but who that is not quite

lost to truth would say that neither love nor joy shall be experienced

there? But if by apathy a condition be meant in which no fear terrifies

nor any pain annoys, we must in this life renounce such a state if we

would live according to God's will, but may hope to enjoy it in that

blessedness which is promised as our eternal condition.

For that fear of which the Apostle John says, "There is no fear in

love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment.

He that feareth is not made perfect in love,"[80]--that fear is not

of the same kind as the Apostle Paul felt lest the Corinthians should

be seduced by the subtlety of the serpent; for love is susceptible

of this fear, yea, love alone is capable of it. But the fear which

is not in love is of that kind of which Paul himself says, "For ye

have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear."[81] But as

for that "clean fear which endureth for ever,"[82] if it is to exist

in the world to come (and how else can it be said to endure for

ever?), it is not a fear deterring us from evil which may happen,

but preserving us in the good which cannot be lost. For where the

love of acquired good is unchangeable, there certainly the fear

that avoids evil is, if I may say so, free from anxiety. For under

the name of "clean fear" David signifies that will by which we

shall necessarily shrink from sin, and guard against it, not with

the anxiety of weakness, which fears that we may strongly sin, but

with the tranquillity of perfect love. Or if no kind of fear at all

shall exist in that most imperturbable security of perpetual and

blissful delights, then the expression, "The fear of the Lord is

clean, enduring for ever," must be taken in the same sense as that

other, "The patience of the poor shall not perish for ever."[83] For

patience, which is necessary only where ills are to be borne, shall

not be eternal, but that which patience leads us to will be eternal.

So perhaps this "clean fear" is said to endure for ever, because that

to which fear leads shall endure.

And since this is so,--since we must live a good life in order to

attain to a blessed life,--a good life has all these affections

right, a bad life has them wrong. But in the blessed life eternal

there will be love and joy, not only right, but also assured; but

fear and grief there will be none. Whence it already appears in some

sort what manner of persons the citizens of the city of God must be

in this their pilgrimage, who live after the spirit, not after the

flesh,--that is to say, according to God, not according to man,--and

what manner of persons they shall be also in that immortality whither

they are journeying. And the city or society of the wicked, who

live not according to God, but according to man, and who accept the

doctrines of men or devils in the worship of a false and contempt

of the true divinity, is shaken with those wicked emotions as by

diseases and disturbances. And if there be some of its citizens who

seem to restrain and, as it were, temper those passions, they are

so elated with ungodly pride, that their disease is as much greater

as their pain is less. And if some, with a vanity monstrous in

proportion to its rarity, have become enamoured of themselves because

they can be stimulated and excited by no emotion, moved or bent by

no affection, such persons rather lose all humanity than obtain true

tranquillity. For a thing is not necessarily right because it is

inflexible, nor healthy because it is insensible.

10. \_Whether it is to be believed that our first parents in

Paradise, before they sinned, were free from all perturbation.\_

But it is a fair question, whether our first parent or first parents

(for there was a marriage of two), before they sinned, experienced

in their animal body such emotions as we shall not experience in

the spiritual body when sin has been purged and finally abolished.

For if they did, then how were they blessed in that boasted place

of bliss, Paradise? For who that is affected by fear or grief can

be called absolutely blessed? And what could those persons fear

or suffer in such affluence of blessings, where neither death nor

ill-health was feared, and where nothing was wanting which a good

will could desire, and nothing present which could interrupt man's

mental or bodily enjoyment? Their love to God was unclouded, and

their mutual affection was that of faithful and sincere marriage;

and from this love flowed a wonderful delight, because they always

enjoyed what was loved. Their avoidance of sin was tranquil; and,

so long as it was maintained, no other ill at all could invade them

and bring sorrow. Or did they perhaps desire to touch and eat the

forbidden fruit, yet feared to die; and thus both fear and desire

already, even in that blissful place, preyed upon those first of

mankind? Away with the thought that such could be the case where

there was no sin! And, indeed, this is already sin, to desire those

things which the law of God forbids, and to abstain from them through

fear of punishment, not through love of righteousness. Away, I say,

with the thought, that before there was any sin, there should already

have been committed regarding that fruit the very sin which our Lord

warns us against regarding a woman: "Whosoever looketh on a woman

to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his

heart."[84] As happy, then, as were these our first parents, who

were agitated by no mental perturbations, and annoyed by no bodily

discomforts, so happy should the whole human race have been, had

they not introduced that evil which they have transmitted to their

posterity, and had none of their descendants committed iniquity

worthy of damnation; but this original blessedness continuing

until, in virtue of that benediction which said, "Increase and

multiply,"[85] the number of the predestined saints should have been

completed, there would then have been bestowed that higher felicity

which is enjoyed by the most blessed angels,--a blessedness in which

there should have been a secure assurance that no one would sin, and

no one die; and so should the saints have lived, after no taste of

labour, pain, or death, as now they shall live in the resurrection,

after they have endured all these things.

11. \_Of the fall of the first man, in whom nature was created

good, and can be restored only by its Author.\_

But because God foresaw all things, and was therefore not ignorant

that man also would fall, we ought to consider this holy city in

connection with what God foresaw and ordained, and not according to

our own ideas, which do not embrace God's ordination. For man, by

his sin, could not disturb the divine counsel, nor compel God to

change what He had decreed; for God's foreknowledge had anticipated

both,--that is to say, both how evil the man whom He had created good

should become, and what good He Himself should even thus derive from

him. For though God is said to change His determinations (so that in

a tropical sense the Holy Scripture says even that God repented[86]),

this is said with reference to man's expectation, or the order of

natural causes, and not with reference to that which the Almighty had

foreknown that He would do. Accordingly God, as it is written, made

man upright,[87] and consequently with a good will. For if he had

not had a good will, he could not have been upright. The good will,

then, is the work of God; for God created him with it. But the first

evil will, which preceded all man's evil acts, was rather a kind of

falling away from the work of God to its own works than any positive

work. And therefore the acts resulting were evil, not having God, but

the will itself for their end; so that the will or the man himself,

so far as his will is bad, was as it were the evil tree bringing

forth evil fruit. Moreover, the bad will, though it be not in harmony

with, but opposed to nature, inasmuch as it is a vice or blemish,

yet it is true of it as of all vice, that it cannot exist except in

a nature, and only in a nature created out of nothing, and not in

that which the Creator has begotten of Himself, as He begot the Word,

by whom all things were made. For though God formed man of the dust

of the earth, yet the earth itself, and every earthly material, is

absolutely created out of nothing; and man's soul, too, God created

out of nothing, and joined to the body, when He made man. But evils

are so thoroughly overcome by good, that though they are permitted

to exist, for the sake of demonstrating how the most righteous

foresight of God can make a good use even of them, yet good can exist

without evil, as in the true and supreme God Himself, and as in every

invisible and visible celestial creature that exists above this murky

atmosphere; but evil cannot exist without good, because the natures

in which evil exists, in so far as they are natures, are good. And

evil is removed, not by removing any nature, or part of a nature,

which had been introduced by the evil, but by healing and correcting

that which had been vitiated and depraved. The will, therefore, is

then truly free, when it is not the slave of vices and sins. Such was

it given us by God; and this being lost by its own fault, can only

be restored by Him who was able at first to give it. And therefore

the truth says, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free

indeed;"[88] which is equivalent to saying, If the Son shall save

you, ye shall be saved indeed. For He is our Liberator, inasmuch as

He is our Saviour.

Man then lived with God for his rule in a paradise at once physical

and spiritual. For neither was it a paradise only physical for the

advantage of the body, and not also spiritual for the advantage of

the mind; nor was it only spiritual to afford enjoyment to man by his

internal sensations, and not also physical to afford him enjoyment

through his external senses. But obviously it was both for both ends.

But after that proud and therefore envious angel (of whose fall I

have said as much as I was able in the eleventh and twelfth books

of this work, as well as that of his fellows, who, from being God's

angels, became his angels), preferring to rule with a kind of pomp of

empire rather than to be another's subject, fell from the spiritual

Paradise, and essaying to insinuate his persuasive guile into the

mind of man, whose unfallen condition provoked him to envy now that

himself was fallen, he chose the serpent as his mouthpiece in that

bodily Paradise in which it and all the other earthly animals were

living with those two human beings, the man and his wife, subject to

them, and harmless; and he chose the serpent because, being slippery,

and moving in tortuous windings, it was suitable for his purpose.

And this animal being subdued to his wicked ends by the presence and

superior force of his angelic nature, he abused as his instrument,

and first tried his deceit upon the woman, making his assault upon

the weaker part of that human alliance, that he might gradually

gain the whole, and not supposing that the man would readily give

ear to him, or be deceived, but that he might yield to the error of

the woman. For as Aaron was not induced to agree with the people

when they blindly wished him to make an idol, and yet yielded to

constraint; and as it is not credible that Solomon was so blind as

to suppose that idols should be worshipped, but was drawn over to

such sacrilege by the blandishments of women; so we cannot believe

that Adam was deceived, and supposed the devil's word to be truth,

and therefore transgressed God's law, but that he by the drawings of

kindred yielded to the woman, the husband to the wife, the one human

being to the only other human being. For not without significance

did the apostle say, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being

deceived was in the transgression;"[89] but he speaks thus, because

the woman accepted as true what the serpent told her, but the man

could not bear to be severed from his only companion, even though

this involved a partnership in sin. He was not on this account less

culpable, but sinned with his eyes open. And so the apostle does not

say, "He did not sin," but "He was not deceived." For he shows that

he sinned when he says, "By one man sin entered into the world,"[90]

and immediately after more distinctly, "In the likeness of Adam's

transgression." But he meant that those are deceived who do not judge

that which they do to be sin; but he knew. Otherwise how were it

true "Adam was not deceived?" But having as yet no experience of the

divine severity, he was possibly deceived in so far as he thought

his sin venial. And consequently he was not deceived as the woman

was deceived, but he was deceived as to the judgment which would be

passed on his apology: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she

gave me, and I did eat."[91] What need of saying more? Although they

were not both deceived by credulity, yet both were entangled in the

snares of the devil, and taken by sin.

12. \_Of the nature of man's first sin.\_

If any one finds a difficulty in understanding why other sins do

not alter human nature as it was altered by the transgression of

those first human beings, so that on account of it this nature is

subject to the great corruption we feel and see, and to death,

and is distracted and tossed with so many furious and contending

emotions, and is certainly far different from what it was before

sin, even though it were then lodged in an animal body,--if, I say,

any one is moved by this, he ought not to think that that sin was a

small and light one because it was committed about food, and that

not bad nor noxious, except because it was forbidden; for in that

spot of singular felicity God could not have created and planted any

evil thing. But by the precept He gave, God commended obedience,

which is, in a sort, the mother and guardian of all the virtues

in the reasonable creature, which was so created that submission

is advantageous to it, while the fulfilment of its own will in

preference to the Creator's is destruction. And as this commandment

enjoining abstinence from one kind of food in the midst of great

abundance of other kinds was so easy to keep,--so light a burden to

the memory,--and, above all, found no resistance to its observance

in lust, which only afterwards sprung up as the penal consequence of

sin, the iniquity of violating it was all the greater in proportion

to the ease with which it might have been kept.

13. \_That in Adam's sin an evil will preceded the evil act.\_

Our first parents fell into open disobedience because already they

were secretly corrupted; for the evil act had never been done had not

an evil will preceded it. And what is the origin of our evil will but

pride? For "pride is the beginning of sin."[92] And what is pride

but the craving for undue exaltation? And this is undue exaltation,

when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end,

and becomes a kind of end to itself. This happens when it becomes

its own satisfaction. And it does so when it falls away from that

unchangeable good which ought to satisfy it more than itself. This

falling away is spontaneous; for if the will had remained stedfast in

the love of that higher and changeless good by which it was illumined

to intelligence and kindled into love, it would not have turned away

to find satisfaction in itself, and so become frigid and benighted;

the woman would not have believed the serpent spoke the truth, nor

would the man have preferred the request of his wife to the command

of God, nor have supposed that it was a venial transgression to

cleave to the partner of his life even in a partnership of sin. The

wicked deed, then,--that is to say, the transgression of eating the

forbidden fruit,--was committed by persons who were already wicked.

That "evil fruit"[93] could be brought forth only by "a corrupt

tree." But that the tree was evil was not the result of nature; for

certainly it could become so only by the vice of the will, and vice

is contrary to nature. Now, nature could not have been depraved by

vice had it not been made out of nothing. Consequently, that it is

a nature, this is because it is made by God; but that it falls away

from Him, this is because it is made out of nothing. But man did not

so fall away[94] as to become absolutely nothing; but being turned

towards himself, his being became more contracted than it was when he

clave to Him who supremely is. Accordingly, to exist in himself, that

is, to be his own satisfaction after abandoning God, is not quite to

become a nonentity, but to approximate to that. And therefore the

holy Scriptures designate the proud by another name, "self-pleasers."

For it is good to have the heart lifted up, yet not to one's self,

for this is proud, but to the Lord, for this is obedient, and can

be the act only of the humble. There is, therefore, something in

humility which, strangely enough, exalts the heart, and something

in pride which debases it. This seems, indeed, to be contradictory,

that loftiness should debase and lowliness exalt. But pious humility

enables us to submit to what is above us; and nothing is more exalted

above us than God; and therefore humility, by making us subject to

God, exalts us. But pride, being a defect of nature, by the very

act of refusing subjection and revolting from Him who is supreme,

falls to a low condition; and then comes to pass what is written:

"Thou castedst them down when they lifted up themselves."[95] For

he does not say, "when they had been lifted up," as if first they

were exalted, and then afterwards cast down; but "when they lifted

up themselves" even then they were cast down,--that is to say,

the very lifting up was already a fall. And therefore it is that

humility is specially recommended to the city of God as it sojourns

in this world, and is specially exhibited in the city of God, and

in the person of Christ its King; while the contrary vice of pride,

according to the testimony of the sacred writings, specially rules

his adversary the devil. And certainly this is the great difference

which distinguishes the two cities of which we speak, the one

being the society of the godly men, the other of the ungodly, each

associated with the angels that adhere to their party, and the one

guided and fashioned by love of self, the other by love of God.

The devil, then, would not have ensnared man in the open and manifest

sin of doing what God had forbidden, had man not already begun to live

for himself. It was this that made him listen with pleasure to the

words, "Ye shall be as gods,"[96] which they would much more readily

have accomplished by obediently adhering to their supreme and true

end than by proudly living to themselves. For created gods are gods

not by virtue of what is in themselves, but by a participation of the

true God. By craving to be more, man becomes less; and by aspiring

to be self-sufficing, he fell away from Him who truly suffices him.

Accordingly, this wicked desire which prompts man to please himself as

if he were himself light, and which thus turns him away from that light

by which, had he followed it, he would himself have become light,--this

wicked desire, I say, already secretly existed in him, and the open

sin was but its consequence. For that is true which is written, "Pride

goeth before destruction, and before honour is humility;"[97] that is

to say, secret ruin precedes open ruin, while the former is not counted

ruin. For who counts exaltation ruin, though no sooner is the Highest

forsaken than a fall is begun? But who does not recognise it as ruin,

when there occurs an evident and indubitable transgression of the

commandment? And consequently, God's prohibition had reference to such

an act as, when committed, could not be defended on any pretence of

doing what was righteous.[98] And I make bold to say that it is useful

for the proud to fall into an open and indisputable transgression, and

so displease themselves, as already, by pleasing themselves, they had

fallen. For Peter was in a healthier condition when he wept and was

dissatisfied with himself, than when he boldly presumed and satisfied

himself. And this is averred by the sacred Psalmist when he says, "Fill

their faces with shame, that they may seek Thy name, O Lord;"[99] that

is, that they who have pleased themselves in seeking their own glory

may be pleased and satisfied with Thee in seeking Thy glory.

14. \_Of the pride in the sin, which was worse than the sin itself.\_

But it is a worse and more damnable pride which casts about for

the shelter of an excuse even in manifest sins, as these our first

parents did, of whom the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I

did eat;" and the man said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with

me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."[100] Here there is no

word of begging pardon, no word of entreaty for healing. For though

they do not, like Cain, deny that they have perpetrated the deed, yet

their pride seeks to refer its wickedness to another,--the woman's

pride to the serpent, the man's to the woman. But where there is a

plain transgression of a divine commandment, this is rather to accuse

than to excuse oneself. For the fact that the woman sinned on the

serpent's persuasion, and the man at the woman's offer, did not make

the transgression less, as if there were any one whom we ought rather

to believe or yield to than God.

15. \_Of the justice of the punishment with which our first parents

were visited for their disobedience.\_

Therefore, because the sin was a despising of the authority of

God,--who had created man; who had made him in His own image; who had

set him above the other animals; who had placed him in Paradise; who

had enriched him with abundance of every kind and of safety; who had

laid upon him neither many, nor great, nor difficult commandments,

but, in order to make a wholesome obedience easy to him, had given

him a single very brief and very light precept by which He reminded

that creature whose service was to be free that He was Lord,--it was

just that condemnation followed, and condemnation such that man, who

by keeping the commandments should have been spiritual even in his

flesh, became fleshly even in his spirit; and as in his pride he had

sought to be his own satisfaction, God in His justice abandoned him

to himself, not to live in the absolute independence he affected, but

instead of the liberty he desired, to live dissatisfied with himself

in a hard and miserable bondage to him to whom by sinning he had

yielded himself, doomed in spite of himself to die in body as he had

willingly become dead in spirit, condemned even to eternal death (had

not the grace of God delivered him) because he had forsaken eternal

life. Whoever thinks such punishment either excessive or unjust

shows his inability to measure the great iniquity of sinning where

sin might so easily have been avoided. For as Abraham's obedience is

with justice pronounced to be great, because the thing commanded, to

kill his son, was very difficult, so in Paradise the disobedience

was the greater, because the difficulty of that which was commanded

was imperceptible. And as the obedience of the second Man was the

more laudable because He became obedient even "unto death,"[101] so

the disobedience of the first man was the more detestable because he

became disobedient even unto death. For where the penalty annexed

to disobedience is great, and the thing commanded by the Creator is

easy, who can sufficiently estimate how great a wickedness it is, in

a matter so easy, not to obey the authority of so great a power, even

when that power deters with so terrible a penalty?

In short, to say all in a word, what but disobedience was the

punishment of disobedience in that sin? For what else is man's

misery but his own disobedience to himself, so that in consequence

of his not being willing to do what he could do, he now wills to do

what he cannot? For though he could not do all things in Paradise

before he sinned, yet he wished to do only what he could do, and

therefore he could do all things he wished. But now, as we recognise

in his offspring, and as divine Scripture testifies, "Man is like

to vanity."[102] For who can count how many things he wishes which

he cannot do, so long as he is disobedient to himself, that is, so

long as his mind and his flesh do not obey his will? For in spite

of himself his mind is both frequently disturbed, and his flesh

suffers, and grows old, and dies; and in spite of ourselves we suffer

whatever else we suffer, and which we would not suffer if our nature

absolutely and in all its parts obeyed our will. But is it not the

infirmities of the flesh which hamper it in its service? Yet what

does it matter \_how\_ its service is hampered, so long as the fact

remains, that by the just retribution of the sovereign God whom we

refused to be subject to and serve, our flesh, which was subjected

to us, now torments us by insubordination, although our disobedience

brought trouble on ourselves, not upon God? For He is not in need of

our service as we of our body's; and therefore what we did was no

punishment to Him, but what we receive is so to us. And the pains

which are called bodily are pains of the soul in and from the body.

For what pain or desire can the flesh feel by itself and without

the soul? But when the flesh is said to desire or to suffer, it is

meant, as we have explained, that the man does so, or some part of

the soul which is affected by the sensation of the flesh, whether

a harsh sensation causing pain, or gentle, causing pleasure. But

pain in the flesh is only a discomfort of the soul arising from the

flesh, and a kind of shrinking from its suffering, as the pain of

the soul which is called sadness is a shrinking from those things

which have happened to us in spite of ourselves. But sadness is

frequently preceded by fear, which is itself in the soul, not in the

flesh; while bodily pain is not preceded by any kind of fear of the

flesh, which can be felt in the flesh before the pain. But pleasure

is preceded by a certain appetite which is felt in the flesh like

a craving, as hunger and thirst and that generative appetite which

is most commonly identified with the name "lust," though this is the

generic word for all desires. For anger itself was defined by the

ancients as nothing else than the lust of revenge;[103] although

sometimes a man is angry even at inanimate objects which cannot feel

his vengeance, as when one breaks a pen, or crushes a quill that

writes badly. Yet even this, though less reasonable, is in its way

a lust of revenge, and is, so to speak, a mysterious kind of shadow

of [the great law of] retribution, that they who do evil should

suffer evil. There is therefore a lust for revenge, which is called

anger; there is a lust of money, which goes by the name of avarice;

there is a lust of conquering, no matter by what means, which is

called opinionativeness; there is a lust of applause, which is named

boasting. There are many and various lusts, of which some have names

of their own, while others have not. For who could readily give a

name to the lust of ruling, which yet has a powerful influence in the

soul of tyrants, as civil wars bear witness?

16. \_Of the evil of lust,--a word which, though applicable to many

vices, is specially appropriated to sexual uncleanness.\_

Although, therefore, lust may have many objects, yet when no object

is specified, the word lust usually suggests to the mind the lustful

excitement of the organs of generation. And this lust not only takes

possession of the whole body and outward members, but also makes

itself felt within, and moves the whole man with a passion in which

mental emotion is mingled with bodily appetite, so that the pleasure

which results is the greatest of all bodily pleasures. So possessing

indeed is this pleasure, that at the moment of time in which it is

consummated, all mental activity is suspended. What friend of wisdom

and holy joys, who, being married, but knowing, as the apostle says,

"how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the

disease of desire, as the Gentiles who know not God,"[104] would

not prefer, if this were possible, to beget children without this

lust, so that in this function of begetting offspring the members

created for this purpose should not be stimulated by the heat of

lust, but should be actuated by his volition, in the same way as his

other members serve him for their respective ends? But even those

who delight in this pleasure are not moved to it at their own will,

whether they confine themselves to lawful or transgress to unlawful

pleasures; but sometimes this lust importunes them in spite of

themselves, and sometimes fails them when they desire to feel it, so

that though lust rages in the mind, it stirs not in the body. Thus,

strangely enough, this emotion not only fails to obey the legitimate

desire to beget offspring, but also refuses to serve lascivious lust;

and though it often opposes its whole combined energy to the soul

that resists it, sometimes also it is divided against itself, and

while it moves the soul, leaves the body unmoved.

17. \_Of the nakedness of our first parents, which they saw after

their base and shameful sin.\_

Justly is shame very specially connected with this lust; justly,

too, these members themselves, being moved and restrained not at

our will, but by a certain independent autocracy, so to speak, are

called "shameful." Their condition was different before sin. For as

it is written, "They were naked and were not ashamed,"[105]--not that

their nakedness was unknown to them, but because nakedness was not

yet shameful, because not yet did lust move those members without the

will's consent; not yet did the flesh by its disobedience testify

against the disobedience of man. For they were not created blind,

as the unenlightened vulgar fancy;[106] for Adam saw the animals to

whom he gave names, and of Eve we read, "The woman saw that the tree

was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes."[107] Their

eyes, therefore, were open, but were not open to this, that is to

say, were not observant so as to recognise what was conferred upon

them by the garment of grace, for they had no consciousness of their

members warring against their will. But when they were stripped of

this grace,[108] that their disobedience might be punished by fit

retribution, there began in the movement of their bodily members a

shameless novelty which made nakedness indecent: it at once made them

observant and made them ashamed. And therefore, after they violated

God's command by open transgression, it is written: "And the eyes

of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and

they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."[109]

"The eyes of them both were opened," not to see, for already they

saw, but to discern between the good they had lost and the evil into

which they had fallen. And therefore also the tree itself which they

were forbidden to touch was called the tree of the knowledge of good

and evil from this circumstance, that if they ate of it it would

impart to them this knowledge. For the discomfort of sickness reveals

the pleasure of health. "They knew," therefore, "that they were

naked,"--naked of that grace which prevented them from being ashamed

of bodily nakedness while the law of sin offered no resistance to

their mind. And thus they obtained a knowledge which they would have

lived in blissful ignorance of, had they, in trustful obedience to

God, declined to commit that offence which involved them in the

experience of the hurtful effects of unfaithfulness and disobedience.

And therefore, being ashamed of the disobedience of their own flesh,

which witnessed to their disobedience while it punished it, "they

sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons," that is,

cinctures for their privy parts; for some interpreters have rendered

the word by \_succinctoria\_. \_Campestria\_ is, indeed, a Latin word,

but it is used of the drawers or aprons used for a similar purpose by

the young men who stripped for exercise in the \_campus\_; hence those

who were so girt were commonly called \_campestrati\_. Shame modestly

covered that which lust disobediently moved in opposition to the

will which was thus punished for its own disobedience. Consequently

all nations, being propagated from that one stock, have so strong an

instinct to cover the shameful parts, that some barbarians do not

uncover them even in the bath, but wash with their drawers on. In the

dark solitudes of India also, though some philosophers go naked, and

are therefore called gymnosophists, yet they make an exception in the

case of these members, and cover them.

18. \_Of the shame which attends all sexual intercourse.\_

Lust requires for its consummation darkness and secrecy; and this

not only when unlawful intercourse is desired, but even such

fornication as the earthly city has legalized. Where there is no

fear of punishment, these permitted pleasures still shrink from the

public eye. Even where provision is made for this lust, secrecy also

is provided; and while lust found it easy to remove the prohibitions

of law, shamelessness found it impossible to lay aside the veil of

retirement. For even shameless men call this shameful; and though

they love the pleasure, dare not display it. What! does not even

conjugal intercourse, sanctioned as it is by law for the propagation

of children, legitimate and honourable though it be, does it not seek

retirement from every eye? Before the bridegroom fondles his bride,

does he not exclude the attendants, and even the paranymphs, and such

friends as the closest ties have admitted to the bridal chamber?

The greatest master of Roman eloquence says, that all right actions

wish to be set in the light, \_i.e.\_ desire to be known. This right

action, however, has such a desire to be known, that yet it blushes

to be seen. Who does not know what passes between husband and wife

that children may be born? Is it not for this purpose that wives are

married with such ceremony? And yet, when this well-understood act

is gone about for the procreation of children, not even the children

themselves, who may already have been born to them, are suffered to

be witnesses. This right action seeks the light, in so far as it

seeks to be known, but yet dreads being seen. And why so, if not

because that which is by nature fitting and decent is so done as to

be accompanied with a shame-begetting penalty of sin?

19. \_That it is now necessary, as it was not before man sinned,

to bridle anger and lust by the restraining influence of wisdom.\_

Hence it is that even the philosophers who have approximated to the

truth have avowed that anger and lust are vicious mental emotions,

because, even when exercised towards objects which wisdom does not

prohibit, they are moved in an ungoverned and inordinate manner, and

consequently need the regulation of mind and reason. And they assert

that this third part of the mind is posted as it were in a kind of

citadel, to give rule to these other parts, so that, while it rules and

they serve, man's righteousness is preserved without a breach.[110]

These parts, then, which they acknowledge to be vicious even in a wise

and temperate man, so that the mind, by its composing and restraining

influence, must bridle and recall them from those objects towards which

they are unlawfully moved, and give them access to those which the

law of wisdom sanctions,--that anger, \_e.g.\_, may be allowed for the

enforcement of a just authority, and lust for the duty of propagating

offspring,--these parts, I say, were not vicious in Paradise before

sin, for they were never moved in opposition to a holy will towards

any object from which it was necessary that they should be withheld

by the restraining bridle of reason. For though now they are moved in

this way, and are regulated by a bridling and restraining power, which

those who live temperately, justly, and godly exercise, sometimes with

ease, and sometimes with greater difficulty, this is not the sound

health of nature, but the weakness which results from sin. And how is

it that shame does not hide the acts and words dictated by anger or

other emotions, as it covers the motions of lust, unless because the

members of the body which we employ for accomplishing them are moved,

not by the emotions themselves, but by the authority of the consenting

will? For he who in his anger rails at or even strikes some one, could

not do so were not his tongue and hand moved by the authority of the

will, as also they are moved when there is no anger. But the organs

of generation are so subjected to the rule of lust, that they have no

motion but what it communicates. It is this we are ashamed of; it is

this which blushingly hides from the eyes of onlookers. And rather

will a man endure a crowd of witnesses when he is unjustly venting his

anger on some one, than the eye of one man when he innocently copulates

with his wife.

20. \_Of the foolish beastliness of the Cynics.\_

It is this which those canine or cynic[111] philosophers have

overlooked, when they have, in violation of the modest instincts

of men, boastfully proclaimed their unclean and shameless opinion,

worthy indeed of dogs, viz., that as the matrimonial act is

legitimate, no one should be ashamed to perform it openly, in the

street or in any public place. Instinctive shame has overborne this

wild fancy. For though it is related[112] that Diogenes once dared to

put his opinion in practice, under the impression that his sect would

be all the more famous if his egregious shamelessness were deeply

graven in the memory of mankind, yet this example was not afterwards

followed. Shame had more influence with them, to make them blush

before men, than error to make them affect a resemblance to dogs. And

possibly, even in the case of Diogenes, and those who did imitate

him, there was but an appearance and pretence of copulation, and not

the reality. Even at this day there are still Cynic philosophers to

be seen; for these are Cynics who are not content with being clad

in the \_pallium\_, but also carry a club; yet no one of them dares

to do this that we speak of. If they did, they would be spat upon,

not to say stoned, by the mob. Human nature, then, is without doubt

ashamed of this lust; and justly so, for the insubordination of these

members, and their defiance of the will, are the clear testimony

of the punishment of man's first sin. And it was fitting that this

should appear specially in those parts by which is generated that

nature which has been altered for the worse by that first and great

sin,--that sin from whose evil connection no one can escape, unless

God's grace expiate in him individually that which was perpetrated to

the destruction of all in common, when all were in one man, and which

was avenged by God's justice.

21. \_That man's transgression did not annul the blessing of fecundity

pronounced upon man before he sinned, but infected it with the

disease of lust.\_

Far be it, then, from us to suppose that our first parents in

Paradise felt that lust which caused them afterwards to blush and

hide their nakedness, or that by its means they should have fulfilled

the benediction of God, "Increase and multiply and replenish the

earth;"[113] for it was after sin that lust began. It was after sin

that our nature, having lost the power it had over the whole body,

but not having lost all shame, perceived, noticed, blushed at, and

covered it. But that blessing upon marriage, which encouraged them to

increase and multiply and replenish the earth, though, it continued

even after they had sinned, was yet given before they sinned, in

order that the procreation of children might be recognised as part of

the glory of marriage, and not of the punishment of sin. But now, men

being ignorant of the blessedness of Paradise, suppose that children

could not have been begotten there in any other way than they know

them to be begotten now, \_i.e.\_ by lust, at which even honourable

marriage blushes; some not simply rejecting, but sceptically deriding

the divine Scriptures, in which we read that our first parents,

after they sinned, were ashamed of their nakedness, and covered it;

while others, though they accept and honour Scripture, yet conceive

that this expression, "Increase and multiply," refers not to carnal

fecundity, because a similar expression is used of the soul in the

words, "Thou wilt multiply me with strength in my soul;"[114] and

so, too, in the words which follow in Genesis, "And replenish the

earth, and subdue it," they understand by the earth the body which

the soul fills with its presence, and which it rules over when it

is multiplied in strength. And they hold that children could no

more then than now be begotten without lust, which, after sin, was

kindled, observed, blushed for, and covered; and even that children

would not have been born in Paradise, but only outside of it, as in

fact it turned out. For it was after they were expelled from it that

they came together to beget children, and begot them.

22. \_Of the conjugal union as it was originally instituted and

blessed by God.\_

But we, for our part, have no manner of doubt that to increase and

multiply and replenish the earth in virtue of the blessing of God,

is a gift of marriage as God instituted it from the beginning before

man sinned, when He created them male and female,--in other words,

two sexes manifestly distinct. And it was this work of God on which

His blessing was pronounced. For no sooner had Scripture said, "Male

and female created He them,"[115] than it immediately continues, "And

God blessed them, and God said unto them, Increase, and multiply,

and replenish the earth, and subdue it," etc. And though all these

things may not unsuitably be interpreted in a spiritual sense, yet

"male and female" cannot be understood of two things in one man,

as if there were in him one thing which rules, another which is

ruled; but it is quite clear that they were created male and female,

with bodies of different sexes, for the very purpose of begetting

offspring, and so increasing, multiplying, and replenishing the

earth; and it is great folly to oppose so plain a fact. It was not

of the spirit which commands and the body which obeys, nor of the

rational soul which rules and the irrational desire which is ruled,

nor of the contemplative virtue which is supreme and the active which

is subject, nor of the understanding of the mind and the sense of the

body, but plainly of the matrimonial union by which the sexes are

mutually bound together, that our Lord, when asked whether it were

lawful for any cause to put away one's wife (for on account of the

hardness of the hearts of the Israelites Moses permitted a bill of

divorcement to be given), answered and said, "Have ye not read that

He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and

said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall

cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they

are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined

together, let not man put asunder."[116] It is certain, then, that

from the first men were created, as we see and know them to be now,

of two sexes, male and female, and that they are called one, either

on account of the matrimonial union, or on account of the origin of

the woman, who was created from the side of the man. And it is by

this original example, which God Himself instituted, that the apostle

admonishes all husbands to love their own wives in particular.[117]

23. \_Whether generation should have taken place even in Paradise

had man not sinned, or whether there should have been any

contention there between chastity and lust.\_

But he who says that there should have been neither copulation nor

generation but for sin, virtually says that man's sin was necessary

to complete the number of the saints. For if these two by not sinning

should have continued to live alone, because, as is supposed, they

could not have begotten children had they not sinned, then certainly

sin was necessary in order that there might be not only two but many

righteous men. And if this cannot be maintained without absurdity,

we must rather believe that the number of the saints fit to complete

this most blessed city would have been as great though no one had

sinned, as it is now that the grace of God gathers its citizens out

of the multitude of sinners, so long as the children of this world

generate and are generated.[118]

And therefore that marriage, worthy of the happiness of Paradise,

should have had desirable fruit without the shame of lust, had

there been no sin. But how that could be, there is now no example

to teach us. Nevertheless, it ought not to seem incredible that

one member might serve the will without lust then, since so many

serve it now. Do we now move our feet and hands when we will to do

the things we would by means of these members? do we meet with no

resistance in them, but perceive that they are ready servants of the

will, both in our own case and in that of others, and especially of

artisans employed in mechanical operations, by which the weakness

and clumsiness of nature become, through industrious exercise,

wonderfully dexterous? and shall we not believe that, like as all

those members obediently serve the will, so also should the members

have discharged the function of generation, though lust, the award

of disobedience, had been awanting? Did not Cicero, in discussing

the difference of governments in his \_De Republica\_, adopt a simile

from human nature, and say that we command our bodily members as

children, they are so obedient; but that the vicious parts of the

soul must be treated as slaves, and be coerced with a more stringent

authority? And no doubt, in the order of nature, the soul is more

excellent than the body; and yet the soul commands the body more

easily than itself. Nevertheless this lust, of which we at present

speak, is the more shameful on this account, because the soul is

therein neither master of itself, so as not to lust at all, nor of

the body, so as to keep the members under the control of the will;

for if they were thus ruled, there should be no shame. But now the

soul is ashamed that the body, which by nature is inferior and

subject to it, should resist its authority. For in the resistance

experienced by the soul in the other emotions there is less shame,

because the resistance is from itself, and thus, when it is conquered

by itself, itself is the conqueror, although the conquest is

inordinate and vicious, because accomplished by those parts of the

soul which ought to be subject to reason, yet, being accomplished

by its own parts and energies, the conquest is, as I say, its own.

For when the soul conquers itself to a due subordination, so that

its unreasonable motions are controlled by reason, while it again is

subject to God, this is a conquest virtuous and praiseworthy. Yet

there is less shame when the soul is resisted by its own vicious

parts than when its will and order are resisted by the body, which is

distinct from and inferior to it, and dependent on it for life itself.

But so long as the will retains under its authority the other

members, without which the members excited by lust to resist the

will cannot accomplish what they seek, chastity is preserved,

and the delight of sin foregone. And certainly, had not culpable

disobedience been visited with penal disobedience, the marriage of

Paradise should have been ignorant of this struggle and rebellion,

this quarrel between will and lust, that the will may be satisfied

and lust restrained, but those members, like all the rest, should

have obeyed the will. The field of generation[119] should have been

sown by the organ created for this purpose, as the earth is sown by

the hand. And whereas now, as we essay to investigate this subject

more exactly, modesty hinders us, and compels us to ask pardon of

chaste ears, there would have been no cause to do so, but we could

have discoursed freely, and without fear of seeming obscene, upon

all those points which occur to one who meditates on the subject.

There would not have been even words which could be called obscene,

but all that might be said of these members would have been as pure

as what is said of the other parts of the body. Whoever, then, comes

to the perusal of these pages with unchaste mind, let him blame his

disposition, not his nature; let him brand the actings of his own

impurity, not the words which necessity forces us to use, and for

which every pure and pious reader or hearer will very readily pardon

me, while I expose the folly of that scepticism which argues solely

on the ground of its own experience, and has no faith in anything

beyond. He who is not scandalized at the apostle's censure of the

horrible wickedness of the women who "changed the natural use into

that which is against nature,"[120] will read all this without being

shocked, especially as we are not, like Paul, citing and censuring

a damnable uncleanness, but are explaining, so far as we can, human

generation, while with Paul we avoid all obscenity of language.

24. \_That if men had remained innocent and obedient in Paradise,

the generative organs should have been in subjection to the

will as the other members are.\_

The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it,

as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not

excited by lust. For we move at will not only those members which are

furnished with joints of solid bone, as the hands, feet, and fingers,

but we move also at will those which are composed of slack and soft

nerves: we can put them in motion, or stretch them out, or bend and

twist them, or contract and stiffen them, as we do with the muscles

of the mouth and face. The lungs, which are the very tenderest of

the viscera except the brain, and are therefore carefully sheltered

in the cavity of the chest, yet for all purposes of inhaling and

exhaling the breath, and of uttering and modulating the voice, are

obedient to the will when we breathe, exhale, speak, shout, or sing,

just as the bellows obey the smith or the organist. I will not press

the fact that some animals have a natural power to move a single spot

of the skin with which their whole body is covered, if they have felt

on it anything they wish to drive off,--a power so great, that by

this shivering tremor of the skin they can not only shake off flies

that have settled on them, but even spears that have fixed in their

flesh. Man, it is true, has not this power; but is this any reason

for supposing that God could not give it to such creatures as He

wished to possess it? And therefore man himself also might very well

have enjoyed absolute power over his members had he not forfeited it

by his disobedience; for it was not difficult for God to form him

so that what is now moved in his body only by lust should have been

moved only at will.

We know, too, that some men are differently constituted from others,

and have some rare and remarkable faculty of doing with their body

what other men can by no effort do, and, indeed, scarcely believe

when they hear of others doing. There are persons who can move their

ears, either one at a time, or both together. There are some who,

without moving the head, can bring the hair down upon the forehead,

and move the whole scalp backwards and forwards at pleasure. Some,

by lightly pressing their stomach, bring up an incredible quantity

and variety of things they have swallowed, and produce whatever they

please, quite whole, as if out of a bag. Some so accurately mimic

the voices of birds and beasts and other men, that, unless they

are seen, the difference cannot be told. Some have such command of

their bowels, that they can break wind continuously at pleasure,

so as to produce the effect of singing. I myself have known a man

who was accustomed to sweat whenever he wished. It is well known

that some weep when they please, and shed a flood of tears. But

far more incredible is that which some of our brethren saw quite

recently. There was a presbyter called Restitutus, in the parish of

the Calamensian[121] Church, who, as often as he pleased (and he

was asked to do this by those who desired to witness so remarkable

a phenomenon), on some one imitating the wailings of mourners,

became so insensible, and lay in a state so like death, that not

only had he no feeling when they pinched and pricked him, but even

when fire was applied to him, and he was burned by it, he had no

sense of pain except afterwards from the wound. And that his body

remained motionless, not by reason of his self-command, but because

he was insensible, was proved by the fact that he breathed no more

than a dead man; and yet he said that, when any one spoke with more

than ordinary distinctness, he heard the voice, but as if it were a

long way off. Seeing, then, that even in this mortal and miserable

life the body serves some men by many remarkable movements and

moods beyond the ordinary course of nature, what reason is there

for doubting that, before man was involved by his sin in this weak

and corruptible condition, his members might have served his will

for the propagation of offspring without lust? Man has been given

over to himself because he abandoned God, while he sought to be

self-satisfying; and disobeying God, he could not obey even himself.

Hence it is that he is involved in the obvious misery of being unable

to live as he wishes. For if he lived as he wished, he would think

himself blessed; but he could not be so if he lived wickedly.

25. \_Of true blessedness, which this present life cannot enjoy.\_

However, if we look at this a little more closely, we see that no one

lives as he wishes but the blessed, and that no one is blessed but the

righteous. But even the righteous himself does not live as he wishes,

until he has arrived where he cannot die, be deceived, or injured, and

until he is assured that this shall be his eternal condition. For this

nature demands; and nature is not fully and perfectly blessed till it

attains what it seeks. But what man is at present able to live as he

wishes, when it is not in his power so much as to live? He wishes to

live, he is compelled to die. How, then, does he live as he wishes who

does not live as long as he wishes? or if he wishes to die, how can

he live as he wishes, since he does not wish even to live? Or if he

wishes to die, not because he dislikes life, but that after death he

may live better, still he is not yet living as he wishes, but only has

the prospect of so living when, through death, he reaches that which

he wishes. But admit that he lives as he wishes, because he has done

violence to himself, and forced himself not to wish what he cannot

obtain, and to wish only what he can (as Terence has it, "Since you

cannot do what you will, will what you can"[122]), is he therefore

blessed because he is patiently wretched? For a blessed life is

possessed only by the man who loves it. If it is loved and possessed,

it must necessarily be more ardently loved than all besides; for

whatever else is loved must be loved for the sake of the blessed life.

And if it is loved as it deserves to be,--and the man is not blessed

who does not love the blessed life as it deserves,--then he who so

loves it cannot but wish it to be eternal. Therefore it shall then only

be blessed when it is eternal.

26. \_That we are to believe that in Paradise our first parents

begat offspring without blushing.\_

In Paradise, then, man lived as he desired so long as he desired

what God had commanded. He lived in the enjoyment of God, and was

good by God's goodness; he lived without any want, and had it in his

power so to live eternally. He had food that he might not hunger,

drink that he might not thirst, the tree of life that old age might

not waste him. There was in his body no corruption, nor seed of

corruption, which could produce in him any unpleasant sensation.

He feared no inward disease, no outward accident. Soundest health

blessed his body, absolute tranquillity his soul. As in Paradise

there was no excessive heat or cold, so its inhabitants were exempt

from the vicissitudes of fear and desire. No sadness of any kind was

there, nor any foolish joy; true gladness ceaselessly flowed from

the presence of God, who was loved "out of a pure heart, and a good

conscience, and faith unfeigned."[123] The honest love of husband

and wife made a sure harmony between them. Body and spirit worked

harmoniously together, and the commandment was kept without labour.

No languor made their leisure wearisome; no sleepiness interrupted

their desire to labour.[124] In tanta facilitate rerum et felicitate

hominum, absit ut suspicemur, non potuisse prolem seri sine libidinis

morbo: sed eo voluntatis nutu moverentur illa membra quo cætera, et

sine ardoris illecebroso stimulo cum tranquillitate animi et corporis

nulla corruptione integritatis infunderetur gremio maritus uxoris.

Neque enim quia experientia probari non potest, ideo credendum non

est; quando illas corporis partes non ageret turbidus calor, sed

spontanea potestas, sicut opus esset, adhiberet; ita tunc potuisse

utero conjugis salva integritate feminei genitalis virile semen

immitti, sicut nunc potest eadem integritate salva ex utero virginis

fluxus menstrui cruoris emitti. Eadem quippe via posset illud injici,

qua hoc potest ejici. Ut enim ad pariendum non doloris gemitus, sed

maturitatis impulsus feminea viscera relaxaret: sic ad fœtandum et

concipiendum non libidinis appetitus, sed voluntarius usus naturam

utramque conjungeret. We speak of things which are now shameful, and

although we try, as well as we are able, to conceive them as they

were before they became shameful, yet necessity compels us rather to

limit our discussion to the bounds set by modesty than to extend it

as our moderate faculty of discourse might suggest. For since that

which I have been speaking of was not experienced even by those who

might have experienced it,--I mean our first parents (for sin and

its merited banishment from Paradise anticipated this passionless

generation on their part),--when sexual intercourse is spoken of now,

it suggests to men's thoughts not such a placid obedience to the will

as is conceivable in our first parents, but such violent acting of

lust as they themselves have experienced. And therefore modesty shuts

my mouth, although my mind conceives the matter clearly. But Almighty

God, the supreme and supremely good Creator of all natures, who aids

and rewards good wills, while He abandons and condemns the bad, and

rules both, was not destitute of a plan by which He might people

His city with the fixed number of citizens which His wisdom had

foreordained even out of the condemned human race, discriminating

them not now by merits, since the whole mass was condemned as if in a

vitiated root, but by grace, and showing, not only in the case of the

redeemed, but also in those who were not delivered, how much grace He

has bestowed upon them. For every one acknowledges that he has been

rescued from evil, not by deserved, but by gratuitous goodness, when

he is singled out from the company of those with whom he might justly

have borne a common punishment, and is allowed to go scathless.

Why, then, should God not have created those whom He foresaw would

sin, since He was able to show in and by them both what their guilt

merited, and what His grace bestowed, and since, under His creating

and disposing hand, even the perverse disorder of the wicked could

not pervert the right order of things?

27. \_Of the angels and men who sinned, and that their wickedness

did not disturb the order of God's providence.\_

The sins of men and angels do nothing to impede the "great works

of the Lord which accomplish His will."[125] For He who by His

providence and omnipotence distributes to every one his own portion,

is able to make good use not only of the good, but also of the

wicked. And thus making a good use of the wicked angel, who, in

punishment of his first wicked volition, was doomed to an obduracy

that prevents him now from willing any good, why should not God have

permitted him to tempt the first man, who had been created upright,

that is to say, with a good will? For he had been so constituted,

that if he looked to God for help, man's goodness should defeat

the angel's wickedness; but if by proud self-pleasing he abandoned

God, his Creator and Sustainer, he should be conquered. If his

will remained upright, through leaning on God's help, he should

be rewarded; if it became wicked, by forsaking God, he should be

punished. But even this trusting in God's help could not itself

be accomplished without God's help, although man had it in his

own power to relinquish the benefits of divine grace by pleasing

himself. For as it is not in our power to live in this world without

sustaining ourselves by food, while it is in our power to refuse this

nourishment and cease to live, as those do who kill themselves, so

it was not in man's power, even in Paradise, to live as he ought

without God's help; but it was in his power to live wickedly,

though thus he should cut short his happiness, and incur very just

punishment. Since, then, God was not ignorant that man would fall,

why should He not have suffered him to be tempted by an angel who

hated and envied him? It was not, indeed, that He was unaware that he

should be conquered, but because He foresaw that by the man's seed,

aided by divine grace, this same devil himself should be conquered,

to the greater glory of the saints. All was brought about in such a

manner, that neither did any future event escape God's foreknowledge,

nor did His foreknowledge compel any one to sin, and so as to

demonstrate in the experience of the intelligent creation, human

and angelic, how great a difference there is between the private

presumption of the creature and the Creator's protection. For who

will dare to believe or say that it was not in God's power to prevent

both angels and men from sinning? But God preferred to leave this

in their power, and thus to show both what evil could be wrought by

their pride, and what good by His grace.

28. \_Of the nature of the two cities, the earthly and the

heavenly.\_

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly

by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by

the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a

word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks

glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the

witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory;

the other says to its God, "Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of

mine head."[126] In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues

are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the

subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the

former take thought for all. The one delights in its own strength,

represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God,

"I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength."[127] And therefore the wise

men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit

to their own bodies or souls, or both, and those who have known God

"glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in

their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing

themselves to be wise,"--that is, glorying in their own wisdom, and

being possessed by pride,--"they became fools, and changed the glory

of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man,

and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." For they

were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images,

"and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who

is blessed for ever."[128] But in the other city there is no human

wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God,

and looks for its reward in the society of the saints, of holy angels

as well as holy men, "that God may be all in all."[129]

FOOTNOTES:

[1] This book is referred to in another work of Augustine's (\_contra

Advers. Legis et Prophet.\_ i. 18), which was written about the year 420.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 39.

[3] Rom. iii. 20.

[4] Gal. iii. 11.

[5] John. i. 14.

[6] The Apollinarians.

[7] John. xx. 13.

[8] Gal. v. 19-21.

[9] Wisd. ix. 15.

[10] 2 Cor. iv. 16.

[11] 2 Cor. v. 1-4.

[12] \_Æneid\_, vi. 730-32.

[13] \_Ib.\_ 733, 734.

[14] On the punishment of the devil, see the \_De Agone Christi\_, 3-5,

and \_De Nat. Boni\_, 33.

[15] Rom. iii. 7.

[16] John xiv. 6.

[17] 1 Cor. iii. 3.

[18] 1 Cor. ii. 11-14.

[19] 1 Cor. iii. 1.

[20] Rom. iii. 20.

[21] Gen. xlvi. 27.

[22] See Augustine, \_De Hæres.\_ 46.

[23] \_Tusc. Quæst.\_ iv. 6.

[24] \_Æneid\_, vi. 719-21.

[25] Tit. i. 8, according to Greek and Vulgate.

[26] John xxi. 15-17. On these synonyms see the commentaries \_in loc.\_

[27] Ps. xi. 5.

[28] 1 John ii. 15

[29] 2 Tim. iii. 2.

[30] Phil. i. 23.

[31] Ps. cxix. 20.

[32] Wisd. vi. 20.

[33] Ps. xxxii. 11.

[34] Ps. iv. 7.

[35] Ps. xvi. 11.

[36] Phil. ii. 12.

[37] Rom. xi. 20.

[38] 2 Cor. xi. 3.

[39] \_Æneid\_, vi. 733.

[40] Isa. lvii. 21.

[41] Matt. vii. 12.

[42] Ecclus. vii. 13.

[43] Luke ii. 14.

[44] \_Cat.\_ i. 2.

[45] Ter. \_Andr.\_ ii. 1, 6.

[46] \_Æneid\_, vi. 733.

[47] \_Æneid\_, v. 278.

[48] 2 Cor. vii. 8-11.

[49] \_Tusc. Disp.\_ iii. 32.

[50] C. 4, 5.

[51] Rom. viii. 23.

[52] 1 Cor. xv. 54.

[53] Matt. xxiv. 12.

[54] Matt. x. 22.

[55] 1 John i. 8.

[56] 2 Cor. ix. 7.

[57] Gal. vi. 1.

[58] Ps. xxvi. 2.

[59] Matt. xxvi. 75.

[60] Jas. i. 2.

[61] 1 Cor. iv. 9.

[62] Phil. iii. 14.

[63] Rom. xii. 15.

[64] 2 Cor. vii. 5.

[65] Phil. i. 23.

[66] Rom. i. 11-13.

[67] 2 Cor. xi. 1-3.

[68] Rom. ix. 2.

[69] Rom. x. 3.

[70] 2 Cor. xii. 21.

[71] Mark iii. 5.

[72] John xi. 15.

[73] John xi. 35.

[74] Luke xxii. 15.

[75] Matt. xxvi. 38.

[76] Rom. i. 31.

[77] Ps. lxix. 20.

[78] Crantor, an Academic philosopher quoted by Cicero, \_Tusc.

Quæst.\_ iii. 6.

[79] 1 John i. 8.

[80] 1 John iv. 18.

[81] Rom. viii. 15.

[82] Ps. xix. 9.

[83] Ps. ix. 18.

[84] Matt. v. 28.

[85] Gen. i. 28.

[86] Gen. vi. 6, and 1 Sam. xv. 11.

[87] Eccles. vii. 29.

[88] John viii. 36.

[89] 1 Tim. ii. 14.

[90] Rom. v. 12.

[91] Gen. iii. 12.

[92] Ecclus. x. 13.

[93] Matt. vii. 18.

[94] \_Defecit.\_

[95] Ps. lxxiii. 18.

[96] Gen. iii. 5.

[97] Prov. xviii. 12.

[98] That is to say, it was an obvious and indisputable transgression.

[99] Ps. lxxxiii. 16.

[100] Gen. iii. 12, 13.

[101] Phil. ii. 8.

[102] Ps. cxliv. 4.

[103] Cicero, \_Tusc. Quæst.\_ iii. 6 and iv. 9. So Aristotle.

[104] 1 Thess. iv. 4.

[105] Gen. ii. 25.

[106] An error which arose from the words, "The eyes of them both

were opened," Gen. iii. 7.--See \_De Genesi ad lit.\_ ii. 40.

[107] Gen. iii. 6.

[108] This doctrine and phraseology of Augustine being important in

connection with his whole theory of the fall, we give some parallel

passages to show that the words are not used at random: \_De Genesi ad

lit.\_ xi. 41; \_De Corrept. et Gratia\_, xi. 31; and especially \_Cont.

Julian.\_ iv. 82.

[109] Gen. iii. 7.

[110] See Plato's \_Republic\_, book iv.

[111] The one word being the Latin form, the other the Greek, of the

same adjective.

[112] By Diogenes Laertius, vi. 69, and Cicero, \_De Offic.\_ i. 41.

[113] Gen. i. 28.

[114] Ps. cxxxviii. 3.

[115] Gen. i. 27, 28.

[116] Matt. xix. 4, 5.

[117] Eph. v. 25.

[118] Luke xx. 34.

[119] See Virgil, \_Georg.\_ iii. 136.

[120] Rom. i. 26.

[121] The position of Calama is described by Augustine as between

Constantine and Hippo, but nearer Hippo.--\_Contra Lit. Petil.\_ ii.

228. A full description of it is given in Poujoulat's \_Histoire de

S. Augustin\_, i. 340, who says it was one of the most important

towns of Numidia, eighteen leagues south of Hippo, and represented

by the modern Ghelma. It is to its bishop, Possidius, we owe the

contemporary \_Life of Augustine\_.

[122] \_Andr.\_ ii. 1, 5.

[123] 1 Tim. i. 5.

[124] Compare Basil's \_Homily on Paradise\_, and John Damascene, \_De

Fide Orthod.\_ ii. 11.

[125] Ps. cxi. 2.

[126] Ps. iii. 3.

[127] Ps. xviii. 1.

[128] Rom. i. 21-25.

[129] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

BOOK FIFTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

HAVING TREATED IN THE FOUR PRECEDING BOOKS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE TWO

CITIES, THE EARTHLY AND THE HEAVENLY, AUGUSTINE EXPLAINS THEIR

GROWTH AND PROGRESS IN THE FOUR BOOKS WHICH FOLLOW; AND, IN

ORDER TO DO SO, HE EXPLAINS THE CHIEF PASSAGES OF THE SACRED

HISTORY WHICH BEAR UPON THIS SUBJECT. IN THIS FIFTEENTH BOOK HE

OPENS THIS PART OF HIS WORK BY EXPLAINING THE EVENTS RECORDED

IN GENESIS FROM THE TIME OF CAIN AND ABEL TO THE DELUGE.

1. \_Of the two lines of the human race which from first to last

divide it.\_

OF the bliss of Paradise, of Paradise itself, and of the life of

our first parents there, and of their sin and punishment, many

have thought much, spoken much, written much. We ourselves, too,

have spoken of these things in the foregoing books, and have

written either what we read in the Holy Scriptures, or what we

could reasonably deduce from them. And were we to enter into a more

detailed investigation of these matters, an endless number of endless

questions would arise, which would involve us in a larger work than

the present occasion admits. We cannot be expected to find room for

replying to every question that may be started by unoccupied and

captious men, who are ever more ready to ask questions than capable

of understanding the answer. Yet I trust we have already done justice

to these great and difficult questions regarding the beginning of

the world, or of the soul, or of the human race itself. This race we

have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live

according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And

these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities

of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God,

and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil. This,

however, is their end, and of it we are to speak afterwards. At

present, as we have said enough about their origin, whether among

the angels, whose numbers we know not, or in the two first human

beings, it seems suitable to attempt an account of their career, from

the time when our two first parents began to propagate the race until

all human generation shall cease. For this whole time or world-age,

in which the dying give place and those who are born succeed, is the

career of these two cities concerning which we treat.

Of these two first parents of the human race, then, Cain was the

first-born, and he belonged to the city of men; after him was born

Abel, who belonged to the city of God. For as in the individual the

truth of the apostle's statement is discerned, "that is not first

which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that

which is spiritual,"[130] whence it comes to pass that each man,

being derived from a condemned stock, is first of all born of Adam

evil and carnal, and becomes good and spiritual only afterwards, when

he is grafted into Christ by regeneration: so was it in the human

race as a whole. When these two cities began to run their course by

a series of deaths and births, the citizen of this world was the

first-born, and after him the stranger in this world, the citizen

of the city of God, predestinated by grace, elected by grace, by

grace a stranger below, and by grace a citizen above. By grace,--for

so far as regards himself he is sprung from the same mass, all of

which is condemned in its origin; but God, like a potter (for this

comparison is introduced by the apostle judiciously, and not without

thought), of the same lump made one vessel to honour, another to

dishonour.[131] But first the vessel to dishonour was made, and after

it another to honour. For in each individual, as I have already said,

there is first of all that which is reprobate, that from which we

must begin, but in which we need not necessarily remain; afterwards

is that which is well-approved, to which we may by advancing attain,

and in which, when we have reached it, we may abide. Not, indeed,

that every wicked man shall be good, but that no one will be good

who was not first of all wicked; but the sooner any one becomes a

good man, the more speedily does he receive this title, and abolish

the old name in the new. Accordingly, it is recorded of Cain that he

built a city,[132] but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. For the

city of the saints is above, although here below it begets citizens,

in whom it sojourns till the time of its reign arrives, when it shall

gather together all in the day of the resurrection; and then shall

the promised kingdom be given to them, in which they shall reign with

their Prince, the King of the ages, time without end.

2. \_Of the children of the flesh and the children of the promise.\_

There was indeed on earth, so long as it was needed, a symbol and

foreshadowing image of this city, which served the purpose of

reminding men that such a city was to be, rather than of making it

present; and this image was itself called the holy city, as a symbol

of the future city, though not itself the reality. Of this city

which served as an image, and of that free city it typified, Paul

writes to the Galatians in these terms: "Tell me, ye that desire

to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written,

that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a

free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the

flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an

allegory:[133] for these are the two covenants; the one from the

mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this

Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now

is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is

above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written,

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou

that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than

she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the

children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh

persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and

her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son

of the free woman. And we, brethren, are not children of the bond

woman, but of the free, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made

us free."[134] This interpretation of the passage, handed down to

us with apostolic authority, shows how we ought to understand the

Scriptures of the two covenants--the old and the new. One portion of

the earthly city became an image of the heavenly city, not having a

significance of its own, but signifying another city, and therefore

serving, or "being in bondage." For it was founded not for its own

sake, but to prefigure another city; and this shadow of a city was

also itself foreshadowed by another preceding figure. For Sarah's

handmaid Agar, and her son, were an image of this image. And as the

shadows were to pass away when the full light came, Sarah, the free

woman, who prefigured the free city (which again was also prefigured

in another way by that shadow of a city Jerusalem), therefore said,

"Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman

shall not be heir with my son Isaac," or, as the apostle says, "with

the son of the free woman." In the earthly city, then, we find two

things--its own obvious presence, and its symbolic presentation of

the heavenly city. Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by

nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing

nature from sin; whence the former are called "vessels of wrath,"

the latter "vessels of mercy."[135] And this was typified in the two

sons of Abraham,--Ishmael, the son of Agar the handmaid, being born

according to the flesh, while Isaac was born of the free woman Sarah,

according to the promise. Both, indeed, were of Abraham's seed; but

the one was begotten by natural law, the other was given by gracious

promise. In the one birth, human action is revealed; in the other, a

divine kindness comes to light.

3. \_That Sarah's barrenness was made productive by God's grace.\_

Sarah, in fact, was barren; and, despairing of offspring, and being

resolved that she would have at least through her handmaid that

blessing she saw she could not in her own person procure, she gave her

handmaid to her husband, to whom she herself had been unable to bear

children. From him she required this conjugal duty, exercising her own

right in another's womb. And thus Ishmael was born according to the

common law of human generation, by sexual intercourse. Therefore it

is said that he was born "according to the flesh,"--not because such

births are not the gifts of God, nor His handiwork, whose creative

wisdom "reaches," as it is written, "from one end to another mightily,

and sweetly doth she order all things,"[136] but because, in a case in

which the gift of God, which was not due to men and was the gratuitous

largess of grace, was to be conspicuous, it was requisite that a son

be given in a way which no effort of nature could compass. Nature

denies children to persons of the age which Abraham and Sarah had now

reached; besides that, in Sarah's case, she was barren even in her

prime. This nature, so constituted that offspring could not be looked

for, symbolized the nature of the human race vitiated by sin and by

just consequence condemned, which deserves no future felicity. Fitly,

therefore, does Isaac, the child of promise, typify the children of

grace, the citizens of the free city, who dwell together in everlasting

peace, in which self-love and self-will have no place, but a

ministering love that rejoices in the common joy of all, of many hearts

makes one, that is to say, secures a perfect concord.

4. \_Of the conflict and peace of the earthly city.\_

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no

longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty),

has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such

things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its

devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself

by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either

life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against

another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself

in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with

pride, its victory is life-destroying; but if it turns its thoughts

upon the common casualties of our mortal condition, and is rather

anxious concerning the disasters that may befall it than elated with

the successes already achieved, this victory, though of a higher

kind, is still only short-lived; for it cannot abidingly rule over

those whom it has victoriously subjugated. But the things which this

city desires cannot justly be said to be evil, for it is itself,

in its own kind, better than all other human good. For it desires

earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes

war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and

there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not

while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment

of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace

is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a

glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which

had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and

style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are good things, and

without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things

of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace

never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things

that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them

better than those things which are believed to be better,--if this be

so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase.

5. \_Of the fratricidal act of the founder of the earthly city, and

the corresponding crime of the founder of Rome.\_

Thus the founder of the earthly city was a fratricide. Overcome with

envy, he slew his own brother, a citizen of the eternal city, and a

sojourner on earth. So that we cannot be surprised that this first

specimen, or, as the Greeks say, archetype of crime, should, long

afterwards, find a corresponding crime at the foundation of that

city which was destined to reign over so many nations, and be the

head of this earthly city of which we speak. For of that city also,

as one of their poets has mentioned, "the first walls were stained

with a brother's blood,"[137] or, as Roman history records, Remus

was slain by his brother Romulus. And thus there is no difference

between the foundation of this city and of the earthly city, unless

it be that Romulus and Remus were both citizens of the earthly city.

Both desired to have the glory of founding the Roman republic, but

both could not have as much glory as if one only claimed it; for he

who wished to have the glory of ruling would certainly rule less if

his power were shared by a living consort. In order, therefore, that

the whole glory might be enjoyed by one, his consort was removed;

and by this crime the empire was made larger indeed, but inferior,

while otherwise it would have been less, but better. Now these

brothers, Cain and Abel, were not both animated by the same earthly

desires, nor did the murderer envy the other because he feared that,

by both ruling, his own dominion would be curtailed,--for Abel was

not solicitous to rule in that city which his brother built,--he

was moved by that diabolical, envious hatred with which the evil

regard the good, for no other reason than because they are good

while themselves are evil. For the possession of goodness is by no

means diminished by being shared with a partner either permanent or

temporarily assumed; on the contrary, the possession of goodness is

increased in proportion to the concord and charity of each of those

who share it. In short, he who is unwilling to share this possession

cannot have it; and he who is most willing to admit others to a share

of it will have the greatest abundance to himself. The quarrel, then,

between Romulus and Remus shows how the earthly city is divided

against itself; that which fell out between Cain and Abel illustrated

the hatred that subsists between the two cities, that of God and

that of men. The wicked war with the wicked; the good also war with

the wicked. But with the good, good men, or at least perfectly good

men, cannot war; though, while only going on towards perfection,

they war to this extent, that every good man resists others in those

points in which he resists himself. And in each individual "the flesh

lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."[138]

This spiritual lusting, therefore, can be at war with the carnal

lust of another man; or carnal lust may be at war with the spiritual

desires of another, in some such way as good and wicked men are at

war; or, still more certainly, the carnal lusts of two men, good but

not yet perfect, contend together, just as the wicked contend with

the wicked, until the health of those who are under the treatment of

grace attains final victory.

6. \_Of the weaknesses which even the citizens of the city of God

suffer during this earthly pilgrimage in punishment of sin, and

of which they are healed by God's care.\_

This sickliness--that is to say, that disobedience of which we spoke

in the fourteenth book--is the punishment of the first disobedience.

It is therefore not nature, but vice; and therefore it is said to

the good who are growing in grace, and living in this pilgrimage

by faith, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law

of Christ."[139] In like manner it is said elsewhere, "Warn them

that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be

patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any

man."[140] And in another place, "If a man be overtaken in a fault,

ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;

considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."[141] And elsewhere,

"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."[142] And in the Gospel,

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his

fault between thee and him alone."[143] So too of sins which may

create scandal the apostle says, "Them that sin rebuke before all,

that others also may fear."[144] For this purpose, and that we may

keep that peace without which no man can see the Lord,[145] many

precepts are given which carefully inculcate mutual forgiveness;

among which we may number that terrible word in which the servant is

ordered to pay his formerly remitted debt of ten thousand talents,

because he did not remit to his fellow-servant his debt of two

hundred pence. To which parable the Lord Jesus added the words,

"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from

your hearts forgive not every one his brother."[146] It is thus the

citizens of the city of God are healed while still they sojourn in

this earth and sigh for the peace of their heavenly country. The Holy

Spirit, too, works within, that the medicine externally applied may

have some good result. Otherwise, even though God Himself make use of

the creatures that are subject to Him, and in some human form address

our human senses, whether we receive those impressions in sleep or

in some external appearance, still, if He does not by His own inward

grace sway and act upon the mind, no preaching of the truth is of

any avail. But this God does, distinguishing between the vessels

of wrath and the vessels of mercy, by His own very secret but very

just providence. When He Himself aids the soul in His own hidden and

wonderful ways, and the sin which dwells in our members, and is, as

the apostle teaches, rather the punishment of sin, does not reign in

our mortal body to obey the lusts of it, and when we no longer yield

our members as instruments of unrighteousness,[147] then the soul is

converted from its own evil and selfish desires, and, God possessing

it, it possesses itself in peace even in this life, and afterwards,

with perfected health and endowed with immortality, will reign

without sin in peace everlasting.

7. \_Of the cause of Cain's crime and his obstinacy, which not even

the word of God could subdue.\_

But though God made use of this very mode of address which we have

been endeavouring to explain, and spoke to Cain in that form by

which He was wont to accommodate Himself to our first parents and

converse with them as a companion, what good influence had it on

Cain? Did he not fulfil his wicked intention of killing his brother

even after he was warned by God's voice? For when God had made a

distinction between their sacrifices, neglecting Cain's, regarding

Abel's, which was doubtless intimated by some visible sign to that

effect; and when God had done so because the works of the one were

evil but those of his brother good, Cain was very wroth, and his

countenance fell. For thus it is written: "And the Lord said unto

Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou

offerest rightly, but dost not rightly distinguish, hast thou not

sinned? Fret not thyself, for unto thee shall be his turning, and

thou shalt rule over him."[148] In this admonition administered by

God to Cain, that clause indeed, "If thou offerest rightly, but dost

not rightly distinguish, hast thou not sinned?" is obscure, inasmuch

as it is not apparent for what reason or purpose it was spoken, and

many meanings have been put upon it, as each one who discusses it

attempts to interpret it according to the rule of faith. The truth

is, that a sacrifice is "rightly offered" when it is offered to the

true God, to whom alone we must sacrifice. And it is "not rightly

distinguished" when we do not rightly distinguish the places or

seasons or materials of the offering, or the person offering, or the

person to whom it is presented, or those to whom it is distributed

for food after the oblation. Distinguishing[149] is here used for

discriminating,--whether when an offering is made in a place where

it ought not or of a material which ought to be offered not there

but elsewhere; or when an offering is made at a wrong time, or of a

material suitable not then but at some other time; or when that is

offered which in no place nor any time ought to be offered; or when

a man keeps to himself choicer specimens of the same kind than he

offers to God; or when he or any other who may not lawfully partake

profanely eats of the oblation. In which of these particulars Cain

displeased God, it is difficult to determine. But the Apostle John,

speaking of these brothers, says, "Not as Cain, who was of that

wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because

his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."[150] He

thus gives us to understand that God did not respect his offering

because it was not rightly "distinguished" in this, that he gave to

God something of his own but kept himself to himself. For this all

do who follow not God's will but their own, who live not with an

upright but a crooked heart, and yet offer to God such gifts as they

suppose will procure from Him that He aid them not by healing but

by gratifying their evil passions. And this is the characteristic

of the earthly city, that it worships God or gods who may aid it in

reigning victoriously and peacefully on earth not through love of

doing good, but through lust of rule. The good use the world that

they may enjoy God: the wicked, on the contrary, that they may enjoy

the world would fain use God,--those of them, at least, who have

attained to the belief that He is and takes an interest in human

affairs. For they who have not yet attained even to this belief are

still at a much lower level. Cain, then, when he saw that God had

respect to his brother's sacrifice, but not to his own, should have

humbly chosen his good brother as his example, and not proudly

counted him his rival. But he was wroth, and his countenance fell.

This angry regret for another person's goodness, even his brother's,

was charged upon him by God as a great sin. And He accused him of it

in the interrogation, "Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance

fallen?" For God saw that he envied his brother, and of this He

accused him. For to men, from whom the heart of their fellow is

hid, it might be doubtful and quite uncertain whether that sadness

bewailed his own wickedness by which, as he had learned, he had

displeased God, or his brother's goodness, which had pleased God, and

won His favourable regard to his sacrifice. But God, in giving the

reason why He refused to accept Cain's offering and why Cain should

rather have been displeased at himself than at his brother, shows him

that though he was unjust in "not rightly distinguishing," that is,

not rightly living and being unworthy to have his offering received,

he was more unjust by far in hating his just brother without a cause.

Yet He does not dismiss him without counsel, holy, just, and good.

"Fret not thyself," He says, "for unto thee shall be his turning,

and thou shalt rule over him." Over his brother, does He mean? Most

certainly not. Over what, then, but sin? For He had said, "Thou

hast sinned," and then He added, "Fret not thyself, for to thee

shall be its turning, and thou shalt rule over it."[151] And the

"turning" of sin to the man can be understood of his conviction that

the guilt of sin can be laid at no other man's door but his own.

For this is the health-giving medicine of penitence, and the fit

plea for pardon; so that, when it is said, "To thee its turning,"

we must not supply "shall be," but we must read, "To thee let its

turning be," understanding it as a command, not as a prediction.

For then shall a man rule over his sin when he does not prefer it

to himself and defend it, but subjects it by repentance; otherwise

he that becomes protector of it shall surely become its prisoner.

But if we understand this sin to be that carnal concupiscence of

which the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit,"[152]

among the fruits of which lust he names envy, by which assuredly

Cain was stung and excited to destroy his brother, then we may

properly supply the words "shall be," and read, "To thee shall be

its turning, and thou shalt rule over it." For when the carnal part

which the apostle calls sin, in that place where he says, "It is

not I who do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,"[153] that part which

the philosophers also call vicious, and which ought not to lead the

mind, but which the mind ought to rule and restrain by reason from

illicit motions,--when, then, this part has been moved to perpetrate

any wickedness, if it be curbed and if it obey the word of the

apostle, "Yield not your members instruments of unrighteousness unto

sin,"[154] it is turned towards the mind and subdued and conquered

by it, so that reason rules over it as a subject. It was this which

God enjoined on him who was kindled with the fire of envy against his

brother, so that he sought to put out of the way him whom he should

have set as an example. "Fret not thyself," or compose thyself, He

says: withhold thy hand from crime; let not sin reign in your mortal

body to fulfil it in the lusts thereof, nor yield your members

instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. "For to thee shall be its

turning," so long as you do not encourage it by giving it the rein,

but bridle it by quenching its fire. "And thou shalt rule over it;"

for when it is not allowed any external actings, it yields itself to

the rule of the governing mind and righteous will, and ceases from

even internal motions. There is something similar said in the same

divine book of the woman, when God questioned and judged them after

their sin, and pronounced sentence on them all,--the devil in the

form of the serpent, the woman and her husband in their own persons.

For when He had said to her, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and

thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," then He

added, "and thy turning shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule

over thee."[155] What is said to Cain about his sin, or about the

vicious concupiscence of his flesh, is here said of the woman who

had sinned; and we are to understand that the husband is to rule his

wife as the soul rules the flesh. And therefore, says the apostle,

"He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated

his own flesh."[156] This flesh, then, is to be healed, because it

belongs to ourselves: is not to be abandoned to destruction as if

it were alien to our nature. But Cain received that counsel of God

in the spirit of one who did not wish to amend. In fact, the vice

of envy grew stronger in him; and, having entrapped his brother,

he slew him. Such was the founder of the earthly city. He was also

a figure of the Jews who slew Christ the Shepherd of the flock of

men, prefigured by Abel the shepherd of sheep: but as this is an

allegorical and prophetical matter, I forbear to explain it now;

besides, I remember that I have made some remarks upon it in writing

against Faustus the Manichæan.[157]

8. \_What Cain's reason was for building a city so early in the

history of the human race.\_

At present it is the history which I aim at defending, that Scripture

may not be reckoned incredible when it relates that one man built

a city at a time in which there seem to have been but four men

upon earth, or rather indeed but three, after one brother slew the

other,--to wit, the first man the father of all, and Cain himself,

and his son Enoch, by whose name the city was itself called. But they

who are moved by this consideration forget to take into account that

the writer of the sacred history does not necessarily mention all the

men who might be alive at that time, but those only whom the scope of

his work required him to name. The design of that writer (who in this

matter was the instrument of the Holy Ghost) was to descend to Abraham

through the successions of ascertained generations propagated from one

man, and then to pass from Abraham's seed to the people of God, in

whom, separated as they were from other nations, was prefigured and

predicted all that relates to the city whose reign is eternal, and to

its king and founder Christ, which things were foreseen in the Spirit

as destined to come; yet neither is this object so effected as that

nothing is said of the other society of men which we call the earthly

city, but mention is made of it so far as seemed needful to enhance the

glory of the heavenly city by contrast to its opposite. Accordingly,

when the divine Scripture, in mentioning the number of years which

those men lived, concludes its account of each man of whom it speaks,

with the words, "And he begat sons and daughters, and all his days were

so and so, and he died," are we to understand that, because it does

not name those sons and daughters, therefore, during that long term

of years over which one lifetime extended in those early days, there

might not have been born very many men, by whose united numbers not one

but several cities might have been built? But it suited the purpose of

God, by whose inspiration these histories were composed, to arrange

and distinguish from the first these two societies in their several

generations,--that on the one side the generations of men, that is to

say, of those who live according to man, and on the other side the

generations of the sons of God, that is to say, of men living according

to God, might be traced down together and yet apart from one another as

far as the deluge, at which point their dissociation and association

are exhibited: their dissociation, inasmuch as the generations of both

lines are recorded in separate tables, the one line descending from the

fratricide Cain, the other from Seth, who had been born to Adam instead

of him whom his brother slew; their association, inasmuch as the good

so deteriorated that the whole race became of such a character that it

was swept away by the deluge, with the exception of one just man, whose

name was Noah, and his wife and three sons and three daughters-in-law,

which eight persons were alone deemed worthy to escape from that

desolating visitation which destroyed all men.

Therefore, although it is written, "And Cain knew his wife, and

she conceived and bare Enoch, and he builded a city and called the

name of the city after the name of his son Enoch,"[158] it does not

follow that we are to believe this to have been his first-born; for

we cannot suppose that this is proved by the expression "he knew his

wife," as if then for the first time he had had intercourse with

her. For in the case of Adam, the father of all, this expression

is used not only when Cain, who seems to have been his first-born,

was conceived, but also afterwards the same Scripture says, "Adam

knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare a son, and called his

name Seth."[159] Whence it is obvious that Scripture employs this

expression neither always when a birth is recorded nor then only when

the birth of a first-born is mentioned. Neither is it necessary to

suppose that Enoch was Cain's first-born because he named his city

after him. For it is quite possible that though he had other sons,

yet for some reason the father loved him more than the rest. Judah

was not the first-born, though he gives his name to Judæa and the

Jews. But even though Enoch was the first-born of the city's founder,

that is no reason for supposing that the father named the city after

him as soon as he was born; for at that time he, being but a solitary

man, could not have founded a civic community, which is nothing else

than a multitude of men bound together by some associating tie.

But when his family increased to such numbers that he had quite a

population, then it became possible to him both to build a city,

and give it, when founded, the name of his son. For so long was the

life of those antediluvians, that he who lived the shortest time of

those whose years are mentioned in Scripture attained to the age of

753 years.[160] And though no one attained the age of a thousand

years, several exceeded the age of nine hundred. Who then can doubt

that during the lifetime of one man the human race might be so

multiplied that there would be a population to build and occupy not

one but several cities? And this might very readily be conjectured

from the fact that from one man, Abraham, in not much more than four

hundred years, the numbers of the Hebrew race so increased, that

in the exodus of that people from Egypt there are recorded to have

been six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms,[161] and this

over and above the Idumæans, who, though not numbered with Israel's

descendants, were yet sprung from his brother, also a grandson of

Abraham; and over and above the other nations which were of the same

stock of Abraham, though not through Sarah,--that is, his descendants

by Hagar and Keturah, the Ishmaelites, Midianites, etc.

9. \_Of the long life and greater stature of the antediluvians.\_

Wherefore no one who considerately weighs facts will doubt that Cain

might have built a city, and that a large one, when it is observed

how prolonged were the lives of men, unless perhaps some sceptic take

exception to this very length of years which our authors ascribe to

the antediluvians and deny that this is credible. And so, too, they

do not believe that the size of men's bodies was larger then than

now, though the most esteemed of their own poets, Virgil, asserts the

same, when he speaks of that huge stone which had been fixed as a

landmark, and which a strong man of those ancient times snatched up

as he fought, and ran, and hurled, and cast it,--

"Scarce twelve strong men of later mould

That weight could on their necks uphold;"[162]

thus declaring his opinion that the earth then produced mightier men.

And if in the more recent times, how much more in the ages before the

world-renowned deluge? But the large size of the primitive human body

is often proved to the incredulous by the exposure of sepulchres,

either through the wear of time or the violence of torrents or some

accident, and in which bones of incredible size have been found or

have rolled out. I myself, along with some others, saw on the shore

at Utica a man's molar tooth of such a size, that if it were cut

down into teeth such as we have, a hundred, I fancy, could have

been made out of it. But that, I believe, belonged to some giant.

For though the bodies of ordinary men were then larger than ours,

the giants surpassed all in stature. And neither in our own age nor

any other have there been altogether wanting instances of gigantic

stature, though they may be few. The younger Pliny, a most learned

man, maintains that the older the world becomes, the smaller will

be the bodies of men.[163] And he mentions that Homer in his poems

often lamented the same decline; and this he does not laugh at as

a poetical figment, but in his character of a recorder of natural

wonders accepts it as historically true. But, as I said, the bones

which are from time to time discovered prove the size of the bodies

of the ancients,[164] and will do so to future ages, for they are

slow to decay. But the length of an antediluvian's life cannot

now be proved by any such monumental evidence. But we are not on

this account to withhold our faith from the sacred history, whose

statements of past fact we are the more inexcusable in discrediting,

as we see the accuracy of its prediction of what was future. And

even that same Pliny[165] tells us that there is still a nation in

which men live 200 years. If, then, in places unknown to us, men

are believed to have a length of days which is quite beyond our own

experience, why should we not believe the same of times distant from

our own? Or are we to believe that in other places there is what is

not here, while we do not believe that in other times there has been

anything but what is now?

10. \_Of the different computation of the ages of the antediluvians,

given by the Hebrew manuscripts and by our own.\_[166]

Wherefore, although there is a discrepancy for which I cannot account

between our manuscripts and the Hebrew, in the very number of years

assigned to the antediluvians, yet the discrepancy is not so great

that they do not agree about their longevity. For the very first man,

Adam, before he begot his son Seth, is in our manuscripts found to

have lived 230 years, but in the Hebrew MSS. 130. But after he begot

Seth, our copies read that he lived 700 years, while the Hebrew give

800. And thus, when the two periods are taken together, the sum agrees.

And so throughout the succeeding generations, the period before the

father begets a son is always made shorter by 100 years in the Hebrew,

but the period after his son is begotten is longer by 100 years in the

Hebrew than in our copies. And thus, taking the two periods together,

the result is the same in both. And in the sixth generation there is

no discrepancy at all. In the seventh, however, of which Enoch is the

representative, who is recorded to have been translated without death

because he pleased God, there is the same discrepancy as in the first

five generations, 100 years more being ascribed to him by our MSS.

before he begat a son. But still the result agrees; for according to

both documents he lived before he was translated 365 years. In the

eighth generation the discrepancy is less than in the others, and of

a different kind. For Methuselah, whom Enoch begat, lived, before he

begat his successor, not 100 years less, but 100 years more, according

to the Hebrew reading; and in our MSS. again these years are added

to the period after he begat his son; so that in this case also the

sum-total is the same. And it is only in the ninth generation, that is,

in the age of Lamech, Methuselah's son and Noah's father, that there

is a discrepancy in the sum-total; and even in this case it is slight.

For the Hebrew MSS. represent him as living twenty-four years more than

ours assign to him. For before he begat his son, who was called Noah,

six years fewer are given to him by the Hebrew MSS. than by ours; but

after he begat this son, they give him thirty years more than ours; so

that, deducting the former six, there remains, as we said, a surplus of

twenty-four.

11. \_Of Methuselah's age, which seems to extend fourteen years

beyond the deluge.\_

From this discrepancy between the Hebrew books and our own arises

the well-known question as to the age of Methuselah;[167] for it

is computed that he lived for fourteen years after the deluge,

though Scripture relates that of all who were then upon the earth

only the eight souls in the ark escaped destruction by the flood,

and of these Methuselah was not one. For, according to our books,

Methuselah, before he begat the son whom he called Lamech, lived 167

years; then Lamech himself, before his son Noah was born, lived 188

years, which together make 355 years. Add to these the age of Noah

at the date of the deluge, 600 years, and this gives a total of 955

from the birth of Methuselah to the year of the flood. Now all the

years of the life of Methuselah are computed to be 969; for when he

had lived 167 years, and had begotten his son Lamech, he then lived

after this 802 years, which makes a total, as we said, of 969 years.

From this, if we deduct 955 years from the birth of Methuselah to

the flood, there remain fourteen years, which he is supposed to

have lived after the flood. And therefore some suppose that, though

he was not on earth (in which it is agreed that every living thing

which could not naturally live in water perished), he was for a time

with his father, who had been translated, and that he lived there

till the flood had passed away. This hypothesis they adopt, that

they may not cast a slight on the trustworthiness of versions which

the Church has received into a position of high authority,[168]

and because they believe that the Jewish MSS. rather than our own

are in error. For they do not admit that this is a mistake of the

translators, but maintain that there is a falsified statement in

the original, from which, through the Greek, the Scripture has been

translated into our own tongue. They say that it is not credible that

the seventy translators, who simultaneously and unanimously produced

one rendering, could have erred, or, in a case in which no interest

of theirs was involved, could have falsified their translation; but

that the Jews, envying us our translation of their Law and Prophets,

have made alterations in their texts so as to undermine the authority

of ours. This opinion or suspicion let each man adopt according to

his own judgment. Certain it is that Methuselah did not survive

the flood, but died in the very year it occurred, if the numbers

given in the Hebrew MSS. are true. My own opinion regarding the

seventy translators I will, with God's help, state more carefully

in its own place, when I have come down (following the order which

this work requires) to that period in which their translation was

executed.[169] For the present question, it is enough that, according

to our versions, the men of that age had lives so long as to make it

quite possible that, during the lifetime of the first-born of the two

sole parents then on earth, the human race multiplied sufficiently

to form a community.

12. \_Of the opinion of those who do not believe that in these

primitive times men lived so long as is stated.\_

For they are by no means to be listened to who suppose that in those

times years were differently reckoned, and were so short that one

of our years may be supposed to be equal to ten of theirs. So that

they say, when we read or hear that some man lived 900 years, we

should understand ninety,--ten of those years making but one of

ours, and ten of ours equalling 100 of theirs. Consequently, as they

suppose, Adam was twenty-three years of age when he begat Seth, and

Seth himself was twenty years and six months old when his son Enos

was born, though the Scripture calls these months 205 years. For,

on the hypothesis of those whose opinion we are explaining, it was

customary to divide one such year as we have into ten parts, and to

call each part a year. And each of these parts was composed of six

days squared; because God finished His works in six days, that He

might rest the seventh. Of this I disputed according to my ability

in the eleventh book.[170] Now six squared, or six times six, gives

thirty-six days; and this multiplied by ten amounts to 360 days, or

twelve lunar months. As for the five remaining days which are needed

to complete the solar year, and for the fourth part of a day, which

requires that into every fourth or leap-year a day be added, the

ancients added such days as the Romans used to call "intercalary,"

in order to complete the number of the years. So that Enos, Seth's

son, was nineteen years old when his son Cainan was born, though

Scripture calls these years 190. And so through all the generations

in which the ages of the antediluvians are given, we find in our

versions that almost no one begat a son at the age of 100 or under,

or even at the age of 120 or thereabouts; but the youngest fathers

are recorded to have been 160 years old and upwards. And the reason

of this, they say, is that no one can beget children when he is ten

years old, the age spoken of by those men as 100, but that sixteen

is the age of puberty, and competent now to propagate offspring; and

this is the age called by them 160. And that it may not be thought

incredible that in these days the year was differently computed from

our own, they adduce what is recorded by several writers of history,

that the Egyptians had a year of four months, the Acarnanians of

six, and the Lavinians of thirteen months.[171] The younger Pliny,

after mentioning that some writers reported that one man had lived

152 years, another ten more, others 200, others 300, that some had

even reached 500 and 600, and a few 800 years of age, gave it as

his opinion that all this must be ascribed to mistaken computation.

For some, he says, make summer and winter each a year; others make

each season a year, like the Arcadians, whose years, he says, were

of three months. He added, too, that the Egyptians, of whose little

years of four months we have spoken already, sometimes terminated

their year at the wane of each moon; so that with them there are

produced lifetimes of 1000 years.

By these plausible arguments certain persons, with no desire to

weaken the credit of this sacred history, but rather to facilitate

belief in it by removing the difficulty of such incredible longevity,

have been themselves persuaded, and think they act wisely in

persuading others, that in these days the year was so brief that

ten of their years equal but one of ours, while ten of ours equal

100 of theirs. But there is the plainest evidence to show that this

is quite false. Before producing this evidence, however, it seems

right to mention a conjecture which is yet more plausible. From the

Hebrew manuscripts we could at once refute this confident statement;

for in them Adam is found to have lived not 230 but 130 years before

he begat his third son. If, then, this mean thirteen years by our

ordinary computation, then he must have begotten his first son when

he was only twelve or thereabouts. Who can at this age beget children

according to the ordinary and familiar course of nature? But not to

mention him, since it is possible he may have been able to beget his

like as soon as he was created,--for it is not credible that he was

created so little as our infants are,--not to mention him, his son

was not 205 years old when he begat Enos, as our versions have it,

but 105, and consequently, according to this idea, was not eleven

years old. But what shall I say of his son Cainan, who, though by our

version 170 years old, was by the Hebrew text seventy when he beget

Mahalaleel? If seventy years in those times meant only seven of our

years, what man of seven years old begets children?

13. \_Whether, in computing years, we ought to follow the Hebrew

or the Septuagint.\_

But if I say this, I shall presently be answered, It is one of the

Jews' lies. This, however, we have disposed of above, showing that it

cannot be that men of so just a reputation as the seventy translators

should have falsified their version. However, if I ask them which

of the two is more credible, that the Jewish nation, scattered

far and wide, could have unanimously conspired to forge this lie,

and so, through envying others the authority of their Scriptures,

have deprived themselves of their verity; or that seventy men, who

were also themselves Jews, shut up in one place (for Ptolemy king

of Egypt had got them together for this work), should have envied

foreign nations that same truth, and by common consent inserted these

errors: who does not see which can be more naturally and readily

believed? But far be it from any prudent man to believe either that

the Jews, however malicious and wrong-headed, could have tampered

with so many and so widely-dispersed manuscripts; or that those

renowned seventy individuals had any common purpose to grudge the

truth to the nations. One must therefore more plausibly maintain,

that when first their labours began to be transcribed from the copy

in Ptolemy's library, some such misstatement might find its way into

the first copy made, and from it might be disseminated far and wide;

and that this might arise from no fraud, but from a mere copyist's

error. This is a sufficiently plausible account of the difficulty

regarding Methuselah's life, and of that other case in which there is

a difference in the total of twenty-four years. But in those cases

in which there is a methodical resemblance in the falsification, so

that uniformly the one version allots to the period before a son and

successor is born 100 years more than the other, and to the period

subsequent 100 years less, and \_vice versâ\_, so that the totals may

agree,--and this holds true of the first, second, third, fourth,

fifth, and seventh generations,--in these cases error seems to have,

if we may say so, a certain kind of constancy, and savours not of

accident, but of design.

Accordingly, that diversity of numbers which distinguishes the Hebrew

from the Greek and Latin copies of Scripture, and which consists of

a uniform addition and deduction of 100 years in each lifetime for

several consecutive generations, is to be attributed neither to the

malice of the Jews nor to men so diligent and prudent as the seventy

translators, but to the error of the copyist who was first allowed to

transcribe the manuscript from the library of the above-mentioned king.

For even now, in cases where numbers contribute nothing to the easier

comprehension or more satisfactory knowledge of anything, they are both

carelessly transcribed, and still more carelessly emended. For who

will trouble himself to learn how many thousand men the several tribes

of Israel contained? He sees no resulting benefit of such knowledge.

Or how many men are there who are aware of the vast advantage that

lies hid in this knowledge? But in this case, in which during so many

consecutive generations 100 years are added in one manuscript where

they are not reckoned in the other, and then, after the birth of the

son and successor, the years which were wanting are added, it is

obvious that the copyist who contrived this arrangement designed to

insinuate that the antediluvians lived an excessive number of years

only because each year was excessively brief, and that he tried to draw

the attention to this fact by his statement of their age of puberty at

which they became able to beget children. For, lest the incredulous

might stumble at the difficulty of so long a lifetime, he insinuated

that 100 of their years equalled but ten of ours; and this insinuation

he conveyed by adding 100 years whenever he found the age below 160

years or thereabouts, deducting these years again from the period after

the son's birth, that the total might harmonize. By this means he

intended to ascribe the generation of offspring to a fit age, without

diminishing the total sum of years ascribed to the lifetime of the

individuals. And the very fact that in the sixth generation he departed

from this uniform practice, inclines us all the rather to believe that

when the circumstance we have referred to required his alterations, he

made them; seeing that when this circumstance did not exist, he made

no alteration. For in the same generation he found in the Hebrew MS.

that Jared lived before he begat Enoch 162 years, which, according to

the short year computation, is sixteen years and somewhat less than

two months, an age capable of procreation; and therefore it was not

necessary to add 100 short years, and so make the age twenty-six years

of the usual length; and of course it was not necessary to deduct,

after the son's birth, years which he had not added before it. And thus

it comes to pass that in this instance there is no variation between

the two manuscripts.

This is corroborated still further by the fact that in the eighth

generation, while the Hebrew books assign 182[172] years to Methuselah

before Lamech's birth, ours assign to him twenty less, though usually

100 years are added to this period; then, after Lamech's birth, the

twenty years are restored, so as to equalize the total in the two

books. For if his design was that these 170 years be understood as

seventeen, so as to suit the age of puberty, as there was no need for

him adding anything, so there was none for his subtracting anything;

for in this case he found an age fit for the generation of children,

for the sake of which he was in the habit of adding those 100 years

in cases where he did not find the age already sufficient. This

difference of twenty years we might, indeed, have supposed had happened

accidentally, had he not taken care to restore them afterwards as he

had deducted them from the period before, so that there might be no

deficiency in the total. Or are we perhaps to suppose that there was

the still more astute design of concealing the deliberate and uniform

addition of 100 years to the first period and their deduction from the

subsequent period,--did he design to conceal this by doing something

similar, that is to say, adding and deducting, not indeed a century,

but some years, even in a case in which there was no need for his doing

so? But whatever may be thought of this, whether it be believed that

he did so or not, whether, in fine, it be so or not, I would have no

manner of doubt that when any diversity is found in the books, since

both cannot be true to fact, we do well to believe in preference

that language out of which the translation was made into another by

translators. For there are three Greek MSS., one Latin, and one Syriac,

which agree with one another, and in all of these Methuselah is said to

have died six years before the deluge.

14. \_That the years in those ancient times were of the same length

as our own.\_

Let us now see how it can be plainly made out that in the enormously

protracted lives of those men the years were not so short that ten

of their years were equal to only one of ours, but were of as great

length as our own, which are measured by the course of the sun. It is

proved by this, that Scripture states that the flood occurred in the

six hundredth year of Noah's life. But why in the same place is it

also written, "The waters of the flood were upon the earth in the six

hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the twenty-seventh

day of the month,"[173] if that very brief year (of which it took ten

to make one of ours) consisted of thirty-six days? For so scant a year,

if the ancient usage dignified it with the name of year, either has not

months, or its month must be three days, so that it may have twelve

of them. How then was it here said, "In the six hundredth year, the

second month, the twenty-seventh day of the month," unless the months

then were of the same length as the months now? For how else could it

be said that the flood began on the twenty-seventh day of the second

month? Then afterwards, at the end of the flood, it is thus written:

"And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the twenty-seventh day

of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased

continually until the eleventh month: on the first day of the month

were the tops of the mountains seen."[174] But if the months were

such as we have, then so were the years. And certainly months of three

days each could not have a twenty-seventh day. Or if every measure of

time was diminished in proportion, and a thirtieth part of three days

was then called a day, then that great deluge, which is recorded to

have lasted forty days and forty nights, was really over in less than

four of our days. Who can away with such foolishness and absurdity?

Far be this error from us,--an error which seeks to build up our faith

in the divine Scriptures on false conjecture, only to demolish our

faith at another point. It is plain that the day then was what it now

is, a space of four-and-twenty hours, determined by the lapse of day

and night; the month then equal to the month now, which is defined by

the rise and completion of one moon; the year then equal to the year

now, which is completed by twelve lunar months, with the addition of

five days and a-fourth to adjust it with the course of the sun. It was

a year of this length which was reckoned the six hundredth of Noah's

life; and in the second month, the twenty-seventh day of the month,

the flood began,--a flood which, as is recorded, was caused by heavy

rains continuing for forty days, which days had not only two hours and

a little more, but four-and-twenty hours, completing a night and a

day. And consequently those antediluvians lived more than 900 years,

which were years as long as those which afterwards Abraham lived 175

of, and after him his son Isaac 180, and his son Jacob nearly 150,

and some time after, Moses 120, and men now seventy or eighty, or not

much longer, of which years it is said, "their strength is labour and

sorrow."[175]

But that discrepancy of numbers which is found to exist between our

own and the Hebrew text does not touch the longevity of the ancients;

and if there is any diversity so great that both versions cannot

be true, we must take our ideas of the real facts from that text

out of which our own version has been translated. However, though

any one who pleases has it in his power to correct this version,

yet it is not unimportant to observe that no one has presumed to

emend the Septuagint from the Hebrew text in the many places where

they seem to disagree. For this difference has not been reckoned a

falsification; and for my own part I am persuaded it ought not to

be reckoned so. But where the difference is not a mere copyist's

error, and where the sense is agreeable to truth and illustrative

of truth, we must believe that the divine Spirit prompted them to

give a varying version, not in their function of translators, but in

the liberty of prophesying. And therefore we find that the apostles

justly sanction the Septuagint, by quoting it as well as the Hebrew

when they adduce proofs from the Scriptures. But as I have promised

to treat this subject more carefully, if God help me, in a more

fitting place, I will now go on with the matter in hand. For there

can be no doubt that, the lives of men being so long, the first-born

of the first man could have built a city,--a city, however, which was

earthly, and not that which is called the city of God, to describe

which we have taken in hand this great work.

15. \_Whether it is credible that the men of the primitive age

abstained from sexual intercourse until that date at which it

is recorded that they begat children.\_

Some one, then, will say, Is it to be believed that a man who

intended to beget children, and had no intention of continence,

abstained from sexual intercourse a hundred years and more, or even,

according to the Hebrew version, only a little less, say eighty,

seventy, or sixty years; or, if he did not abstain, was unable to

beget offspring? This question admits of two solutions. For either

puberty was so much later as the whole life was longer, or, which

seems to me more likely, it is not the first-born sons that are here

mentioned, but those whose names were required to fill up the series

until Noah was reached, from whom again we see that the succession

is continued to Abraham, and after him down to that point of time

until which it was needful to mark by pedigree the course of the

most glorious city, which sojourns as a stranger in this world, and

seeks the heavenly country. That which is undeniable is that Cain

was the first who was born of man and woman. For had he not been the

first who was added by birth to the two unborn persons, Adam could

not have said what he is recorded to have said, "I have gotten a man

by the Lord."[176] He was followed by Abel, whom the elder brother

slew, and who was the first to show, by a kind of foreshadowing of

the sojourning city of God, what iniquitous persecutions that city

would suffer at the hands of wicked and, as it were, earth-born

men, who love their earthly origin, and delight in the earthly

happiness of the earthly city. But how old Adam was when he begat

these sons does not appear. After this the generations diverge, the

one branch deriving from Cain, the other from him whom Adam begot

in the room of Abel slain by his brother, and whom he called Seth,

saying, as it is written, "For God hath raised me up another seed

for Abel whom Cain slew."[177] These two series of generations

accordingly, the one of Cain, the other of Seth, represent the two

cities in their distinctive ranks, the one the heavenly city, which

sojourns on earth, the other the earthly, which gapes after earthly

joys, and grovels in them as if they were the only joys. But though

eight generations, including Adam, are registered before the flood,

no man of Cain's line has his age recorded at which the son who

succeeded him was begotten. For the Spirit of God refused to mark the

times before the flood in the generations of the earthly city, but

preferred to do so in the heavenly line, as if it were more worthy

of being remembered. Further, when Seth was born, the age of his

father is mentioned; but already he had begotten other sons, and who

will presume to say that Cain and Abel were the only ones previously

begotten? For it does not follow that they alone had been begotten

of Adam, because they alone were named in order to continue the

series of generations which it was desirable to mention. For though

the names of all the rest are buried in silence, yet it is said that

Adam begot sons and daughters; and who that cares to be free from the

charge of temerity will dare to say how many his offspring numbered?

It was possible enough that Adam was divinely prompted to say, after

Seth was born, "For God hath raised up to me another seed for Abel,"

because that son was to be capable of representing Abel's holiness,

not because he was born first after him in point of time. Then

because it is written, "And Seth lived 205 years," or, according to

the Hebrew reading, "105 years, and begat Enos,"[178] who but a rash

man could affirm that this was his first-born? Will any man do so to

excite our wonder, and cause us to inquire how for so many years he

remained free from sexual intercourse, though without any purpose

of continuing so, or how, if he did not abstain, he yet had no

children? Will any man do so when it is written of him, "And he begat

sons and daughters, and all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he

died?"[179] And similarly regarding those whose years are afterwards

mentioned, it is not disguised that they begat sons and daughters.

Consequently it does not at all appear whether he who is named as the

son was himself the first begotten. Nay, since it is incredible that

those fathers were either so long in attaining puberty, or could not

get wives, or could not impregnate them, it is also incredible that

those sons were their first-born. But as the writer of the sacred

history designed to descend by well-marked intervals through a series

of generations to the birth and life of Noah, in whose time the flood

occurred, he mentioned not those sons who were first begotten, but

those by whom the succession was handed down.

Let me make this clearer by here inserting an example, in regard to

which no one can have any doubt that what I am asserting is true.

The evangelist Matthew, where he designs to commit to our memories

the generation of the Lord's flesh by a series of parents, beginning

from Abraham and intending to reach David, says, "Abraham begat

Isaac;"[180] why did he not say Ishmael, whom he first begat? Then

"Isaac begat Jacob;" why did he not say Esau, who was the first-born?

Simply because these sons would not have helped him to reach David.

Then follows, "And Jacob begat Judah and his brethren:" was Judah

the first begotten? "Judah," he says, "begat Pharez and Zara;" yet

neither were these twins the first-born of Judah, but before them he

had begotten three other sons. And so in the order of the generations

he retained those by whom he might reach David, so as to proceed

onwards to the end he had in view. And from this we may understand

that the antediluvians who are mentioned were not the first-born, but

those through whom the order of the succeeding generations might

be carried on to the patriarch Noah. We need not, therefore, weary

ourselves with discussing the needless and obscure question as to

their lateness of reaching puberty.

16. \_Of marriage between blood-relations, in regard to which the

present law could not bind the men of the earliest ages.\_

As, therefore, the human race, subsequently to the first marriage

of the man who was made of dust, and his wife who was made out

of his side, required the union of males and females in order

that it might multiply, and as there were no human beings except

those who had been born of these two, men took their sisters for

wives,--an act which was as certainly dictated by necessity in these

ancient days as afterwards it was condemned by the prohibitions

of religion. For it is very reasonable and just that men, among

whom concord is honourable and useful, should be bound together by

various relationships; and that one man should not himself sustain

many relationships, but that the various relationships should be

distributed among several, and should thus serve to bind together

the greatest number in the same social interests. "Father" and

"father-in-law" are the names of two relationships. When, therefore,

a man has one person for his father, another for his father-in-law,

friendship extends itself to a larger number. But Adam in his single

person was obliged to hold both relations to his sons and daughters,

for brothers and sisters were united in marriage. So too Eve his wife

was both mother and mother-in-law to her children of both sexes;

while, had there been two women, one the mother, the other the

mother-in-law, the family affection would have had a wider field.

Then the sister herself by becoming a wife sustained in her single

person two relationships, which, had they been distributed among

individuals, one being sister, and another being wife, the family tie

would have embraced a greater number of persons. But there was then

no material for effecting this, since there were no human beings but

the brothers and sisters born of those two first parents. Therefore,

when an abundant population made it possible, men ought to choose for

wives women who were not already their sisters; for not only would

there then be no necessity for marrying sisters, but, were it done,

it would be most abominable. For if the grandchildren of the first

pair, being now able to choose their cousins for wives, married their

sisters, then it would no longer be only two but three relationships

that were held by one man, while each of these relationships ought to

have been held by a separate individual, so as to bind together by

family affection a larger number. For one man would in that case be

both father, and father-in-law, and uncle[181] to his own children

(brother and sister now man and wife); and his wife would be mother,

aunt, and mother-in-law to them; and they themselves would be not

only brother and sister, and man and wife, but cousins also, being

the children of brother and sister. Now, all these relationships,

which combined three men into one, would have embraced nine persons

had each relationship been held by one individual, so that a man had

one person for his sister, another his wife, another his cousin,

another his father, another his uncle, another his father-in-law,

another his mother, another his aunt, another his mother-in-law; and

thus the social bond would not have been tightened to bind a few, but

loosened to embrace a larger number of relations.

And we see that, since the human race has increased and multiplied,

this is so strictly observed even among the profane worshippers

of many and false gods, that though their laws perversely allow a

brother to marry his sister,[182] yet custom, with a finer morality,

prefers to forego this licence; and though it was quite allowable in

the earliest ages of the human race to marry one's sister, it is now

abhorred as a thing which no circumstances could justify. For custom

has very great power either to attract or to shock human feeling. And

in this matter, while it restrains concupiscence within due bounds,

the man who neglects and disobeys it is justly branded as abominable.

For if it is iniquitous to plough beyond our own boundaries through

the greed of gain, is it not much more iniquitous to transgress

the recognised boundaries of morals through sexual lust? And with

regard to marriage in the next degree of consanguinity, marriage

between cousins, we have observed that in our own time the customary

morality has prevented this from being frequent, though the law

allows it. It was not prohibited by divine law, nor as yet had human

law prohibited it; nevertheless, though legitimate, people shrank

from it, because it lay so close to what was illegitimate, and in

marrying a cousin seemed almost to marry a sister,--for cousins are

so closely related that they are called brothers and sisters,[183]

and are almost really so. But the ancient fathers, fearing that near

relationship might gradually in the course of generations diverge,

and become distant relationship, or cease to be relationship at all,

religiously endeavoured to limit it by the bond of marriage before

it became distant, and thus, as it were, to call it back when it

was escaping them. And on this account, even when the world was

full of people, though they did not choose wives from among their

sisters or half-sisters, yet they preferred them to be of the same

stock as themselves. But who doubts that the modern prohibition of

the marriage even of cousins is the more seemly regulation,--not

merely on account of the reason we have been urging, the multiplying

of relationships, so that one person might not absorb two, which

might be distributed to two persons, and so increase the number of

people bound together as a family, but also because there is in

human nature I know not what natural and praiseworthy shamefacedness

which restrains us from desiring that connection which, though for

propagation, is yet lustful, and which even conjugal modesty blushes

over, with any one to whom consanguinity bids us render respect?

The sexual intercourse of man and woman, then, is in the case of

mortals a kind of seed-bed of the city; but while the earthly city

needs for its population only generation, the heavenly needs also

regeneration to rid it of the taint of generation. Whether before the

deluge there was any bodily or visible sign of regeneration, such

as was afterwards enjoined upon Abraham when he was circumcised, or

what kind of sign it was, the sacred history does not inform us. But

it does inform us that even these earliest of mankind sacrificed to

God, as appeared also in the case of the two first brothers; Noah,

too, is said to have offered sacrifices to God when he had come

forth from the ark after the deluge. And concerning this subject we

have already said in the foregoing books that the devils arrogate to

themselves divinity, and require sacrifice that they may be esteemed

gods, and delight in these honours on no other account than this,

because they know that true sacrifice is due to the true God.

17. \_Of the two fathers and leaders who sprang from one

progenitor.\_

Since, then, Adam was the father of both lines,--the father, that is

to say, both of the line which belonged to the earthly, and of that

which belonged to the heavenly city,--when Abel was slain, and by his

death exhibited a marvellous mystery, there were henceforth two lines

proceeding from two fathers, Cain and Seth, and in those sons of

theirs, whom it behoved to register, the tokens of these two cities

began to appear more distinctly. For Cain begat Enoch, in whose name

he built a city, an earthly one, which was not from home in this

world, but rested satisfied with its temporal peace and happiness.

Cain, too, means "possession;" wherefore at his birth either his

father or mother said, "I have gotten a man through God." Then Enoch

means "dedication;" for the earthly city is dedicated in this world

in which it is built, for in this world it finds the end towards

which it aims and aspires. Further, Seth signifies "resurrection,"

and Enos his son signifies "man," not as Adam, which also signifies

man but is used in Hebrew indifferently for man and woman, as it is

written, "Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and

called their name Adam,"[184] leaving no room to doubt that though

the woman was distinctively called Eve, yet the name Adam, meaning

man, was common to both. But Enos means man in so restricted a

sense, that Hebrew linguists tell us it cannot be applied to woman:

it is the equivalent of the "child of the resurrection," when they

neither marry nor are given in marriage.[185] For there shall be no

generation in that place to which regeneration shall have brought

us. Wherefore I think it not immaterial to observe that in those

generations which are propagated from him who is called Seth,

although daughters as well as sons are said to have been begotten,

no woman is expressly registered by name; but in those which sprang

from Cain at the very termination to which the line runs, the last

person named as begotten is a woman. For we read, "Methusael begat

Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was

Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was

the father of the shepherds that dwell in tents. And his brother's

name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp

and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, an instructor of

every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-Cain was

Naamah."[186] Here terminate all the generations of Cain, being

eight in number, including Adam,--to wit, seven from Adam to Lamech,

who married two wives, and whose children, among whom a woman also

is named, form the eighth generation. Whereby it is elegantly

signified that the earthly city shall to its termination have carnal

generations proceeding from the intercourse of males and females.

And therefore the wives themselves of the man who is the last named

father of Cain's line are registered in their own names,--a practice

nowhere followed before the deluge save in Eve's case. Now as Cain,

signifying possession, the founder of the earthly city, and his son

Enoch, meaning dedication, in whose name it was founded, indicate

that this city is earthly both in its beginning and in its end,--a

city in which nothing more is hoped for than can be seen in this

world,--so Seth, meaning resurrection, and being the father of

generations registered apart from the others, we must consider what

this sacred history says of his son.

18. \_The significance of Abel, Seth, and Enos to Christ and

His body the Church.\_

"And to Seth," it is said, "there was born a son, and he called his

name Enos: he hoped to call on the name of the Lord God."[187] Here

we have a loud testimony to the truth. Man, then, the son of the

resurrection, lives in hope: he lives in hope as long as the city of

God, which is begotten by faith in the resurrection, sojourns in

this world. For in these two men, Abel, signifying "grief," and his

brother Seth, signifying "resurrection," the death of Christ and His

life from the dead are prefigured. And by faith in these is begotten

in this world the city of God, that is to say, the man who has hoped

to call on the name of the Lord. "For by hope," says the apostle, "we

are saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth,

why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do

we with patience wait for it."[188] Who can avoid referring this to a

profound mystery? For did not Abel hope to call upon the name of the

Lord God when his sacrifice is mentioned in Scripture as having been

accepted by God? Did not Seth himself hope to call on the name of the

Lord God, of whom it was said, "For God hath appointed me another

seed instead of Abel?" Why then is this which is found to be common

to all the godly specially attributed to Enos, unless because it was

fit that in him, who is mentioned as the first-born of the father

of those generations which were separated to the better part of the

heavenly city, there should be a type of the man, or society of men,

who live not according to man in contentment with earthly felicity,

but according to God in hope of everlasting felicity? And it was not

said, "He hoped in the Lord God," nor "He called on the name of the

Lord God," but "He hoped to call on the name of the Lord God." And

what does this "hoped to call" mean, unless it is a prophecy that a

people should arise who, according to the election of grace, would

call on the name of the Lord God? It is this which has been said by

another prophet, and which the apostle interprets of the people who

belong to the grace of God: "And it shall be that whosoever shall

call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."[189] For these two

expressions, "And he called his name Enos, which means man," and "He

hoped to call on the name of the Lord God," are sufficient proof

that man ought not to rest his hopes in himself; as it is elsewhere

written, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man."[190] Consequently

no one ought to trust in himself that he shall become a citizen of

that other city which is not dedicated in the name of Cain's son in

this present time, that is to say, in the fleeting course of this

mortal world, but in the immortality of perpetual blessedness.

19. \_The significance of Enoch's translation.\_

For that line also of which Seth is the father has the name

"Dedication" in the seventh generation from Adam, counting Adam. For

the seventh from him is Enoch, that is, Dedication. But this is that

man who was translated because he pleased God, and who held in the

order of the generations a remarkable place, being the seventh from

Adam, a number signalized by the consecration of the Sabbath. But,

counting from the diverging point of the two lines, or from Seth,

he was the sixth. Now it was on the sixth day God made man, and

consummated His works. But the translation of Enoch prefigured our

deferred dedication; for though it is indeed already accomplished in

Christ our Head, who so rose again that He shall die no more, and who

was Himself also translated, yet there remains another dedication

of the whole house, of which Christ Himself is the foundation, and

this dedication is deferred till the end, when all shall rise again

to die no more. And whether it is the house of God, or the temple of

God, or the city of God, that is said to be dedicated, it is all the

same, and equally in accordance with the usage of the Latin language.

For Virgil himself calls the city of widest empire "the house of

Assaracus,"[191] meaning the Romans, who were descended through

the Trojans from Assaracus. He also calls them the house of Æneas,

because Rome was built by those Trojans who had come to Italy under

Æneas.[192] For that poet imitated the sacred writings, in which the

Hebrew nation, though so numerous, is called the house of Jacob.

20. \_How it is that Cain's line terminates in the eighth

generation, while Noah, though descended from the same father,

Adam, is found to be the tenth from him.\_

Some one will say, If the writer of this history intended, in

enumerating the generations from Adam through his son Seth, to

descend through them to Noah, in whose time the deluge occurred, and

from him again to trace the connected generations down to Abraham,

with whom Matthew begins the pedigree of Christ the eternal King of

the city of God, what did he intend by enumerating the generations

from Cain, and to what terminus did he mean to trace them? We reply,

To the deluge, by which the whole stock of the earthly city was

destroyed, but repaired by the sons of Noah. For the earthly city

and community of men who live after the flesh will never fail until

the end of this world, of which our Lord says, "The children of this

world generate, and are generated."[193] But the city of God, which

sojourns in this world, is conducted by regeneration to the world to

come, of which the children neither generate nor are generated. In

this world generation is common to both cities; though even now the

city of God has many thousand citizens who abstain from the act of

generation; yet the other city also has some citizens who imitate

these, though erroneously. For to that city belong also those who

have erred from the faith, and introduced divers heresies; for

they live according to man, not according to God. And the Indian

gymnosophists, who are said to philosophize in the solitudes of

India in a state of nudity, are its citizens; and they abstain

from marriage. For continence is not a good thing, except when it

is practised in the faith of the highest good, that is, God. Yet

no one is found to have practised it before the deluge; for indeed

even Enoch himself, the seventh from Adam, who is said to have been

translated without dying, begat sons and daughters before he was

translated, and among these was Methuselah, by whom the succession of

the recorded generations is maintained.

Why, then, is so small a number of Cain's generations registered, if

it was proper to trace them to the deluge, and if there was no such

delay of the date of puberty as to preclude the hope of offspring

for a hundred or more years? For if the author of this book had

not in view some one to whom he might rigidly trace the series of

generations, as he designed in those which sprang from Seth's seed

to descend to Noah, and thence to start again by a rigid order,

what need was there of omitting the first-born sons for the sake of

descending to Lamech, in whose sons that line terminates,--that

is to say, in the eighth generation from Adam, or the seventh from

Cain,--as if from this point he had wished to pass on to another

series, by which he might reach either the Israelitish people,

among whom the earthly Jerusalem presented a prophetic figure of

the heavenly city, or to Jesus Christ, "according to the flesh, who

is over all, God blessed for ever,"[194] the Maker and Ruler of the

heavenly city? What, I say, was the need of this, seeing that the

whole of Cain's posterity were destroyed in the deluge? From this it

is manifest that they are the first-born sons who are registered in

this genealogy. Why, then, are there so few of them? Their numbers in

the period before the deluge must have been greater, if the date of

puberty bore no proportion to their longevity, and they had children

before they were a hundred years old. For supposing they were on an

average thirty years old when they began to beget children, then, as

there are eight generations, including Adam and Lamech's children,

8 times 30 gives 240 years; did they then produce no more children

in all the rest of the time before the deluge? With what intention,

then, did he who wrote this record make no mention of subsequent

generations? For from Adam to the deluge there are reckoned,

according to our copies of Scripture, 2262 years,[195] and according

to the Hebrew text, 1656 years. Supposing, then, the smaller number

to be the true one, and subtracting from 1656 years 240, is it

credible that during the remaining 1400 and odd years until the

deluge the posterity of Cain begat no children?

But let any one who is moved by this call to mind that when I

discussed the question, how it is credible that those primitive

men could abstain for so many years from begetting children, two

modes of solution were found,--either a puberty late in proportion

to their longevity, or that the sons registered in the genealogies

were not the first-born, but those through whom the author of the

book intended to reach the point aimed at, as he intended to reach

Noah by the generations of Seth. So that, if in the generations of

Cain there occurs no one whom the writer could make it his object

to reach by omitting the first-borns and inserting those who would

serve such a purpose, then we must have recourse to the supposition

of late puberty, and say that only at some age beyond a hundred years

they became capable of begetting children, so that the order of the

generations ran through the first-borns, and filled up even the

whole period before the deluge, long though it was. It is, however,

possible that, for some more secret reason which escapes me, this

city, which we say is earthly, is exhibited in all its generations

down to Lamech and his sons, and that then the writer withholds

from recording the rest which may have existed before the deluge.

And without supposing so late a puberty in these men, there might

be another reason for tracing the generations by sons who were not

first-borns, viz. that the same city which Cain built, and named

after his son Enoch, may have had a widely extended dominion and many

kings, not reigning simultaneously, but successively, the reigning

king begetting always his successor. Cain himself would be the first

of these kings; his son Enoch, in whose name the city in which he

reigned was built, would be the second; the third Irad, whom Enoch

begat; the fourth Mehujael, whom Irad begat; the fifth Methusael,

whom Mehujael begat; the sixth Lamech, whom Methusael begat, and who

is the seventh from Adam through Cain. But it was not necessary that

the first-born should succeed their fathers in the kingdom, but those

would succeed who were recommended by the possession of some virtue

useful to the earthly city, or who were chosen by lot, or the son who

was best liked by his father would succeed by a kind of hereditary

right to the throne. And the deluge may have happened during the

lifetime and reign of Lamech, and may have destroyed him along with

all other men, save those who were in the ark. For we cannot be

surprised that, during so long a period from Adam to the deluge, and

with the ages of individuals varying as they did, there should not be

an equal number of generations in both lines, but seven in Cain's,

and ten in Seth's; for as I have already said, Lamech is the seventh

from Adam, Noah the tenth; and in Lamech's case not one son only is

registered, as in the former instances, but more, because it was

uncertain which of them would have succeeded when he died, if there

had intervened any time to reign between his death and the deluge.

But in whatever manner the generations of Cain's line are traced

downwards, whether it be by first-born sons or by the heirs to

the throne, it seems to me that I must by no means omit to notice

that, when Lamech had been set down as the seventh from Adam, there

were named, in addition, as many of his children as made up this

number to eleven, which is the number signifying sin; for three

sons and one daughter are added. The wives of Lamech have another

signification, different from that which I am now pressing. For at

present I am speaking of the children, and not of those by whom the

children were begotten. Since, then, the law is symbolized by the

number ten,--whence that memorable Decalogue,--there is no doubt

that the number eleven, which goes beyond[196] ten, symbolizes the

transgression of the law, and consequently sin. For this reason,

eleven veils of goat's skin were ordered to be hung in the tabernacle

of the testimony, which served in the wanderings of God's people as

an ambulatory temple. And in that haircloth there was a reminder of

sins, because the goats were to be set on the left hand of the Judge;

and therefore, when we confess our sins, we prostrate ourselves in

haircloth, as if we were saying what is written in the psalm, "My

sin is ever before me."[197] The progeny of Adam, then, by Cain

the murderer, is completed in the number eleven, which symbolizes

sin; and this number itself is made up by a woman, as it was by the

same sex that beginning was made of sin by which we all die. And

it was committed that the pleasure of the flesh, which resists the

spirit, might follow; and so Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, means

"pleasure." But from Adam to Noah, in the line of Seth, there are

ten generations. And to Noah three sons are added, of whom, while

one fell into sin, two were blessed by their father; so that, if you

deduct the reprobate and add the gracious sons to the number, you get

twelve,--a number signalized in the case of the patriarchs and of

the apostles, and made up of the parts of the number seven multiplied

into one another,--for three times four, or four times three, give

twelve. These things being so, I see that I must consider and mention

how these two lines, which by their separate genealogies depict the

two cities, one of earth-born, the other of regenerated persons,

became afterwards so mixed and confused, that the whole human race,

with the exception of eight persons, deserved to perish in the deluge.

21. \_Why it is that, as soon as Cain's son Enoch has been named,

the genealogy is forthwith continued as far as the deluge,

while after the mention of Enos, Seth's son, the narrative

returns again to the creation of man.\_

We must first see why, in the enumeration of Cain's posterity, after

Enoch, in whose name the city was built, has been first of all

mentioned, the rest are at once enumerated down to that terminus of

which I have spoken, and at which that race and the whole line was

destroyed in the deluge; while, after Enos the son of Seth has been

mentioned, the rest are not at once named down to the deluge, but a

clause is inserted to the following effect: "This is the book of the

generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness

of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them,

and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."[198]

This seems to me to be inserted for this purpose, that here again the

reckoning of the times may start from Adam himself,--a purpose which

the writer had not in view in speaking of the earthly city, as if God

mentioned it, but did not take account of its duration. But why does

he return to this recapitulation after mentioning the son of Seth,

the man who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, unless because

it was fit thus to present these two cities, the one beginning with a

murderer and ending in a murderer (for Lamech, too, acknowledges to

his two wives that he had committed murder), the other built up by him

who hoped to call upon the name of the Lord God? For the highest and

complete terrestrial duty of the city of God, which is a stranger in

this world, is that which was exemplified in the individual who was

begotten by him who typified the resurrection of the murdered Abel.

That one man is the unity of the whole heavenly city, not yet indeed

complete, but to be completed, as this prophetic figure foreshows. The

son of Cain, therefore, that is, the son of possession (and of what

but an earthly possession?), may have a name in the earthly city which

was built in his name. It is of such the Psalmist says, "They call

their lands after their own names."[199] Wherefore they incur what is

written in another psalm: "Thou, O Lord, in Thy city wilt despise their

image."[200] But as for the son of Seth, the son of the resurrection,

let him hope to call on the name of the Lord God. For he prefigures

that society of men which says, "But I am like a green olive-tree in

the house of God: I have trusted in the mercy of God."[201] But let him

not seek the empty honours of a famous name upon earth, for "Blessed

is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and respecteth

not vanities nor lying follies."[202] After having presented the two

cities, the one founded in the material good of this world, the other

in hope in God, but both starting from a common gate opened in Adam

into this mortal state, and both running on and running out to their

proper and merited ends, Scripture begins to reckon the times, and in

this reckoning includes other generations, making a recapitulation

from Adam, out of whose condemned seed, as out of one mass handed over

to merited damnation, God made some vessels of wrath to dishonour and

others vessels of mercy to honour; in punishment rendering to the

former what is due, in grace giving to the latter what is not due:

in order that by the very comparison of itself with the vessels of

wrath, the heavenly city, which sojourns on earth, may learn not to

put confidence in the liberty of its own will, but may hope to call on

the name of the Lord God. For will, being a nature which was made good

by the good God, but mutable by the immutable, because it was made out

of nothing, can both decline from good to do evil, which takes place

when it freely chooses, and can also escape the evil and do good, which

takes place only by divine assistance.

22. \_Of the fall of the sons of God who were captivated by the

daughters of men, whereby all, with the exception of eight

persons, deservedly perished in the deluge.\_

When the human race, in the exercise of this freedom of will,

increased and advanced, there arose a mixture and confusion of the

two cities by their participation in a common iniquity. And this

calamity, as well as the first, was occasioned by woman, though

not in the same way; for these women were not themselves betrayed,

neither did they persuade the men to sin, but having belonged to the

earthly city and society of the earthly, they had been of corrupt

manners from the first, and were loved for their bodily beauty by the

sons of God, or the citizens of the other city which sojourns in this

world. Beauty is indeed a good gift of God; but that the good may not

think it a great good, God dispenses it even to the wicked. And thus,

when the good that is great and proper to the good was abandoned by

the sons of God, they fell to a paltry good which is not peculiar to

the good, but common to the good and the evil; and when they were

captivated by the daughters of men, they adopted the manners of the

earthly to win them as their brides, and forsook the godly ways

they had followed in their own holy society. And thus beauty, which

is indeed God's handiwork, but only a temporal, carnal, and lower

kind of good, is not fitly loved in preference to God, the eternal,

spiritual, and unchangeable good. When the miser prefers his gold to

justice, it is through no fault of the gold, but of the man; and so

with every created thing. For though it be good, it may be loved with

an evil as well as with a good love: it is loved rightly when it is

loved ordinately; evilly, when inordinately. It is this which some

one has briefly said in these verses in praise of the Creator:[203]

"These are Thine, they are good, because Thou art good who didst

create them. There is in them nothing of ours, unless the sin we

commit when we forget the order of things, and instead of Thee love

that which Thou hast made."

But if the Creator is truly loved, that is, if He Himself is loved

and not another thing in His stead, He cannot be evilly loved; for

love itself is to be ordinately loved, because we do well to love

that which, when we love it, makes us live well and virtuously.

So that it seems to me that it is a brief but true definition of

virtue to say, it is the order of love; and on this account, in the

Canticles, the bride of Christ, the city of God, sings, "Order love

within me."[204] It was the order of this love, then, this charity

or attachment, which the sons of God disturbed when they forsook

God, and were enamoured of the daughters of men.[205] And by these

two names (sons of God and daughters of men) the two cities are

sufficiently distinguished. For though the former were by nature

children of men, they had come into possession of another name by

grace. For in the same Scripture in which the sons of God are said to

have loved the daughters of men, they are also called angels of God;

whence many suppose that they were not men but angels.

23. \_Whether we are to believe that angels, who are of a spiritual

substance, fell in love with the beauty of women, and sought them

in marriage, and that from this connection giants were born.\_

In the third book of this work (c. 5) we made a passing reference

to this question, but did not decide whether angels, inasmuch as

they are spirits, could have bodily intercourse with women. For it

is written, "Who maketh His angels spirits,"[206] that is, He makes

those who are by nature spirits His angels by appointing them to

the duty of bearing His messages. For the Greek word ἄγγελος, which

in Latin appears as "angelus," means a messenger. But whether the

Psalmist speaks of their bodies when he adds, "and His ministers a

flaming fire," or means that God's ministers ought to blaze with love

as with a spiritual fire, is doubtful. However, the same trustworthy

Scripture testifies that angels have appeared to men in such bodies

as could not only be seen, but also touched. There is, too, a very

general rumour, which many have verified by their own experience,

or which trustworthy persons who have heard the experience of

others corroborate, that sylvans and fauns, who are commonly called

"incubi," had often made wicked assaults upon women, and satisfied

their lust upon them; and that certain devils, called Duses by the

Gauls, are constantly attempting and effecting this impurity is so

generally affirmed, that it were impudent to deny it.[207] From

these assertions, indeed, I dare not determine whether there be some

spirits embodied in an aerial substance (for this element, even when

agitated by a fan, is sensibly felt by the body), and who are capable

of lust and of mingling sensibly with women; but certainly I could by

no means believe that God's holy angels could at that time have so

fallen, nor can I think that it is of them the Apostle Peter said,

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down

to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved

unto judgment."[208] I think he rather speaks of those who first

apostatized from God, along with their chief the devil, who enviously

deceived the first man under the form of a serpent. But the same holy

Scripture affords the most ample testimony that even godly men have

been called angels; for of John it is written: "Behold, I send my

messenger (angel) before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way."[209]

And the prophet Malachi, by a peculiar grace specially communicated

to him, was called an angel.[210]

But some are moved by the fact that we have read that the fruit of

the connection between those who are called angels of God and the

women they loved were not men like our own breed, but giants; just

as if there were not born even in our own time (as I have mentioned

above) men of much greater size than the ordinary stature. Was

there not at Rome a few years ago, when the destruction of the city

now accomplished by the Goths was drawing near, a woman, with her

father and mother, who by her gigantic size overtopped all others?

Surprising crowds from all quarters came to see her, and that which

struck them most was the circumstance that neither of her parents

were quite up to the tallest ordinary stature. Giants therefore might

well be born, even before the sons of God, who are also called angels

of God, formed a connection with the daughters of men, or of those

living according to men, that is to say, before the sons of Seth

formed a connection with the daughters of Cain. For thus speaks even

the canonical Scripture itself in the book in which we read of this;

its words are: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on

the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the

sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair [good];

and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord God

said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is

flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were

giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons

of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to

them, the same became the giants, men of renown."[211] These words of

the divine book sufficiently indicate that already there were giants

in the earth in those days, in which the sons of God took wives of

the children of men, when they loved them because they were good,

that is, fair. For it is the custom of this Scripture to call those

who are beautiful in appearance "good." But after this connection had

been formed, then too were giants born. For the words are: "There

were giants in the earth in those days, \_and also after that\_, when

the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men." Therefore there

were giants both before, "in those days," and "also after that."

And the words, "they bare children to them," show plainly enough

that before the sons of God fell in this fashion they begat children

to God, not to themselves,--that is to say, not moved by the lust

of sexual intercourse, but discharging the duty of propagation,

intending to produce not a family to gratify their own pride, but

citizens to people the city of God; and to these they as God's angels

would bear the message, that they should place their hope in God,

like him who was born of Seth the son of resurrection, and who hoped

to call on the name of the Lord God, in which hope they and their

offspring would be co-heirs of eternal blessings, and brethren in the

family of which God is the Father.

But that those angels were not angels in the sense of not being

men, as some suppose, Scripture itself decides, which unambiguously

declares that they were men. For when it had first been stated that

"the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and

they took them wives of all which they chose," it was immediately

added, "And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive

with these men, for that they also are flesh." For by the Spirit of

God they had been made angels of God, and sons of God; but declining

towards lower things, they are called men, a name of nature, not of

grace; and they are called flesh, as deserters of the Spirit, and

by their desertion deserted [by Him]. The Septuagint indeed calls

them both angels of God and sons of God, though all the copies do

not show this, some having only the name "sons of God." And Aquila,

whom the Jews prefer to the other interpreters,[212] has translated

neither angels of God nor sons of God, but sons of gods. But both

are correct. For they were both sons of God, and thus brothers of

their own fathers, who were children of the same God; and they were

sons of gods, because begotten by gods, together with whom they

themselves also were gods, according to that expression of the psalm:

"I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most

High."[213] For the Septuagint translators are justly believed to

have received the Spirit of prophecy; so that, if they made any

alterations under His authority, and did not adhere to a strict

translation, we could not doubt that this was divinely dictated.

However, the Hebrew word may be said to be ambiguous, and to be

susceptible of either translation, "sons of God," or "sons of gods."

Let us omit, then, the fables of those scriptures which are called

apocryphal, because their obscure origin was unknown to the fathers

from whom the authority of the true Scriptures has been transmitted

to us by a most certain and well-ascertained succession. For though

there is some truth in these apocryphal writings, yet they contain

so many false statements, that they have no canonical authority.

We cannot deny that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, left some divine

writings, for this is asserted by the Apostle Jude in his canonical

epistle. But it is not without reason that these writings have no

place in that canon of Scripture which was preserved in the temple

of the Hebrew people by the diligence of successive priests; for

their antiquity brought them under suspicion, and it was impossible

to ascertain whether these were his genuine writings, and they were

not brought forward as genuine by the persons who were found to have

carefully preserved the canonical books by a successive transmission.

So that the writings which are produced under his name, and which

contain these fables about the giants, saying that their fathers were

not men, are properly judged by prudent men to be not genuine; just

as many writings are produced by heretics under the names both of

other prophets, and, more recently, under the names of the apostles,

all of which, after careful examination, have been set apart from

canonical authority under the title of Apocrypha. There is therefore

no doubt that, according to the Hebrew and Christian canonical

Scriptures, there were many giants before the deluge, and that these

were citizens of the earthly society of men, and that the sons of

God, who were according to the flesh the sons of Seth, sunk into this

community when they forsook righteousness. Nor need we wonder that

giants should be born even from these. For all of their children were

not giants; but there were more then than in the remaining periods

since the deluge. And it pleased the Creator to produce them, that

it might thus be demonstrated that neither beauty, nor yet size and

strength, are of much moment to the wise man, whose blessedness lies

in spiritual and immortal blessings, in far better and more enduring

gifts, in the good things that are the peculiar property of the good,

and are not shared by good and bad alike. It is this which another

prophet confirms when he says, "These were the giants, famous from

the beginning, that were of so great stature, and so expert in war.

Those did not the Lord choose, neither gave He the way of knowledge

unto them; but they were destroyed because they had no wisdom, and

perished through their own foolishness."[214]

24. \_How we are to understand this which the Lord said to those who

were to perish in the flood: "Their days shall be\_ 120 \_years."\_

But that which God said, "Their days shall be an hundred and twenty

years," is not to be understood as a prediction that henceforth men

should not live longer than 120 years,--for even after the deluge we

find that they lived more than 500 years,--but we are to understand

that God said this when Noah had nearly completed his fifth century,

that is, had lived 480 years, which Scripture, as it frequently uses

the name of the whole for the largest part, calls 500 years. Now the

deluge came in the 600th year of Noah's life, the second month; and

thus 120 years were predicted as being the remaining span of those

who were doomed, which years being spent, they should be destroyed

by the deluge. And it is not unreasonably believed that the deluge

came as it did, because already there were not found upon earth any

who were not worthy of sharing a death so manifestly judicial,--not

that a good man, who must die some time, would be a jot the worse of

such a death after it was past. Nevertheless there died in the deluge

none of those mentioned in the sacred Scripture as descended from

Seth. But here is the divine account of the cause of the deluge: "The

Lord God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and

that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil

continually. And it repented[215] the Lord that He had made man on

the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will

destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both

man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for

I am angry that I have made them."[216]

25. \_Of the anger of God, which does not inflame His mind, nor

disturb His unchangeable tranquillity.\_

The anger of God is not a disturbing emotion of His mind, but a

judgment by which punishment is inflicted upon sin. His thought

and reconsideration also are the unchangeable reason which

changes things; for He does not, like man, repent of anything He

has done, because in all matters His decision is as inflexible as

His prescience is certain. But if Scripture were not to use such

expressions as the above, it would not familiarly insinuate itself

into the minds of all classes of men, whom it seeks access to for

their good, that it may alarm the proud, arouse the careless,

exercise the inquisitive, and satisfy the intelligent; and this it

could not do, did it not first stoop, and in a manner descend, to

them where they lie. But its denouncing death on all the animals of

earth and air is a declaration of the vastness of the disaster that

was approaching: not that it threatens destruction to the irrational

animals as if they too had incurred it by sin.

26. \_That the ark which Noah was ordered to make figures in

every respect Christ and the church.\_

Moreover, inasmuch as God commanded Noah, a just man, and, as the

truthful Scripture says, a man perfect in his generation,--not indeed

with the perfection of the citizens of the city of God in that

immortal condition in which they equal the angels, but in so far as

they can be perfect in their sojourn in this world,--inasmuch as God

commanded him, I say, to make an ark, in which he might be rescued

from the destruction of the flood, along with his family, \_i.e.\_ his

wife, sons, and daughters-in-law, and along with the animals who, in

obedience to God's command, came to him into the ark: is certainly

a figure of the city of God sojourning in this world; that is to

say, of the church, which is rescued by the wood on which hung the

Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus.[217] For even its

very dimensions, in length, breadth, and height, represent the human

body in which He came, as it had been foretold. For the length of

the human body, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot,

is six times its breadth from side to side, and ten times its depth

or thickness, measuring from back to front: that is to say, if you

measure a man as he lies on his back or on his face, he is six times

as long from head to foot as he is broad from side to side, and ten

times as long as he is high from the ground. And therefore the ark

was made 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height. And

its having a door made in the side of it certainly signified the

wound which was made when the side of the Crucified was pierced with

the spear: for by this those who come to Him enter; for thence flowed

the sacraments by which those who believe are initiated. And the fact

that it was ordered to be made of squared timbers, signifies the

immoveable steadiness of the life of the saints; for however you turn

a cube, it still stands. And the other peculiarities of the ark's

construction are signs of features of the church.

But we have not now time to pursue this subject; and, indeed, we

have already dwelt upon it in the work we wrote against Faustus the

Manichean, who denies that there is anything prophesied of Christ

in the Hebrew books. It may be that one man's exposition excels

another's, and that ours is not the best; but all that is said

must be referred to this city of God we speak of, which sojourns

in this wicked world as in a deluge, at least if the expositor

would not widely miss the meaning of the author. For example, the

interpretation I have given in the work against Faustus, of the

words, "with lower, second, and third storeys shalt thou make it,"

is, that because the church is gathered out of all nations, it is

said to have two storeys, to represent the two kinds of men,--the

circumcision, to wit, and the uncircumcision, or, as the apostle

otherwise calls them, Jews and Gentiles; and to have three storeys,

because all the nations were replenished from the three sons of Noah.

Now any one may object to this interpretation, and may give another

which harmonizes with the rule of faith. For as the ark was to have

rooms not only on the lower, but also on the upper storeys, which

were called "third storeys," that there might be a habitable space

on the third floor from the basement, some one may interpret these

to mean the three graces commended by the apostle,--faith, hope, and

charity. Or even more suitably they may be supposed to represent

those three harvests in the gospel, thirty-fold, sixtyfold, an

hundredfold,--chaste marriage dwelling in the ground floor, chaste

widowhood in the upper, and chaste virginity in the top storey. Or

any better interpretation may be given, so long as the reference to

this city is maintained. And the same statement I would make of all

the remaining particulars in this passage which require exposition,

viz. that although different explanations are given, yet they must

all agree with the one harmonious catholic faith.

27. \_Of the ark and the deluge, and that we cannot agree with

those who receive the bare history, but reject the allegorical

interpretation, nor with those who maintain the figurative and

not the historical meaning.\_

Yet no one ought to suppose either that these things were written for

no purpose, or that we should study only the historical truth, apart

from any allegorical meanings; or, on the contrary, that they are

only allegories, and that there were no such facts at all, or that,

whether it be so or no, there is here no prophecy of the church.

For what right-minded man will contend that books so religiously

preserved during thousands of years, and transmitted by so orderly

a succession, were written without an object, or that only the bare

historical facts are to be considered when we read them? For, not

to mention other instances, if the number of the animals entailed

the construction of an ark of great size, where was the necessity of

sending into it two unclean and seven clean animals of each species,

when both could have been preserved in equal numbers? Or could not

God, who ordered them to be preserved in order to replenish the race,

restore them in the same way He had created them?

But they who contend that these things never happened, but are only

figures setting forth other things, in the first place suppose that

there could not be a flood so great that the water should rise

fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, because it is said

that clouds cannot rise above the top of Mount Olympus, because it

reaches the sky where there is none of that thicker atmosphere in

which winds, clouds, and rains have their origin. They do not reflect

that the densest element of all, earth, can exist there; or perhaps

they deny that the top of the mountain is earth. Why, then, do these

measurers and weighers of the elements contend that earth can be

raised to those aerial altitudes, and that water cannot, while they

admit that water is lighter, and liker to ascend than earth? What

reason do they adduce why earth, the heavier and lower element, has

for so many ages scaled to the tranquil æther, while water, the

lighter, and more likely to ascend, is not suffered to do the same

even for a brief space of time?

They say, too, that the area of that ark could not contain so many

kinds of animals of both sexes, two of the unclean and seven of the

clean. But they seem to me to reckon only one area of 300 cubits long

and 50 broad, and not to remember that there was another similar

in the storey above, and yet another as large in the storey above

that again; and that there was consequently an area of 900 cubits by

150. And if we accept what Origen[218] has with some appropriateness

suggested, that Moses the man of God, being, as it is written,

"learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,"[219] who delighted

in geometry, may have meant geometrical cubits, of which they say

that one is equal to six of our cubits, then who does not see what a

capacity these dimensions give to the ark? For as to their objection

that an ark of such size could not be built, it is a very silly

calumny; for they are aware that huge cities have been built, and

they should remember that the ark was an hundred years in building.

Or, perhaps, though stone can adhere to stone when cemented with

nothing but lime, so that a wall of several miles may be constructed,

yet plank cannot be riveted to plank by mortices, bolts, nails,

and pitch-glue, so as to construct an ark which was not made with

curved ribs but straight timbers, which was not to be launched by its

builders but to be lifted by the natural pressure of the water when

it reached it, and which was to be preserved from shipwreck as it

floated about rather by divine oversight than by human skill.

As to another customary inquiry of the scrupulous about the very

minute creatures, not only such as mice and lizards, but also

locusts, beetles, flies, fleas, and so forth, whether there were not

in the ark a larger number of them than was determined by God in

His command, those persons who are moved by this difficulty are to

be reminded that the words "every creeping thing of the earth" only

indicate that it was not needful to preserve in the ark the animals

that can live in the water, whether the fishes that live submerged

in it, or the sea-birds that swim on its surface. Then, when it is

said "male and female," no doubt reference is made to the repairing

of the races, and consequently there was no need for those creatures

being in the ark which are born without the union of the sexes from

inanimate things, or from their corruption; or if they were in the

ark, they might be there as they commonly are in houses, not in any

determinate numbers; or if it was necessary that there should be a

definite number of all those animals that cannot naturally live in

the water, that so the most sacred mystery which was being enacted

might be bodied forth and perfectly figured in actual realities,

still this was not the care of Noah or his sons, but of God. For

Noah did not catch the animals and put them into the ark, but gave

them entrance as they came seeking it. For this is the force of the

words, "They shall come unto thee,"[1]--not, that is to say, by man's

effort, but by God's will. But certainly we are not required to

believe that those which have no sex also came; for it is expressly

and definitely said, "They shall be male and female."[220] For there

are some animals which are born out of corruption, but yet afterwards

they themselves copulate and produce offspring, as flies; but others,

which have no sex, like bees. Then, as to those animals which have

sex, but without ability to propagate their kind, like mules and

she-mules, it is probable that they were not in the ark, but that

it was counted sufficient to preserve their parents, to wit, the

horse and the ass; and this applies to all hybrids. Yet, if it was

necessary for the completeness of the mystery, they were there; for

even this species has "male and female."

Another question is commonly raised regarding the food of the

carnivorous animals,--whether, without transgressing the command

which fixed the number to be preserved, there were necessarily others

included in the ark for their sustenance; or, as is more probable,

there might be some food which was not flesh, and which yet suited

all. For we know how many animals whose food is flesh eat also

vegetable products and fruits, especially figs and chestnuts. What

wonder is it, therefore, if that wise and just man was instructed

by God what would suit each, so that without flesh he prepared and

stored provision fit for every species? And what is there which

hunger would not make animals eat? Or what could not be made sweet

and wholesome by God, who, with a divine facility, might have enabled

them to do without food at all, had it not been requisite to the

completeness of so great a mystery that they should be fed? But none

but a contentious man can suppose that there was no prefiguring

of the church in so manifold and circumstantial a detail. For the

nations have already so filled the church, and are comprehended in

the framework of its unity, the clean and unclean together, until

the appointed end, that this one very manifest fulfilment leaves no

doubt how we should interpret even those others which are somewhat

more obscure, and which cannot so readily be discerned. And since

this is so, if not even the most audacious will presume to assert

that these things were written without a purpose, or that though the

events really happened they mean nothing, or that they did not really

happen, but are only allegory, or that at all events they are far

from having any figurative reference to the church; if it has been

made out that, on the other hand, we must rather believe that there

was a wise purpose in their being committed to memory and to writing,

and that they did happen, and have a significance, and that this

significance has a prophetic reference to the church, then this book,

having served this purpose, may now be closed, that we may go on to

trace in the history subsequent to the deluge the courses of the two

cities,--the earthly, that lives according to men, and the heavenly,

that lives according to God.

FOOTNOTES:

[130] 1 Cor. xv. 46.

[131] Rom. ix. 21.

[132] Gen. iv. 17.

[133] Comp. \_De Trin.\_ xv. c. 15.

[134] Gal. iv. 21-31.

[135] Rom. ix. 22, 23.

[136] Wisdom viii. 1.

[137] Lucan, \_Phar.\_ i. 95.

[138] Gal. v. 17.

[139] Gal. vi. 2.

[140] 1 Thess. v. 14, 15.

[141] Gal. vi. 1.

[142] Eph. iv. 26.

[143] Matt. xviii. 15.

[144] 1 Tim. v. 20.

[145] Heb. xii. 14.

[146] Matt. xviii. 35.

[147] Rom. vi. 12, 13.

[148] Gen. iv. 6, 7.

[149] Literally, "division."

[150] 1 John iii. 12.

[151] We alter the pronoun to suit Augustine's interpretation.

[152] Gal. v. 17.

[153] Rom. vii. 17.

[154] Rom. vi. 13.

[155] Gen. iii. 16.

[156] Eph. v. 28, 29.

[157] \_C. Faustum. Man.\_ xii. c. 9.

[158] Gen. iv. 17.

[159] Gen. iv. 25.

[160] Lamech, according to the LXX.

[161] Ex. xii. 37.

[162] Virgil, \_Æneid\_, xii. 899, 900. Compare the \_Iliad\_, v. 302,

and Juvenal, xv. 65 et seqq.

"Terra malos homines nunc educat atque pusillos."

[163] Plin. \_Hist. Nat.\_ vii. 16.

[164] See the account given by Herodotus (i. 67) of the discovery of

the bones of Orestes, which, as the story goes, gave a stature of

seven cubits.

[165] Pliny, \_Hist. Nat.\_ vii. 49, merely reports what he had read in

Hellanicus about the Epirotes of Etolia.

[166] "Our own MSS.," of which Augustine here speaks, were the Latin

versions of the Septuagint used by the Church before Jerome's was

received; the "Hebrew MSS." were the versions made from the Hebrew

text. Compare \_De Doct. Christ.\_ ii. 15 et seqq.

[167] Jerome (\_De Quæst. Heb. in Gen.\_) says it was a question famous

in all the churches.--VIVES.

[168] "Quos in auctoritatem celebriorum Ecclesia suscepit."

[169] See below, book xviii. c. 42-44.

[170] C. 8.

[171] On this subject see Wilkinson's note to the second book

(appendix) of Rawlinson's \_Herodotus\_, where all available references

are given.

[172] One hundred and eighty-seven is the number given in the Hebrew,

and one hundred and sixty-seven in the Septuagint; but notwithstanding

the confusion, the argument of Augustine is easily followed.

[173] Gen. vii. 10, 11 (in our version the seventeenth day).

[174] Gen. viii. 4, 5.

[175] Ps. xc. 10.

[176] Gen. iv. 1.

[177] Gen. iv. 25.

[178] Gen. v. 6.

[179] Gen. v. 8.

[180] Matt. i.

[181] His own children being the children of his sister, and

therefore his nephews.

[182] This was allowed by the Egyptians and Athenians, never by the

Romans.

[183] Both in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, though not uniformly, nor in

Latin commonly.

[184] Gen. v. 2.

[185] Luke xx. 35, 36.

[186] Gen. iv. 18-22.

[187] Gen. iv. 26.

[188] Rom. viii. 24, 25.

[189] Rom. x. 13.

[190] Jer. xvii. 5.

[191] \_Æneid\_, i. 288.

[192] \_Æneid\_, iii. 97.

[193] Luke xx. 34.

[194] Rom. ix. 5.

[195] Eusebius, Jerome, Bede, and others, who follow the Septuagint,

reckon only 2242 years, which Vives explains by supposing Augustine

to have made a copyist's error.

[196] \_Transgreditur.\_

[197] Ps. li. 3.

[198] Gen. v. 1.

[199] Ps. xlix. 11.

[200] Ps. lxxiii. 20.

[201] Ps. lii. 8.

[202] Ps. xl. 4.

[203] Or, according to another reading, "Which I briefly said in

these verses in praise of a taper."

[204] Cant. ii. 4.

[205] See \_De Doct. Christ.\_ i. 28.

[206] Ps. civ. 4.

[207] On these kinds of devils, see the note of Vives \_in loc.\_,

or Lecky's \_Hist. of Rationalism\_, i. 26, who quotes from Maury's

\_Histoire de la Magie\_, that the Dusii were Celtic spirits, and are

the origin of our "Deuce."

[208] 2 Pet. ii. 4.

[209] Mark i. 2.

[210] Mal. ii. 7.

[211] Gen. vi. 1-4. Lactantius (\_Inst.\_ ii. 15), Sulpicius Severus

(\_Hist.\_ i. 2), and others suppose from this passage that angels had

commerce with the daughters of men. See further references in the

Commentary of Pererius \_in loc\_.

[212] Aquila lived in the time of Hadrian, to whom he is said to

have been related. He was excommunicated from the Church for the

practice of astrology; and is best known by his translation of the

Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, which he executed with great care and

accuracy, though he has been charged with falsifying passages to

support the Jews in their opposition to Christianity.

[213] Ps. lxxxii. 6.

[214] Baruch iii. 26-28.

[215] Lit.: "The Lord thought and reconsidered."

[216] Gen. vi. 5-7.

[217] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[218] In his second homily on Genesis.

[219] Acts vii. 22.

[220] Gen. vi. 19, 20.

BOOK SIXTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

IN THE FORMER PART OF THIS BOOK, FROM THE FIRST TO THE TWELFTH

CHAPTER, THE PROGRESS OF THE TWO CITIES, THE EARTHLY AND

THE HEAVENLY, FROM NOAH TO ABRAHAM, IS EXHIBITED FROM HOLY

SCRIPTURE: IN THE LATTER PART, THE PROGRESS OF THE HEAVENLY

ALONE, FROM ABRAHAM TO THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, IS THE SUBJECT.

1. \_Whether, after the deluge, from Noah to Abraham, any families

can be found who lived according to God.\_

It is difficult to discover from Scripture, whether, after the

deluge, traces of the holy city are continuous, or are so interrupted

by intervening seasons of godlessness, that not a single worshipper

of the one true God was found among men; because from Noah, who,

with his wife, three sons, and as many daughters-in-law, achieved

deliverance in the ark from the destruction of the deluge, down to

Abraham, we do not find in the canonical books that the piety of

any one is celebrated by express divine testimony, unless it be in

the case of Noah, who commends with a prophetic benediction his two

sons Shem and Japheth, while he beheld and foresaw what was long

afterwards to happen. It was also by this prophetic spirit that,

when his middle son--that is, the son who was younger than the first

and older than the last born--had sinned against him, he cursed him

not in his own person, but in his son's (his own grandson's), in the

words, "Cursed be the lad Canaan; a servant shall he be unto his

brethren."[221] Now Canaan was born of Ham, who, so far from covering

his sleeping father's nakedness, had divulged it. For the same reason

also he subjoins the blessing on his two other sons, the oldest and

youngest, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall

be his servant. God shall gladden Japheth, and he shall dwell in the

houses of Shem."[222] And so, too, the planting of the vine by Noah,

and his intoxication by its fruit, and his nakedness while he slept,

and the other things done at that time, and recorded, are all of them

pregnant with prophetic meanings, and veiled in mysteries.[223]

2. \_What was prophetically prefigured in the sons of Noah.\_

The things which then were hidden are now sufficiently revealed

by the actual events which have followed. For who can carefully

and intelligently consider these things without recognising them

accomplished in Christ? Shem, of whom Christ was born in the flesh,

means "named." And what is of greater name than Christ, the fragrance

of whose name is now everywhere perceived, so that even prophecy

sings of it beforehand, comparing it in the Song of Songs[224] to

ointment poured forth? Is it not also in the houses of Christ, that

is, in the churches, that the "enlargement" of the nations dwells?

For Japheth means "enlargement." And Ham (\_i.e.\_ hot), who was the

middle son of Noah, and, as it were, separated himself from both,

and remained between them, neither belonging to the first-fruits of

Israel nor to the fulness of the Gentiles, what does he signify but

the tribe of heretics, hot with the spirit, not of patience, but of

impatience, with which the breasts of heretics are wont to blaze,

and with which they disturb the peace of the saints? But even the

heretics yield an advantage to those that make proficiency, according

to the apostle's saying, "There must also be heresies, that they

which are approved may be made manifest among you."[225] Whence,

too, it is elsewhere said, "The son that receives instruction will

be wise, and he uses the foolish as his servant."[226] For while the

hot restlessness of heretics stirs questions about many articles of

the catholic faith, the necessity of defending them forces us both to

investigate them more accurately, to understand them more clearly,

and to proclaim them more earnestly; and the question mooted by an

adversary becomes the occasion of instruction. However, not only

those who are openly separated from the church, but also all who

glory in the Christian name, and at the same time lead abandoned

lives, may without absurdity seem to be figured by Noah's middle

son: for the passion of Christ, which was signified by that man's

nakedness, is at once proclaimed by their profession, and dishonoured

by their wicked conduct. Of such, therefore, it has been said,

"By their fruits ye shall know them."[227] And therefore was Ham

cursed in his son, he being, as it were, his fruit. So, too, this

son of his, Canaan, is fitly interpreted "their movement," which is

nothing else than their work. But Shem and Japheth, that is to say,

the circumcision and uncircumcision, or, as the apostle otherwise

calls them, the Jews and Greeks, but called and justified, having

somehow discovered the nakedness of their father (which signifies

the Saviour's passion), took a garment and laid it upon their backs,

and entered backwards and covered their father's nakedness, without

their seeing what their reverence hid. For we both honour the passion

of Christ as accomplished for us, and we hate the crime of the Jews

who crucified Him. The garment signifies the sacrament, their backs

the memory of things past: for the church celebrates the passion of

Christ as already accomplished, and no longer to be looked forward

to, now that Japheth already dwells in the habitations of Shem, and

their wicked brother between them.

But the wicked brother is, in the person of his son (\_i.e.\_ his

work), the boy, or slave, of his good brothers, when good men make

a skilful use of bad men, either for the exercise of their patience

or for their advancement in wisdom. For the apostle testifies that

there are some who preach Christ from no pure motives; "but," says

he, "whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I

therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."[228] For it is Christ

Himself who planted the vine of which the prophet says, "The vine of

the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel;"[229] and He drinks of its

wine, whether we thus understand that cup of which He says, "Can ye

drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"[230] and, "Father, if it

be possible, let this cup pass from me,"[231] by which He obviously

means His passion. Or, as wine is the fruit of the vine, we may

prefer to understand that from this vine, that is to say, from the

race of Israel, He has assumed flesh and blood that He might suffer;

"and he was drunken," that is, He suffered; "and was naked," that is,

His weakness appeared in His suffering, as the apostle says, "though

He was crucified through weakness."[232] Wherefore the same apostle

says, "The weakness of God is stronger than men; and the foolishness

of God is wiser than men."[233] And when to the expression "he was

naked" Scripture adds "in his house," it elegantly intimates that

Jesus was to suffer the cross and death at the hands of His own

household, His own kith and kin, the Jews. This passion of Christ is

only externally and verbally professed by the reprobate, for what

they profess they do not understand. But the elect hold in the inner

man this so great mystery, and honour inwardly in the heart this

weakness and foolishness of God. And of this there is a figure in Ham

going out to proclaim his father's nakedness; while Shem and Japheth,

to cover or honour it, went in, that is to say, did it inwardly.

These secrets of divine Scripture we investigate as well as we can.

All will not accept our interpretation with equal confidence, but

all hold it certain that these things were neither done nor recorded

without some foreshadowing of future events, and that they are to be

referred only to Christ and His church, which is the city of God,

proclaimed from the very beginning of human history by figures which

we now see everywhere accomplished. From the blessing of the two sons

of Noah, and the cursing of the middle son, down to Abraham, or for

more than a thousand years, there is, as I have said, no mention of

any righteous persons who worshipped God. I do not therefore conclude

that there were none; but it had been tedious to mention every one,

and would have displayed historical accuracy rather than prophetic

foresight. The object of the writer of these sacred books, or rather

of the Spirit of God in him, is not only to record the past, but

to depict the future, so far as it regards the city of God; for

whatever is said of those who are not its citizens, is given either

for her instruction, or as a foil to enhance her glory. Yet we are

not to suppose that all that is recorded has some signification; but

those things which have no signification of their own are interwoven

for the sake of the things which are significant. It is only the

ploughshare that cleaves the soil; but to effect this, other parts of

the plough are requisite. It is only the strings in harps and other

musical instruments which produce melodious sounds; but that they may

do so, there are other parts of the instrument which are not indeed

struck by those who sing, but are connected with the strings which

are struck, and produce musical notes. So in this prophetic history

some things are narrated which have no significance, but are, as it

were, the framework to which the significant things are attached.

3. \_Of the generations of the three sons of Noah.\_

We must therefore introduce into this work an explanation of the

generations of the three sons of Noah, in so far as that may illustrate

the progress in time of the two cities. Scripture first mentions that

of the youngest son, who is called Japheth: he had eight sons,[234]

and by two of these sons seven grandchildren, three by one son, four

by the other; in all, fifteen descendants. Ham, Noah's middle son, had

four sons, and by one of them five grandsons, and by one of these two

great-grandsons; in all, eleven. After enumerating these, Scripture

returns to the first of the sons, and says, "Cush begat Nimrod; he

began to be a giant on the earth. He was a giant hunter against the

Lord God: wherefore they say, As Nimrod the giant hunter against the

Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, Erech, Accad, and

Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Assur, and

built Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between

Nineveh and Calah: this was a great city." Now this Cush, father of

the giant Nimrod, is the first-named among the sons of Ham, to whom

five sons and two grandsons are ascribed. But he either begat this

giant after his grandsons were born, or, which is more credible,

Scripture speaks of him separately on account of his eminence; for

mention is also made of his kingdom, which began with that magnificent

city Babylon, and the other places, whether cities or districts,

mentioned along with it. But what is recorded of the land of Shinar

which belonged to Nimrod's kingdom, to wit, that Assur went forth from

it and built Nineveh and the other cities mentioned with it, happened

long after; but he takes occasion to speak of it here on account of

the grandeur of the Assyrian kingdom, which was wonderfully extended

by Ninus son of Belus, and founder of the great city Nineveh, which

was named after him, Nineveh, from Ninus. But Assur, father of the

Assyrian, was not one of the sons of Ham, Noah's middle son, but is

found among the sons of Shem, his eldest son. Whence it appears that

among Shem's offspring there arose men who afterwards took possession

of that giant's kingdom, and advancing from it, founded other cities,

the first of which was called Nineveh, from Ninus. From him Scripture

returns to Ham's other son, Mizraim; and his sons are enumerated, not

as seven individuals, but as seven nations. And from the sixth, as

if from the sixth son, the race called the Philistines are said to

have sprung; so that there are in all eight. Then it returns again to

Canaan, in whose person Ham was cursed; and his eleven sons are named.

Then the territories they occupied, and some of the cities, are named.

And thus, if we count sons and grandsons, there are thirty-one of Ham's

descendants registered.

It remains to mention the sons of Shem, Noah's eldest son; for to

him this genealogical narrative gradually ascends from the youngest.

But in the commencement of the record of Shem's sons there is an

obscurity which calls for explanation, since it is closely connected

with the object of our investigation. For we read, "Unto Shem also,

the father of all the children of Heber, the brother of Japheth the

elder, were children born."[235] This is the order of the words:

And to Shem was born Heber, even to himself, that is, to Shem

himself was born Heber, and Shem is the father of all his children.

We are intended to understand that Shem is the patriarch of all

his posterity who were to be mentioned, whether sons, grandsons,

great-grandsons, or descendants at any remove. For Shem did not beget

Heber, who was indeed in the fifth generation from him. For Shem

begat, among other sons, Arphaxad; Arphaxad begat Cainan, Cainan

begat Salah, Salah begat Heber. And it was with good reason that he

was named first among Shem's offspring, taking precedence even of his

sons, though only a grandchild of the fifth generation; for from him,

as tradition says, the Hebrews derived their name, though the other

etymology which derives the name from Abraham (as if \_Abrahews\_) may

possibly be correct. But there can be little doubt that the former

is the right etymology, and that they were called after Heber,

\_Heberews\_, and then, dropping a letter, Hebrews; and so was their

language called Hebrew, which was spoken by none but the people

of Israel among whom was the city of God, mysteriously prefigured

in all the people, and truly present in the saints. Six of Shem's

sons then are first named, then four grandsons born to one of these

sons; then it mentions another son of Shem, who begat a grandson;

and his son, again, or Shem's great-grandson, was Heber. And Heber

begat two sons, and called the one Peleg, which means "dividing;"

and Scripture subjoins the reason of this name, saying, "for in

his days was the earth divided." What this means will afterwards

appear. Heber's other son begat twelve sons; consequently all Shem's

descendants are twenty-seven. The total number of the progeny of the

three sons of Noah is seventy-three, fifteen by Japheth, thirty-one

by Ham, twenty-seven by Shem. Then Scripture adds, "These are the

sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their

lands, after their nations." And so of the whole number: "These

are the families of the sons of Noah after their generations, in

their nations; and by these were the isles of the nations dispersed

through the earth after the flood." From which we gather that the

seventy-three (or rather, as I shall presently show, seventy-two)

were not individuals, but nations. For in a former passage, when the

sons of Japheth were enumerated, it is said in conclusion, "By these

were the isles of the nations divided in their lands, every one after

his language, in their tribes, and in their nations."

But nations are expressly mentioned among the sons of Ham, as I

showed above. "Mizraim begat those who are called Ludim;" and so also

of the other seven nations. And after enumerating all of them, it

concludes, "These are the sons of Ham, in their families, according

to their languages, in their territories, and in their nations." The

reason, then, why the children of several of them are not mentioned,

is that they belonged by birth to other nations, and did not

themselves become nations. Why else is it, that though eight sons are

reckoned to Japheth, the sons of only two of these are mentioned; and

though four are reckoned to Ham, only three are spoken of as having

sons; and though six are reckoned to Shem, the descendants of only

two of these are traced? Did the rest remain childless? We cannot

suppose so; but they did not produce nations so great as to warrant

their being mentioned, but were absorbed in the nations to which they

belonged by birth.

4. \_Of the diversity of languages, and of the founding of Babylon.\_

But though these nations are said to have been dispersed according to

their languages, yet the narrator recurs to that time when all had

but one language, and explains how it came to pass that a diversity

of languages was introduced. "The whole earth," he says, "was of one

lip, and all had one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed

from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and

dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, and let us make

bricks, and burn them thoroughly. And they had bricks for stone, and

slime for mortar. And they said, Come, and let us build for ourselves

a city, and a tower whose top shall reach the sky; and let us make

us a name, before we be scattered abroad on the face of all the

earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which

the children, of men builded. And the Lord God said, Behold, the

people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin

to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have

imagined to do. Come, and let us go down, and confound there their

language, that they may not understand one another's speech. And God

scattered them thence on the face of all the earth: and they left

off to build the city and the tower. Therefore the name of it is

called Confusion; because the Lord did there confound the language of

all the earth: and the Lord God scattered them thence on the face of

all the earth."[236] This city, which was called Confusion, is the

same as Babylon, whose wonderful construction Gentile history also

notices. For Babylon means Confusion. Whence we conclude that the

giant Nimrod was its founder, as had been hinted a little before,

where Scripture, in speaking of him, says that the beginning of

his kingdom was Babylon, that is, Babylon had a supremacy over the

other cities as the metropolis and royal residence; although it did

not rise to the grand dimensions designed by its proud and impious

founder. The plan was to make it so high that it should reach the

sky, whether this was meant of one tower which they intended to

build higher than the others, or of all the towers, which might be

signified by the singular number, as we speak of "the soldier,"

meaning the army, and of the frog or the locust, when we refer to the

whole multitude of frogs and locusts in the plagues with which Moses

smote the Egyptians.[237] But what did these vain and presumptuous

men intend? How did they expect to raise this lofty mass against God,

when they had built it above all the mountains and the clouds of

the earth's atmosphere? What injury could any spiritual or material

elevation do to God? The safe and true way to heaven is made by

humility, which lifts up the heart to the Lord, not against Him;

as this giant is said to have been a "hunter \_against\_ the Lord."

This has been misunderstood by some through the ambiguity of the

Greek word, and they have translated it, not "against the Lord," but

"before the Lord;" for ἔναντιον means both "before" and "against."

In the Psalm this word is rendered, "Let us weep \_before\_ the Lord

our Maker."[238] The same word occurs in the book of Job, where it is

written, "Thou hast broken into fury \_against\_ the Lord."[239] And

so this giant is to be recognised as a "hunter \_against\_ the Lord."

And what is meant by the term "hunter" but deceiver, oppressor, and

destroyer of the animals of the earth? He and his people, therefore,

erected this tower against the Lord, and so gave expression to their

impious pride; and justly was their wicked intention punished by

God, even though it was unsuccessful. But what was the nature of the

punishment? As the tongue is the instrument of domination, in it

pride was punished; so that man, who would not understand God when

He issued His commands, should be misunderstood when he himself gave

orders. Thus was that conspiracy disbanded, for each man retired from

those he could not understand, and associated with those whose speech

was intelligible; and the nations were divided according to their

languages, and scattered over the earth as seemed good to God, who

accomplished this in ways hidden from and incomprehensible to us.

5. \_Of God's coming down to confound the languages of the builders

of the city.\_

We read, "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the

sons of men built:" it was not the sons of God, but that society

which lived in a merely human way, and which we call the earthly

city. God, who is always wholly everywhere, does not move locally;

but He is said to descend when He does anything in the earth out of

the usual course, which, as it were, makes His presence felt. And

in the same way, He does not by "seeing" learn some new thing, for

He cannot ever be ignorant of anything; but He is said to see and

recognise, in time, that which He causes others to see and recognise.

And therefore that city was not previously being seen as God made

it be seen when He showed how offensive it was to Him. We might,

indeed, interpret God's descending to the city of the descent of

His angels in whom He dwells; so that the following words, "And the

Lord God said, Behold, they are all one race and of one language,"

and also what follows, "Come, and let us go down and confound

their speech," are a recapitulation, explaining how the previously

intimated "descent of the Lord" was accomplished. For if He had

already gone down, why does He say, "Come, and let us go down and

confound?"--words which seem to be addressed to the angels, and to

intimate that He who was in the angels descended in their descent.

And the words most appropriately are, not, "Go ye down and confound,"

but, "Let us confound their speech;" showing that He so works by His

servants, that they are themselves also fellow-labourers with God, as

the apostle says, "For we are fellow-labourers with God."[240]

6. \_What we are to understand by God's speaking to the angels.\_

We might have supposed that the words uttered at the creation of man,

"Let us," and not Let me, "make man," were addressed to the angels,

had He not added "in our image;" but as we cannot believe that man

was made in the image of angels, or that the image of God is the

same as that of angels, it is proper to refer this expression to the

plurality of the Trinity. And yet this Trinity, being one God, even

after saying "Let \_us\_ make," goes on to say, "And God made man in

His image,"[241] and not "Gods made," or "in their image." And were

there any difficulty in applying to the angels the words, "Come,

and let us go down and confound their speech," we might refer the

plural to the Trinity, as if the Father were addressing the Son and

the Holy Spirit; but it rather belongs to the angels to approach God

by holy movements, that is, by pious thoughts, and thereby to avail

themselves of the unchangeable truth which rules in the court of

heaven as their eternal law. For they are not themselves the truth;

but partaking in the creative truth, they are moved towards it as

the fountain of life, that what they have not in themselves they may

obtain in it. And this movement of theirs is steady, for they never

go back from what they have reached. And to these angels God does not

speak, as we speak to one another, or to God, or to angels, or as the

angels speak to us, or as God speaks to us through them: He speaks

to them in an ineffable manner of His own, and that which He says is

conveyed to us in a manner suited to our capacity. For the speaking

of God antecedent and superior to all His works, is the immutable

reason of His work: it has no noisy and passing sound, but an energy

eternally abiding and producing results in time. Thus He speaks to

the holy angels; but to us, who are far off, He speaks otherwise.

When, however, we hear with the inner ear some part of the speech

of God, we approximate to the angels. But in this work I need not

labour to give an account of the ways in which God speaks. For either

the unchangeable Truth speaks directly to the mind of the rational

creature in some indescribable way, or speaks through the changeable

creature, either presenting spiritual images to our spirit, or bodily

voices to our bodily sense.

The words, "Nothing will be restrained from them which they have

imagined to do,"[242] are assuredly not meant as an affirmation, but

as an interrogation, such as is used by persons threatening, as,

\_e.g.\_, when Dido exclaims,

"They will not take arms and pursue?"[243]

We are to understand the words as if it had been said, Shall nothing

be restrained from them which they have imagined to do?[244] From

these three men, therefore, the three sons of Noah we mean, 73, or

rather, as the catalogue will show, 72 nations and as many languages

were dispersed over the earth, and as they increased filled even the

islands. But the nations multiplied much more than the languages. For

even in Africa we know several barbarous nations which have but one

language; and who can doubt that, as the human race increased, men

contrived to pass to the islands in ships?

7. \_Whether even the remotest islands received their\_ FAUNA \_from

the animals which were preserved, through the deluge, in the ark\_.

There is a question raised about all those kinds of beasts which are

not domesticated, nor are produced like frogs from the earth, but are

propagated by male and female parents, such as wolves and animals of

that kind; and it is asked how they could be found in the islands

after the deluge, in which all the animals not in the ark perished,

unless the breed was restored from those which were preserved in

pairs in the ark. It might, indeed, be said that they crossed to

the islands by swimming, but this could only be true of those very

near the mainland; whereas there are some so distant, that we fancy

no animal could swim to them. But if men caught them and took them

across with themselves, and thus propagated these breeds in their new

abodes, this would not imply an incredible fondness for the chase. At

the same time, it cannot be denied that by the intervention of angels

they might be transferred by God's order or permission. If, however,

they were produced out of the earth as at their first creation, when

God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature,"[245]

this makes it more evident that all kinds of animals were preserved

in the ark, not so much for the sake of renewing the stock, as of

prefiguring the various nations which were to be saved in the church;

this, I say, is more evident, if the earth brought forth many animals

in islands to which they could not cross over.

8. \_Whether certain monstrous races of men are derived from the

stock of Adam or Noah's sons.\_

It is also asked whether we are to believe that certain monstrous

races of men, spoken of in secular history,[246] have sprung from

Noah's sons, or rather, I should say, from that one man from whom

they themselves were descended. For it is reported that some have

one eye in the middle of the forehead; some, feet turned backwards

from the heel; some, a double sex, the right breast like a man, the

left like a woman, and that they alternately beget and bring forth:

others are said to have no mouth, and to breathe only through the

nostrils; others are but a cubit high, and are therefore called by

the Greeks "Pigmies:"[247] they say that in some places the women

conceive in their fifth year, and do not live beyond their eighth.

So, too, they tell of a race who have two feet but only one leg, and

are of marvellous swiftness, though they do not bend the knee: they

are called Skiopodes, because in the hot weather they lie down on

their backs and shade themselves with their feet. Others are said to

have no head, and their eyes in their shoulders; and other human or

quasi-human races are depicted in mosaic in the harbour esplanade of

Carthage, on the faith of histories of rarities. What shall I say

of the Cynocephali, whose dog-like head and barking proclaim them

beasts rather than men? But we are not bound to believe all we hear

of these monstrosities. But whoever is anywhere born a man, that

is, a rational mortal animal, no matter what unusual appearance he

presents in colour, movement, sound, nor how peculiar he is in some

power, part, or quality of his nature, no Christian can doubt that he

springs from that one protoplast. We can distinguish the common human

nature from that which is peculiar, and therefore wonderful.

The same account which is given of monstrous births in individual

cases can be given of monstrous races. For God, the Creator of

all, knows where and when each thing ought to be, or to have been

created, because He sees the similarities and diversities which can

contribute to the beauty of the whole. But he who cannot see the

whole is offended by the deformity of the part, because he is blind

to that which balances it, and to which it belongs. We know that

men are born with more than four fingers on their hands or toes on

their feet: this is a smaller matter; but far from us be the folly

of supposing that the Creator mistook the number of a man's fingers,

though we cannot account for the difference. And so in cases where

the divergence from the rule is greater. He whose works no man justly

finds fault with, knows what He has done. At Hippo-Diarrhytus there

is a man whose hands are crescent-shaped, and have only two fingers

each, and his feet similarly formed. If there were a race like him,

it would be added to the history of the curious and wonderful. Shall

we therefore deny that this man is descended from that one man who

was first created? As for the Androgyni, or Hermaphrodites, as

they are called, though they are rare, yet from time to time there

appear persons of sex so doubtful, that it remains uncertain from

which sex they take their name; though it is customary to give them

a masculine name, as the more worthy. For no one ever called them

Hermaphroditesses. Some years ago, quite within my own memory, a man

was born in the East, double in his upper, but single in his lower

half--having two heads, two chests, four hands, but one body and two

feet like an ordinary man; and he lived so long that many had an

opportunity of seeing him. But who could enumerate all the human

births that have differed widely from their ascertained parents? As,

therefore, no one will deny that these are all descended from that

one man, so all the races which are reported to have diverged in

bodily appearance from the usual course which nature generally or

almost universally preserves, if they are embraced in that definition

of man as rational and mortal animals, unquestionably trace their

pedigree to that one first father of all. We are supposing these

stories about various races who differ from one another and from

us to be true; but possibly they are not: for if we were not aware

that apes, and monkeys, and sphinxes are not men, but beasts, those

historians would possibly describe them as races of men, and flaunt

with impunity their false and vainglorious discoveries. But supposing

they are men of whom these marvels are recorded, what if God has seen

fit to create some races in this way, that we might not suppose that

the monstrous births which appear among ourselves are the failures

of that wisdom whereby He fashions the human nature, as we speak of

the failure of a less perfect workman? Accordingly, it ought not to

seem absurd to us, that as in individual races there are monstrous

births, so in the whole race there are monstrous races. Wherefore, to

conclude this question cautiously and guardedly, either these things

which have been told of some races have no existence at all; or if

they do exist, they are not human races; or if they are human, they

are descended from Adam.

9. \_Whether we are to believe in the Antipodes.\_

But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on

the opposite side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to

us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours, that is on no ground

credible. And, indeed, it is not affirmed that this has been learned

by historical knowledge, but by scientific conjecture, on the ground

that the earth is suspended within the concavity of the sky, and that

it has as much room on the one side of it as on the other: hence they

say that the part which is beneath must also be inhabited. But they do

not remark that, although it be supposed or scientifically demonstrated

that the world is of a round and spherical form, yet it does not

follow that the other side of the earth is bare of water; nor even,

though it be bare, does it immediately follow that it is peopled. For

Scripture, which proves the truth of its historical statements by the

accomplishment of its prophecies, gives no false information; and it is

too absurd to say, that some men might have taken ship and traversed

the whole wide ocean, and crossed from this side of the world to the

other, and that thus even the inhabitants of that distant region are

descended from that one first man. Wherefore let us seek if we can find

the city of God that sojourns on earth among those human races who are

catalogued as having been divided into seventy-two nations and as many

languages. For it continued down to the deluge and the ark, and is

proved to have existed still among the sons of Noah by their blessings,

and chiefly in the eldest son Shem; for Japheth received this blessing,

that he should dwell in the tents of Shem.

10. \_Of the genealogy of Shem, in whose line the city of God

is preserved till the time of Abraham.\_

It is necessary, therefore, to preserve the series of generations

descending from Shem, for the sake of exhibiting the city of God

after the flood; as before the flood it was exhibited in the series

of generations descending from Seth. And therefore does divine

Scripture, after exhibiting the earthly city as Babylon or "Confusion,"

revert to the patriarch Shem, and recapitulate the generations from

him to Abraham, specifying besides, the year in which each father

begat the son that belonged to this line, and how long he lived. And

unquestionably it is this which fulfils the promise I made, that it

should appear why it is said of the sons of Heber, "The name of the

one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided."[248] For what

can we understand by the division of the earth, if not the diversity

of languages? And, therefore, omitting the other sons of Shem, who

are not concerned in this matter, Scripture gives the genealogy of

those by whom the line runs on to Abraham, as before the flood those

are given who carried on the line to Noah from Seth. Accordingly this

series of generations begins thus: "These are the generations of Shem:

Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after

the flood. And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years,

and begat sons and daughters." In like manner it registers the rest,

naming the year of his life in which each begat the son who belonged

to that line which extends to Abraham. It specifies, too, how many

years he lived thereafter, begetting sons and daughters, that we may

not childishly suppose that the men named were the only men, but may

understand how the population increased, and how regions and kingdoms

so vast could be populated by the descendants of Shem; especially the

kingdom of Assyria, from which Ninus subdued the surrounding nations,

reigning with brilliant prosperity, and bequeathing to his descendants

a vast but thoroughly consolidated empire, which held together for many

centuries.

But to avoid needless prolixity, we shall mention not the number of

years each member of this series lived, but only the year of his life

in which he begat his heir, that we may thus reckon the number of

years from the flood to Abraham, and may at the same time leave room

to touch briefly and cursorily upon some other matters necessary to

our argument. In the second year, then, after the flood, Shem when

he was a hundred years old begat Arphaxad; Arphaxad when he was 135

years old begat Cainan; Cainan when he was 130 years begat Salah.

Salah himself, too, was the same age when he begat Eber. Eber lived

134 years, and begat Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided.

Peleg himself lived 130 years, and begat Reu; and Reu lived 132

years, and begat Serug; Serug 130, and begat Nahor; and Nahor 79, and

begat Terah; and Terah 70, and begat Abram, whose name God afterwards

changed into \_Abraham\_. There are thus from the flood to Abraham 1072

years, according to the Vulgate or Septuagint versions. In the Hebrew

copies far fewer years are given; and for this either no reason or a

not very credible one is given.

When, therefore, we look for the city of God in these seventy-two

nations, we cannot affirm that while they had but one lip, that is,

one language, the human race had departed from the worship of the

true God, and that genuine godliness had survived only in those

generations which descend from Shem through Arphaxad and reach to

Abraham; but from the time when they proudly built a tower to

heaven, a symbol of godless exaltation, the city or society of the

wicked becomes apparent. Whether it was only disguised before, or

non-existent; whether both cities remained after the flood,--the

godly in the two sons of Noah who were blessed, and in their

posterity, and the ungodly in the cursed son and his descendants,

from whom sprang that mighty hunter against the Lord,--is not easily

determined. For possibly--and certainly this is more credible--there

were despisers of God among the descendants of the two sons, even

before Babylon was founded, and worshippers of God among the

descendants of Ham. Certainly neither race was ever obliterated from

earth. For in both the Psalms in which it is said, "They are all

gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that

doeth good, no, not one," we read further, "Have all the workers of

iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and

call not upon the Lord."[249] There was then a people of God even at

that time. And therefore the words, "There is none that doeth good,

no, not one," were said of the sons of men, not of the sons of God.

For it had been previously said, "God looked down from heaven upon

the sons of men, to see if any understood and sought after God;" and

then follow the words which demonstrate that all the sons of men,

that is, all who belong to the city which lives according to man, not

according to God, are reprobate.

11. \_That the original language in use among men was that which was

afterwards called Hebrew, from Heber, in whose family it was

preserved when the confusion of tongues occurred.\_

Wherefore, as the fact of all using one language did not secure the

absence of sin-infected men from the race,--for even before the

deluge there was one language, and yet all but the single family of

just Noah were found worthy of destruction by the flood,--so when

the nations, by a prouder godlessness, earned the punishment of the

dispersion and the confusion of tongues, and the city of the godless

was called Confusion or Babylon, there was still the house of Heber

in which the primitive language of the race survived. And therefore,

as I have already mentioned, when an enumeration is made of the

sons of Shem, who each founded a nation, Heber is first mentioned,

although he was of the fifth generation from Shem. And because, when

the other races were divided by their own peculiar languages, his

family preserved that language which is not unreasonably believed to

have been the common language of the race, it was on this account

thenceforth named Hebrew. For it then became necessary to distinguish

this language from the rest by a proper name; though, while there was

only one, it had no other name than the language of man, or human

speech, it alone being spoken by the whole human race. Some one will

say: If the earth was divided by languages in the days of Peleg,

Heber's son, that language, which was formerly common to all, should

rather have been called after Peleg. But we are to understand that

Heber himself gave to his son this name Peleg, which means Division;

because he was born when the earth was divided, that is, at the very

time of the division, and that this is the meaning of the words, "In

his days the earth was divided."[250] For unless Heber had been still

alive when the languages were multiplied, the language which was

preserved in his house would not have been called after him. We are

induced to believe that this was the primitive and common language,

because the multiplication and change of languages was introduced

as a punishment, and it is fit to ascribe to the people of God an

immunity from this punishment. Nor is it without significance that

this is the language which Abraham retained, and that he could not

transmit it to all his descendants, but only to those of Jacob's

line, who distinctively and eminently constituted God's people, and

received His covenants, and were Christ's progenitors according to

the flesh. In the same way, Heber himself did not transmit that

language to all his posterity, but only to the line from which

Abraham sprang. And thus, although it is not expressly stated,

that when the wicked were building Babylon there was a godly seed

remaining, this indistinctness is intended to stimulate research

rather than to elude it. For when we see that originally there was

one common language, and that Heber is mentioned before all Shem's

sons, though he belonged to the fifth generation from him, and that

the language which the patriarchs and prophets used, not only in

their conversation, but in the authoritative language of Scripture,

is called Hebrew, when we are asked where that primitive and common

language was preserved after the confusion of tongues, certainly, as

there can be no doubt that those among whom it was preserved were

exempt from the punishment it embodied, what other suggestion can we

make, than that it survived in the family of him whose name it took,

and that this is no small proof of the righteousness of this family,

that the punishment with which the other families were visited did

not fall upon it?

But yet another question is mooted: How did Heber and his son Peleg

each found a nation, if they had but one language? For no doubt the

Hebrew nation propagated from Heber through Abraham, and becoming

through him a great people, is one nation. How, then, are all the sons

of the three branches of Noah's family enumerated as founding a nation

each, if Heber and Peleg did not so? It is very probable that the

giant Nimrod founded also his nation, and that Scripture has named him

separately on account of the extraordinary dimensions of his empire

and of his body, so that the number of seventy-two nations remains.

But Peleg was mentioned, not because he founded a nation (for his

race and language are Hebrew), but on account of the critical time at

which he was born, all the earth being then divided. Nor ought we to

be surprised that the giant Nimrod lived to the time in which Babylon

was founded and the confusion of tongues occurred, and the consequent

division of the earth. For though Heber was in the sixth generation

from Noah, and Nimrod in the fourth, it does not follow that they could

not be alive at the same time. For when the generations are few, they

live longer and are born later; but when they are many, they live a

shorter time, and come into the world earlier. We are to understand

that, when the earth was divided, the descendants of Noah who are

registered as founders of nations were not only already born, but

were of an age to have immense families, worthy to be called tribes

or nations. And therefore we must by no means suppose that they were

born in the order in which they were set down; otherwise, how could the

twelve sons of Joktan, another son of Heber's, and brother of Peleg,

have already founded nations, if Joktan was born, as he is registered,

after his brother Peleg, since the earth was divided at Peleg's birth?

We are therefore to understand that, though Peleg is named first, he

was born long after Joktan, whose twelve sons had already families

so large as to admit of their being divided by different languages.

There is nothing extraordinary in the last born being first named: of

the sons of Noah, the descendants of Japheth are first named; then

the sons of Ham, who was the second son; and last the sons of Shem,

who was the first and oldest. Of these nations the names have partly

survived, so that at this day we can see from whom they have sprung, as

the Assyrians from Assur, the Hebrews from Heber, but partly have been

altered in the lapse of time, so that the most learned men, by profound

research in ancient records, have scarcely been able to discover the

origin, I do not say of all, but of some of these nations. There is,

for example, nothing in the name Egyptians to show that they are

descended from Misraim, Ham's son, nor in the name Ethiopians to show

a connection with Cush, though such is said to be the origin of these

nations. And if we take a general survey of the names, we shall find

that more have been changed than have remained the same.

12. \_Of the era in Abraham's life from which a new period in

the holy succession begins.\_

Let us now survey the progress of the city of God from the era of the

patriarch Abraham, from whose time it begins to be more conspicuous,

and the divine promises which are now fulfilled in Christ are more

fully revealed. We learn, then, from the intimations of holy Scripture,

that Abraham was born in the country of the Chaldeans, a land belonging

to the Assyrian empire. Now, even at that time impious superstitions

were rife with the Chaldeans, as with other nations. The family of

Terah, to which Abraham belonged, was the only one in which the worship

of the true God survived, and the only one, we may suppose, in which

the Hebrew language was preserved; although Joshua the son of Nun tells

us that even this family served other gods in Mesopotamia.[251] The

other descendants of Heber gradually became absorbed in other races and

other languages. And thus, as the single family of Noah was preserved

through the deluge of water to renew the human race, so, in the deluge

of superstition that flooded the whole world, there remained but the

one family of Terah in which the seed of God's city was preserved. And

as, when Scripture has enumerated the generations prior to Noah, with

their ages, and explained the cause of the flood before God began to

speak to Noah about the building of the ark, it is said, "These are the

generations of Noah;" so also now, after enumerating the generations

from Shem, Noah's son, down to Abraham, it then signalizes an era by

saying, "These are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor,

and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah

in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor

took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of

Nahor's wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and

the father of Iscah."[252] This Iscah is supposed to be the same as

Sarah, Abraham's wife.

13. \_Why, in the account of Terah's emigration, on his forsaking

the Chaldeans and passing over into Mesopotamia, no mention is

made of his son Nahor.\_

Next it is related how Terah with his family left the region of the

Chaldeans and came into Mesopotamia, and dwelt in Haran. But nothing

is said about one of his sons called Nahor, as if he had not taken

him along with him. For the narrative runs thus: "And Terah took

Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarah

his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and led them forth out

of the region of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan; and

he came into Haran, and dwelt there."[253] Nahor and Milcah his

wife are nowhere named here. But afterwards, when Abraham sent his

servant to take a wife for his son Isaac, we find it thus written:

"And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his lord, and

of all the goods of his lord, with him; and arose, and went into

Mesopotamia, into the city of Nahor."[254] This and other testimonies

of this sacred history show that Nahor, Abraham's brother, had

also left the region of the Chaldeans, and fixed his abode in

Mesopotamia, where Abraham dwelt with his father. Why, then, did the

Scripture not mention him, when Terah with his family went forth

out of the Chaldean nation and dwelt in Haran, since it mentions

that he took with him not only Abraham his son, but also Sarah his

daughter-in-law, and Lot his grandson? The only reason we can think

of is, that perhaps he had lapsed from the piety of his father and

brother, and adhered to the superstition of the Chaldeans, and had

afterwards emigrated thence, either through penitence, or because he

was persecuted as a suspected person. For in the book called Judith,

when Holofernes, the enemy of the Israelites, inquired what kind of

nation that might be, and whether war should be made against them,

Achior, the leader of the Ammonites, answered him thus: "Let our lord

now hear a word from the mouth of thy servant, and I will declare

unto thee the truth concerning the people which dwelleth near thee

in this hill country, and there shall no lie come out of the mouth

of thy servant. For this people is descended from the Chaldeans, and

they dwelt heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow

the gods of their fathers, which were glorious in the land of the

Chaldeans, but went out of the way of their ancestors, and adored the

God of heaven, whom they knew; and they cast them out from the face

of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and dwelt there many

days. And their God said to them, that they should depart from their

habitation, and go into the land of Canaan; and they dwelt,"[255]

etc., as Achior the Ammonite narrates. Whence it is manifest that the

house of Terah had suffered persecution from the Chaldeans for the

true piety with which they worshipped the one and true God.

14. \_Of the years of Terah, who completed his lifetime in Haran.\_

On Terah's death in Mesopotamia, where he is said to have lived 205

years, the promises of God made to Abraham now begin to be pointed

out; for thus it is written: "And the days of Terah in Haran were

two hundred and five years, and he died in Haran."[256] This is not

to be taken as if he had spent all his days there, but that he there

completed the days of his life, which were two hundred and five

years: otherwise it would not be known how many years Terah lived,

since it is not said in what year of his life he came into Haran; and

it is absurd to suppose that, in this series of generations, where it

is carefully recorded how many years each one lived, his age was the

only one not put on record. For although some whom the same Scripture

mentions have not their age recorded, they are not in this series, in

which the reckoning of time is continuously indicated by the death

of the parents and the succession of the children. For this series,

which is given in order from Adam to Noah, and from him down to

Abraham, contains no one without the number of the years of his life.

15. \_Of the time of the migration of Abraham, when, according

to the commandment of God, he went out from Haran.\_

When, after the record of the death of Terah, the father of Abraham,

we next read, "And the Lord said to Abram, Get thee out of thy

country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house,"[257]

etc., it is not to be supposed, because this follows in the order of

the narrative, that it also followed in the chronological order of

events. For if it were so, there would be an insoluble difficulty.

For after these words of God which were spoken to Abraham, the

Scripture says: "And Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him;

and Lot went with him. Now Abraham was seventy-five years old when he

departed out of Haran."[258] How can this be true if he departed from

Haran after his father's death? For when Terah was seventy years old,

as is intimated above, he begat Abraham; and if to this number we add

the seventy-five years which Abraham reckoned when he went out of

Haran, we get 145 years. Therefore that was the number of the years

of Terah, when Abraham departed out of that city of Mesopotamia;

for he had reached the seventy-fifth year of his life, and thus

his father, who begat him in the seventieth year of his life, had

reached, as was said, his 145th. Therefore he did not depart thence

after his father's death, that is, after the 205 years his father

lived; but the year of his departure from that place, seeing it was

his seventy-fifth, is inferred beyond a doubt to have been the 145th

of his father, who begat him in his seventieth year. And thus it is

to be understood that the Scripture, according to its custom, has

gone back to the time which had already been passed by the narrative;

just as above, when it had mentioned the grandsons of Noah, it said

that they were in their nations and tongues; and yet afterwards, as

if this also had followed in order of time, it says, "And the whole

earth was of one lip, and one speech for all."[259] How, then, could

they be said to be in their own nations and according to their own

tongues, if there was one for all; except because the narrative goes

back to gather up what it had passed over? Here, too, in the same

way, after saying, "And the days of Terah in Haran were 205 years,

and Terah died in Haran," the Scripture, going back to what had been

passed over in order to complete what had been begun about Terah,

says, "And the Lord said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country,"[260]

etc. After which words of God it is added, "And Abram departed,

as the Lord spake unto him; and Lot went with him. But Abram was

seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran." Therefore it

was done when his father was in the 145th year of his age; for it

was then the seventy-fifth of his own. But this question is also

solved in another way, that the seventy-five years of Abraham when

he departed out of Haran are reckoned from the year in which he was

delivered from the fire of the Chaldeans, not from that of his birth,

as if he was rather to be held as having been born then.

Now the blessed Stephen, in narrating these things in the Acts of the

Apostles, says: "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham,

when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto

him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy

father's house, and come into the land which I will show thee."[261]

According to these words of Stephen, God spoke to Abraham, not after

the death of his father, who certainly died in Haran, where his son

also dwelt with him, but before he dwelt in that city, although he

was already in Mesopotamia. Therefore he had already departed from

the Chaldeans. So that when Stephen adds, "Then Abraham went out of

the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran,"[262] this does not

point out what took place after God spoke to him (for it was not after

these words of God that he went out of the land of the Chaldeans,

since he says that God spoke to him in Mesopotamia), but the word

"\_then\_" which he uses refers to that whole period from his going out

of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelling in Haran. Likewise in what

follows, "And thenceforth, when his father was dead, he settled him in

this land, wherein ye now dwell, and your fathers," he does not say,

after his father was dead he went out from Haran; but thenceforth he

settled him here, after his father was dead. It is to be understood,

therefore, that God had spoken to Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia,

before he dwelt in Haran; but that he came to Haran with his father,

keeping in mind the precept of God, and that he went out thence in his

own seventy-fifth year, which was his father's 145th. But he says that

his settlement in the land of Canaan, not his going forth from Haran,

took place after his father's death; because his father was already

dead when he purchased the land, and personally entered on possession

of it. But when, on his having already settled in Mesopotamia, that

is, already gone out of the land of the Chaldeans, God says, "Get

thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's

house,"[263] this means, not that he should cast out his body from

thence, for he had already done that, but that he should tear away

his soul. For he had not gone out from thence in mind, if he was held

by the hope and desire of returning,--a hope and desire which was to

be cut off by God's command and help, and by his own obedience. It

would indeed be no incredible supposition that afterwards, when Nahor

followed his father, Abraham then fulfilled the precept of the Lord,

that he should depart out of Haran with Sarah his wife and Lot his

brother's son.

16. \_Of the order and nature of the promises of God which were

made to Abraham.\_

God's promises made to Abraham are now to be considered; for in

these the oracles of our God,[264] that is, of the true God, began

to appear more openly concerning the godly people, whom prophetic

authority foretold. The first of these reads thus: "And the Lord

said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred,

and from thy father's house, and go into a land that I will show

thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee,

and magnify thy name; and thou shalt be blessed: and I will bless

them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee: and in thee

shall all tribes of the earth be blessed."[265] Now it is to be

observed that two things are promised to Abraham, the one, that his

seed should possess the land of Canaan, which is intimated when it

is said, "Go into a land that I will show thee, and I will make of

thee a great nation;" but the other far more excellent, not about

the carnal but the spiritual seed, through which he is the father,

not of the one Israelite nation, but of all nations who follow the

footprints of his faith, which was first promised in these words,

"And in thee shall all tribes of the earth be blessed." Eusebius

thought this promise was made in Abraham's seventy-fifth year, as if

soon after it was made Abraham had departed out of Haran; because

the Scripture cannot be contradicted, in which we read, "Abram was

seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." But if

this promise was made in that year, then of course Abraham was

staying in Haran with his father; for he could not depart thence

unless he had first dwelt there. Does this, then, contradict what

Stephen says, "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when

he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran?"[266] But it is

to be understood that the whole took place in the same year,--both

the promise of God before Abraham dwelt in Haran, and his dwelling

in Haran, and his departure thence,--not only because Eusebius in

the Chronicles reckons from the year of this promise, and shows that

after 430 years the exodus from Egypt took place, when the law was

given, but because the Apostle Paul also mentions it.

17. \_Of the three most famous kingdoms of the nations, of which

one, that is, the Assyrian, was already very eminent when

Abraham was born.\_

During the same period there were three famous kingdoms of the

nations, in which the city of the earth-born, that is, the society of

men living according to man under the domination of the fallen angels,

chiefly flourished, namely, the three kingdoms of Sicyon, Egypt, and

Assyria. Of these, Assyria was much the most powerful and sublime;

for that king Ninus, son of Belus, had subdued the people of all Asia

except India. By Asia I now mean not that part which is one province of

this greater Asia, but what is called Universal Asia, which some set

down as the half, but most as the third part of the whole world,--the

three being Asia, Europe, and Africa, thereby making an unequal

division. For the part called Asia stretches from the south through the

east even to the north; Europe from the north even to the west; and

Africa from the west even to the south. Thus we see that two, Europe

and Africa, contain one half of the world, and Asia alone the other

half. And these two parts are made by the circumstance, that there

enters between them from the ocean all the Mediterranean water, which

makes this great sea of ours. So that, if you divide the world into

two parts, the east and the west, Asia will be in the one, and Europe

and Africa in the other. So that of the three kingdoms then famous,

one, namely Sicyon, was not under the Assyrians, because it was in

Europe; but as for Egypt, how could it fail to be subject to the empire

which ruled all Asia with the single exception of India? In Assyria,

therefore, the dominion of the impious city had the pre-eminence. Its

head was Babylon,--an earth-born city, most fitly named, for it means

confusion. There Ninus reigned after the death of his father Belus, who

first had reigned there sixty-five years. His son Ninus, who, on his

father's death, succeeded to the kingdom, reigned fifty-two years, and

had been king forty-three years when Abraham was born, which was about

the 1200th year before Rome was founded, as it were another Babylon in

the west.

18. \_Of the repeated address of God to Abraham, in which He

promised the land of Canaan to him and to his seed.\_

Abraham, then, having departed out of Haran in the seventy-fifth year

of his own age, and in the hundred and forty-fifth of his father's,

went with Lot, his brother's son, and Sarah his wife, into the land of

Canaan, and came even to Sichem, where again he received the divine

oracle, of which it is thus written: "And the Lord appeared unto Abram,

and said unto him, Unto thy seed will I give this land."[267] Nothing

is promised here about that seed in which he is made the father of

all nations, but only about that by which he is the father of the one

Israelite nation; for by this seed that land was possessed.

19. \_Of the divine preservation of Sarah's chastity in Egypt,

when Abraham had called her not his wife but his sister.\_

Having built an altar there, and called upon God, Abraham proceeded

thence and dwelt in the desert, and was compelled by pressure of

famine to go on into Egypt. There he called his wife his sister, and

told no lie. For she was this also, because she was near of blood;

just as Lot, on account of the same nearness, being his brother's

son, is called his brother. Now he did not deny that she was his

wife, but held his peace about it, committing to God the defence of

his wife's chastity, and providing as a man against human wiles;

because if he had not provided against the danger as much as he

could, he would have been tempting God rather than trusting in Him.

We have said enough about this matter against the calumnies of

Faustus the Manichæan. At last what Abraham had expected the Lord to

do took place. For Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who had taken her to him

as his wife, restored her to her husband on being severely plagued.

And far be it from us to believe that she was defiled by lying with

another; because it is much more credible that, by these great

afflictions, Pharaoh was not permitted to do this.

20. \_Of the parting of Lot and Abraham, which they agreed to

without breach of charity.\_

On Abraham's return out of Egypt to the place he had left, Lot, his

brother's son, departed from him into the land of Sodom, without

breach of charity. For they had grown rich, and began to have many

herdmen of cattle, and when these strove together, they avoided in

this way the pugnacious discord of their families. Indeed, as human

affairs go, this cause might even have given rise to some strife

between themselves. Consequently these are the words of Abraham to

Lot, when taking precaution against this evil, "Let there be no

strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen;

for we be brethren. Behold, is not the whole land before thee?

Separate thyself from me: if thou wilt go to the left hand, I will

go to the right; or if thou wilt go to the right hand, I will go to

the left."[268] From this, perhaps, has arisen a pacific custom among

men, that when there is any partition of earthly things, the greater

should make the division, the less the choice.

21. \_Of the third promise of God, by which He assured the

land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed in perpetuity.\_

Now, when Abraham and Lot had separated, and dwelt apart, owing to

the necessity of supporting their families, and not to vile discord,

and Abraham was in the land of Canaan, but Lot in Sodom, the Lord

said to Abraham in a third oracle, "Lift up thine eyes, and look

from the place where thou now art, to the north, and to Africa, and

to the east, and to the sea; for all the land which thou seest, to

thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy

seed as the dust of the earth: if any one can number the dust of

the earth, thy seed shall also be numbered. Arise, and walk through

the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for unto

thee will I give it."[269] It does not clearly appear whether in

this promise that also is contained by which he is made the father

of all nations. For the clause, "And I will make thy seed as the

dust of the earth," may seem to refer to this, being spoken by that

figure the Greeks call hyperbole, which indeed is figurative, not

literal. But no person of understanding can doubt in what manner

the Scripture uses this and other figures. For that figure (that

is, way of speaking) is used when what is said is far larger than

what is meant by it; for who does not see how incomparably larger

the number of the dust must be than that of all men can be from Adam

himself down to the end of the world? How much greater, then, must

it be than the seed of Abraham,--not only that pertaining to the

nation of Israel, but also that which is and shall be according to

the imitation of faith in all nations of the whole wide world! For

that seed is indeed very small in comparison with the multitude of

the wicked, although even those few of themselves make an innumerable

multitude, which by a hyperbole is compared to the dust of the earth.

Truly that multitude which was promised to Abraham is not innumerable

to God, although to man; but to God not even the dust of the earth

is so. Further, the promise here made may be understood not only of

the nation of Israel, but of the whole seed of Abraham, which may be

fitly compared to the dust for multitude, because regarding it also

there is the promise[270] of many children, not according to the

flesh, but according to the spirit. But we have therefore said that

this does not clearly appear, because the multitude even of that one

nation, which was born according to the flesh of Abraham through his

grandson Jacob, has increased so much as to fill almost all parts

of the world. Consequently, even it might by hyperbole be compared

to the dust for multitude, because even it alone is innumerable by

man. Certainly no one questions that only that land is meant which is

called Canaan. But that saying, "To thee will I give it, and to thy

seed for ever," may move some, if by "for ever" they understand "to

eternity." But if in this passage they take "for ever" thus, as we

firmly hold it means, that the beginning of the world to come is to

be ordered from the end of the present, there is still no difficulty,

because, although the Israelites are expelled from Jerusalem, they

still remain in other cities in the land of Canaan, and shall remain

even to the end; and when that whole land is inhabited by Christians,

they also are the very seed of Abraham.

22. \_Of Abraham's overcoming the enemies of Sodom, when he

delivered Lot from captivity and was blessed by Melchizedek the

priest.\_

Having received this oracle of promise, Abraham migrated, and remained

in another place of the same land, that is, beside the oak of Mamre,

which was Hebron. Then on the invasion of Sodom, when five kings

carried on war against four, and Lot was taken captive with the

conquered Sodomites, Abraham delivered him from the enemy, leading with

him to battle three hundred and eighteen of his home-born servants,

and won the victory for the kings of Sodom, but would take nothing of

the spoils when offered by the king for whom he had won them. He was

then openly blessed by Melchizedek, who was priest of God Most High,

about whom many and great things are written in the epistle which

is inscribed to the Hebrews, which most say is by the Apostle Paul,

though some deny this. For then first appeared the sacrifice which is

now offered to God by Christians in the whole wide world, and that is

fulfilled which long after the event was said by the prophet to Christ,

who was yet to come in the flesh, "Thou art a priest for ever after the

order of Melchizedek,"[271]--that is to say, not after the order of

Aaron, for that order was to be taken away when the things shone forth

which were intimated beforehand by these shadows.

23. \_Of the word of the Lord to Abraham, by which it was promised

to him that his posterity should be multiplied according to

the multitude of the stars; on believing which he was declared

justified while yet in uncircumcision.\_

The word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision also. For when

God promised him protection and exceeding great reward, he, being

solicitous about posterity, said that a certain Eliezer of Damascus,

born in his house, would be his heir. Immediately he was promised an

heir, not that house-born servant, but one who was to come forth of

Abraham himself; and again a seed innumerable, not as the dust of

the earth, but as the stars of heaven,--which rather seems to me a

promise of a posterity exalted in celestial felicity. For, so far as

multitude is concerned, what are the stars of heaven to the dust of

the earth, unless one should say the comparison is like inasmuch as

the stars also cannot be numbered? For it is not to be believed that

all of them can be seen. For the more keenly one observes them, the

more does he see. So that it is to be supposed some remain concealed

from the keenest observers, to say nothing of those stars which are

said to rise and set in another part of the world most remote from

us. Finally, the authority of this book condemns those like Aratus

or Eudoxus, or any others who boast that they have found out and

written down the complete number of the stars. Here, indeed, is set

down that sentence which the apostle quotes in order to commend

the grace of God, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him

for righteousness;"[272] lest the circumcision should glory, and

be unwilling to receive the uncircumcised nations to the faith of

Christ. For at the time when he believed, and his faith was counted

to him for righteousness, Abraham had not yet been circumcised.

24. \_Of the meaning of the sacrifice Abraham was commanded to offer

when he supplicated to be taught about those things he had

believed.\_

In the same vision, God in speaking to him also says, "I am God that

brought thee out of the region of the Chaldees, to give thee this land

to inherit it."[273] And when Abram asked whereby he might know that he

should inherit it, God said to him, "Take me an heifer of three years

old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old,

and a turtle-dove, and a pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and

divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but

the birds divided he not. And the fowls came down," as it is written,

"on the carcases, and Abram sat down by them. But about the going down

of the sun, great fear fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great

darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that

thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they shall

reduce them to servitude; and shall afflict them four hundred years:

but the nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterward shall

they come out hither with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy

fathers in peace; kept in a good old age. But in the fourth generation

they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is

not yet full. And when the sun was setting, there was a flame, and a

smoking furnace, and lamps of fire, that passed through between those

pieces. In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto

thy seed will I give this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great

river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the

Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Hivites, and the Girgashites, and

the Jebusites."[274]

All these things were said and done in a vision from God; but it

would take long, and would exceed the scope of this work, to treat of

them exactly in detail. It is enough that we should know that, after

it was said Abram believed in God, and it was counted to him for

righteousness, he did not fail in faith in saying, "Lord God, whereby

shall I know that I shall inherit it?" for the inheritance of that land

was promised to him. Now he does not say, How shall I know, as if he

did not yet believe; but he says, "Whereby shall I know," meaning that

some sign might be given by which he might know the manner of those

things which he had believed, just as it is not for lack of faith the

Virgin Mary says, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"[275]

for she inquired as to the way in which that should take place which

she was certain would come to pass. And when she asked this, she was

told, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the

Highest shall overshadow thee."[276] Here also, in fine, a symbol was

given, consisting of three animals, a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram,

and two birds, a turtle-dove and pigeon, that he might know that the

things which he had not doubted should come to pass were to happen in

accordance with this symbol. Whether, therefore, the heifer was a sign

that the people should be put under the law, the she-goat that the same

people was to become sinful, the ram that they should reign (and these

animals are said to be of three years old for this reason, that there

are three remarkable divisions of time, from Adam to Noah, and from

him to Abraham, and from him to David, who, on the rejection of Saul,

was first established by the will of the Lord in the kingdom of the

Israelite nation: in this third division, which extends from Abraham

to David, that people grew up as if passing through the third age of

life), or whether they had some other more suitable meaning, still I

have no doubt whatever that spiritual things were prefigured by them as

well as by the turtle-dove and pigeon. And it is said, "But the birds

divided he not," because carnal men are divided among themselves, but

the spiritual not at all, whether they seclude themselves from the busy

conversation of men, like the turtle-dove, or dwell among them, like

the pigeon; for both birds are simple and harmless, signifying that

even in the Israelite people, to which that land was to be given, there

would be individuals who were children of the promise, and heirs of

the kingdom that is[277] to remain in eternal felicity. But the fowls

coming down on the divided carcases represent nothing good, but the

spirits of this air, seeking some food for themselves in the division

of carnal men. But that Abraham sat down with them, signifies that even

amid these divisions of the carnal, true believers shall persevere to

the end. And that about the going down of the sun great fear fell upon

Abraham and a horror of great darkness, signifies that about the end of

this world believers shall be in great perturbation and tribulation,

of which the Lord said in the gospel, "For then shall be great

tribulation, such as was not from the beginning."[278]

But what is said to Abraham, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall

be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they shall reduce them to

servitude, and shall afflict them 400 years," is most clearly a

prophecy about the people of Israel which was to be in servitude in

Egypt. Not that this people was to be in that servitude under the

oppressive Egyptians for 400 years, but it is foretold that this

should take place in the course of those 400 years. For as it is

written of Terah the father of Abraham, "And the days of Terah in

Haran were 205 years,"[279] not because they were all spent there,

but because they were completed there, so it is said here also,

"And they shall reduce them to servitude, and shall afflict them

400 years," for this reason, because that number was completed, not

because it was all spent in that affliction. The years are said to be

400 in round numbers, although they were a little more,--whether you

reckon from this time, when these things were promised to Abraham,

or from the birth of Isaac, as the seed of Abraham, of which these

things are predicted. For, as we have already said above, from the

seventy-fifth year of Abraham, when the first promise was made to

him, down to the exodus of Israel from Egypt, there are reckoned

430 years, which the apostle thus mentions: "And this I say, that

the covenant confirmed by God, the law, which was made 430 years

after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none

effect."[280] So then these 430 years might be called 400, because

they are not much more, especially since part even of that number

had already gone by when these things were shown and said to Abraham

in vision, or when Isaac was born in his father's 100th year,

twenty-five years after the first promise, when of these 430 years

there now remained 405, which God was pleased to call 400. No one

will doubt that the other things which follow in the prophetic words

of God pertain to the people of Israel.

When it is added, "And when the sun was now setting there was a

flame, and lo, a smoking furnace, and lamps of fire, which passed

through between those pieces," this signifies that at the end of the

world the carnal shall be judged by fire. For just as the affliction

of the city of God, such as never was before, which is expected to

take place under Antichrist, was signified by Abraham's horror of

great darkness about the going down of the sun, that is, when the

end of the world draws nigh,--so at the going down of the sun, that

is, at the very end of the world, there is signified by that fire

the day of judgment, which separates the carnal who are to be saved

by fire from those who are to be condemned in the fire. And then

the covenant made with Abraham particularly sets forth the land of

Canaan, and names eleven tribes in it from the river of Egypt even

to the great river Euphrates. It is not then from the great river of

Egypt, that is, the Nile, but from a small one which separates Egypt

from Palestine, where the city of Rhinocorura is.

25. \_Of Sarah's handmaid, Hagar, whom she herself wished to

be Abraham's concubine.\_

And here follow the times of Abraham's sons, the one by Hagar the bond

maid, the other by Sarah the free woman, about whom we have already

spoken in the previous book. As regards this transaction, Abraham is

in no way to be branded as guilty concerning this concubine, for he

used her for the begetting of progeny, not for the gratification of

lust; and not to insult, but rather to obey his wife, who supposed

it would be a solace of her barrenness if she could make use of the

fruitful womb of her handmaid to supply the defect of her own nature,

and by that law of which the apostle says, "Likewise also the husband

hath not power of his own body, but the wife,"[281] could, as a wife,

make use of him for childbearing by another, when she could not do so

in her own person. Here there is no wanton lust, no filthy lewdness.

The handmaid is delivered to the husband by the wife for the sake of

progeny, and is received by the husband for the sake of progeny, each

seeking, not guilty excess, but natural fruit. And when the pregnant

bond woman despised her barren mistress, and Sarah, with womanly

jealousy, rather laid the blame of this on her husband, even then

Abraham showed that he was not a slavish lover, but a free begetter of

children, and that in using Hagar he had guarded the chastity of Sarah

his wife, and had gratified her will and not his own,--had received

her without seeking, had gone in to her without being attached, had

impregnated without loving her,--for he says, "Behold thy maid is in

thy hands: do to her as it pleaseth thee;"[282] a man able to use women

as a man should,--his wife temperately, his handmaid compliantly,

neither intemperately!

26. \_Of God's attestation to Abraham, by which He assures him, when

now old, of a son by the barren Sarah, and appoints him the

father of the nations, and seals his faith in the promise by

the sacrament of circumcision.\_

After these things Ishmael was born of Hagar; and Abraham might think

that in him was fulfilled what God had promised him, saying, when he

wished to adopt his home-born servant, "This shall not be thine heir;

but he that shall come forth of thee, he shall be thine heir."[283]

Therefore, lest he should think that what was promised was fulfilled

in the handmaid's son, "when Abram was ninety years old and nine, God

appeared to him, and said unto him, I am God; be well-pleasing in my

sight, and be without complaint, and I will make my covenant between

me and thee, and will fill thee exceedingly."[284]

Here there are more distinct promises about the calling of the nations

in Isaac, that is, in the son of the promise, by which grace is

signified, and not nature; for the son is promised from an old man

and a barren old woman. For although God effects even the natural

course of procreation, yet where the agency of God is manifest, through

the decay or failure of nature, grace is more plainly discerned.

And because this was to be brought about, not by generation, but by

regeneration, circumcision was enjoined now, when a son was promised

of Sarah. And by ordering all, not only sons, but also home-born and

purchased servants to be circumcised, he testifies that this grace

pertains to all. For what else does circumcision signify than a nature

renewed on the putting off of the old? And what else does the eighth

day mean than Christ, who rose again when the week was completed, that

is, after the Sabbath? The very names of the parents are changed: all

things proclaim newness, and the new covenant is shadowed forth in the

old. For what does the term old covenant imply but the concealing of

the new? And what does the term new covenant imply but the revealing of

the old? The laughter of Abraham is the exultation of one who rejoices,

not the scornful laughter of one who mistrusts. And those words of his

in his heart, "Shall a son be born to me that am an hundred years old?

and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" are not the words of

doubt, but of wonder. And when it is said, "And I will give to thee,

and to thy seed after thee, the land in which thou art a stranger, all

the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession," if it troubles any

one whether this is to be held as fulfilled, or whether its fulfilment

may still be looked for, since no kind of earthly possession can

be everlasting for any nation whatever, let him know that the word

translated everlasting by our writers is what the Greeks term αἰώνιον,

which is derived from αἰὼν, the Greek for \_sæculum\_, an age. But the

Latins have not ventured to translate this by \_secular\_, lest they

should change the meaning into something widely different. For many

things are called secular which so happen in this world as to pass away

even in a short time; but what is termed αἰώνιον either has no end, or

lasts to the very end of this world.

27. \_Of the male, who was to lose his soul if he was not

circumcised on the eighth day, because he had broken God's

covenant.\_

When it is said, "The male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his

foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people, because he

hath broken my covenant,"[285] some may be troubled how that ought to

be understood, since it can be no fault of the infant whose life it

is said must perish, nor has the covenant of God been broken by him,

but by his parents, who have not taken care to circumcise him. But

even the infants, not personally in their own life, but according to

the common origin of the human race, have all broken God's covenant

in that one in whom all have sinned.[286] Now there are many things

called God's covenants besides those two great ones, the old and

the new, which any one who pleases may read and know. For the first

covenant, which was made with the first man, is just this: "In the

day ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die."[287] Whence it is written

in the book called Ecclesiasticus, "All flesh waxeth old as doth a

garment. For the covenant from the beginning is, Thou shalt die the

death."[288] Now, as the law was more plainly given afterward, and

the apostle says, "Where no law is, there is no prevarication,"[289]

on what supposition is what is said in the psalm true, "I accounted

all the sinners of the earth prevaricators,"[290] except that all

who are held liable for any sin are accused of dealing deceitfully

(prevaricating) with some law? If on this account, then, even the

infants are, according to the true belief, born in sin, not actual

but original, so that we confess they have need of grace for the

remission of sins, certainly it must be acknowledged that in the

same sense in which they are sinners they are also prevaricators of

that law which was given in Paradise, according to the truth of both

scriptures, "I accounted all the sinners of the earth prevaricators,"

and "Where no law is, there is no prevarication." And thus, because

circumcision was the sign of regeneration, and the infant, on account

of the original sin by which God's covenant was first broken, was not

undeservedly to lose his generation unless delivered by regeneration,

these divine words are to be understood as if it had been said,

Whoever is not born again, that soul shall perish from his people,

because he hath broken my covenant, since he also has sinned in Adam

with all others. For had He said, Because he hath broken this my

covenant, He would have compelled us to understand by it only this of

circumcision; but since He has not expressly said what covenant the

infant has broken, we are free to understand Him as speaking of that

covenant of which the breach can be ascribed to an infant. Yet if any

one contends that it is said of nothing else than circumcision, that

in it the infant has broken the covenant of God because he is not

circumcised, he must seek some method of explanation by which it may

be understood without absurdity (such as this) that he has broken the

covenant, because it has been broken in him although not by him. Yet

in this case also it is to be observed that the soul of the infant,

being guilty of no sin of neglect against itself, would perish

unjustly, unless original sin rendered it obnoxious to punishment.

28. \_Of the change of name in Abraham and Sarah, who received the

gift of fecundity when they were incapable of regeneration

owing to the barrenness of one, and the old age of both.\_

Now when a promise so great and clear was made to Abraham, in which

it was so plainly said to him, "I have made thee a father of many

nations, and I will increase thee exceedingly, and I will make

nations of thee, and kings shall go forth of thee. And I will give

thee a son of Sarah; and I will bless him, and he shall become

nations, and kings of nations shall be of him,"[291]--a promise

which we now see fulfilled in Christ,--from that time forward this

couple are not called in Scripture, as formerly, Abram and Sarai, but

Abraham and Sarah, as we have called them from the first, for every

one does so now. The reason why the name of Abraham was changed is

given: "For," He says, "I have made thee a father of many nations."

This, then, is to be understood to be the meaning of \_Abraham\_; but

\_Abram\_, as he was formerly called, means "exalted father." The

reason of the change of Sarah's name is not given; but as those say

who have written interpretations of the Hebrew names contained in

these books, Sarah means "my princess," and Sarai "strength." Whence

it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Through faith also

Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed."[292] For both

were old, as the Scripture testifies; but she was also barren, and

had ceased to menstruate, so that she could no longer bear children

even if she had not been barren. Further, if a woman is advanced in

years, yet still retains the custom of women, she can bear children

to a young man, but not to an old man, although that same old man

can beget, but only of a young woman; as after Sarah's death Abraham

could of Keturah, because he met with her in her lively age. This,

then, is what the apostle mentions as wonderful, saying, besides,

that Abraham's body was now dead;[293] because at that age he was no

longer able to beget children of any woman who retained now only a

small part of her natural vigour. Of course we must understand that

his body was dead only to some purposes, not to all; for if it was

so to all, it would no longer be the aged body of a living man, but

the corpse of a dead one. Although that question, how Abraham begot

children of Keturah, is usually solved in this way, that the gift of

begetting which he received from the Lord, remained even after the

death of his wife, yet I think that solution of the question which

I have followed is preferable, because, although in our days an old

man of a hundred years can beget children of no woman, it was not so

then, when men still lived so long that a hundred years did not yet

bring on them the decrepitude of old age.

29. \_Of the three men or angels, in whom the Lord is related to

have appeared to Abraham at the oak of Mamre.\_

God appeared again to Abraham at the oak of Mamre in three men,

who it is not to be doubted were angels, although some think that

one of them was Christ, and assert that He was visible before He

put on flesh. Now it belongs to the divine power, and invisible,

incorporeal, and incommutable nature, without changing itself at

all, to appear even to mortal men, not by what it is, but by what

is subject to it. And what is not subject to it? Yet if they try

to establish that one of these three was Christ by the fact that,

although he saw three, he addressed the Lord in the singular, as it

is written, "And, lo, three men stood by him: and, when he saw them,

he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and worshipped toward the

ground, and said, Lord, if I have found favour before thee,"[294]

etc.; why do they not advert to this also, that when two of them came

to destroy the Sodomites, while Abraham still spoke to one, calling

him Lord, and interceding that he would not destroy the righteous

along with the wicked in Sodom, Lot received these two in such a

way that he too in his conversation with them addressed the Lord in

the singular? For after saying to them in the plural, "Behold, my

lords, turn aside into your servant's house,"[295] etc., yet it is

afterwards said, "And the angels laid hold upon his hand, and the

hand of his wife, and the hands of his two daughters, because the

Lord was merciful unto him. And it came to pass, whenever they had

led him forth abroad, that they said, Save thy life; look not behind

thee, neither stay thou in all this region: save thyself in the

mountain, lest thou be caught. And Lot said unto them, I pray thee,

Lord, since thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,"[296] etc. And

then after these words the Lord also answered him in the singular,

although He was in two angels, saying, "See, I have accepted thy

face,"[297] etc. This makes it much more credible that both Abraham

in the three men and Lot in the two recognised the Lord, addressing

Him in the singular number, even when they were addressing men; for

they received them as they did for no other reason than that they

might minister human refection to them as men who needed it. Yet

there was about them something so excellent, that those who showed

them hospitality as men could not doubt that God was in them as He

was wont to be in the prophets, and therefore sometimes addressed

them in the plural, and sometimes God in them in the singular. But

that they were angels the Scripture testifies, not only in this book

of Genesis, in which these transactions are related, but also in the

Epistle to the Hebrews, where in praising hospitality it is said,

"For thereby some have entertained angels unawares."[298] By these

three men, then, when a son Isaac was again promised to Abraham by

Sarah, such a divine oracle was also given that it was said, "Abraham

shall become a great and numerous nation, and all the nations of the

earth shall be blessed in him."[299] And here these two things are

promised with the utmost brevity and fulness,--the nation of Israel

according to the flesh, and all nations according to faith.

30. \_Of Lot's deliverance from Sodom, and its consumption by fire

from heaven; and of Abimelech, whose lust could not harm

Sarah's chastity.\_

After this promise Lot was delivered out of Sodom, and a fiery rain

from heaven turned into ashes that whole region of the impious city,

where custom had made sodomy as prevalent as laws have elsewhere

made other kinds of wickedness. But this punishment of theirs was

a specimen of the divine judgment to come. For what is meant by

the angels forbidding those who were delivered to look back, but

that we are not to look back in heart to the old life which, being

regenerated through grace, we have put off, if we think to escape the

last judgment? Lot's wife, indeed, when she looked back, remained,

and, being turned into salt, furnished to believing men a condiment

by which to savour somewhat the warning to be drawn from that

example. Then Abraham did again at Gerar, with Abimelech the king of

that city, what he had done in Egypt about his wife, and received

her back untouched in the same way. On this occasion, when the king

rebuked Abraham for not saying she was his wife, and calling her

his sister, he explained what he had been afraid of, and added this

further, "And yet indeed she is my sister by the father's side, but

not by the mother's;"[300] for she was Abraham's sister by his own

father, and so near of kin. But her beauty was so great, that even at

that advanced age she could be fallen in love with.

31. \_Of Isaac, who was born according to the promise, whose

name was given on account of the laughter of both parents.\_

After these things a son was born to Abraham, according to God's

promise, of Sarah, and was called Isaac, which means \_laughter\_. For

his father had laughed when he was promised to him, in wondering

delight, and his mother, when he was again promised by those three

men, had laughed, doubting for joy; yet she was blamed by the angel

because that laughter, although it was for joy, yet was not full of

faith. Afterwards she was confirmed in faith by the same angel. From

this, then, the boy got his name. For when Isaac was born and called

by that name, Sarah showed that her laughter was not that of scornful

reproach, but that of joyful praise; for she said, "God hath made me

to laugh, so that every one who hears will laugh with me."[301] Then

in a little while the bond maid was cast out of the house with her

son; and, according to the apostle, these two women signify the old

and new covenants,--Sarah representing that of the Jerusalem which is

above, that is, the city of God.[302]

32. \_Of Abraham's obedience and faith, which were proved by the

offering up of his son in sacrifice; and of Sarah's death.\_

Among other things, of which it would take too long time to

mention the whole, Abraham was tempted about the offering up of

his well-beloved son Isaac, to prove his pious obedience, and so

make it known to the world, not to God. Now every temptation is

not blameworthy; it may even be praiseworthy, because it furnishes

probation. And, for the most part, the human mind cannot attain to

self-knowledge otherwise than by making trial of its powers through

temptation, by some kind of experimental and not merely verbal

self-interrogation; when, if it has acknowledged the gift of God,

it is pious, and is consolidated by stedfast grace and not puffed

up by vain boasting. Of course Abraham could never believe that

God delighted in human sacrifices; yet when the divine commandment

thundered, it was to be obeyed, not disputed. Yet Abraham is worthy

of praise, because he all along believed that his son, on being

offered up, would rise again; for God had said to him, when he was

unwilling to fulfil his wife's pleasure by casting out the bond maid

and her son, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." No doubt He then

goes on to say, "And as for the son of this bond woman, I will make

him a great nation, because he is thy seed."[303] How then is it

said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," when God calls Ishmael

also his seed? The apostle, in explaining this, says, "In Isaac

shall thy seed be called, that is, they which are the children of

the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of

the promise are counted for the seed."[304] In order, then, that the

children of the promise may be the seed of Abraham, they are called

in Isaac, that is, are gathered together in Christ by the call of

grace. Therefore the father, holding fast from the first the promise

which behoved to be fulfilled through this son whom God had ordered

him to slay, did not doubt that he whom he once thought it hopeless

he should ever receive would be restored to him when he had offered

him up. It is in this way the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews

is also to be understood and explained. "By faith," he says, "Abraham

overcame, when tempted about Isaac: and he who had received the

promise offered up his only son, to whom it was said, In Isaac shall

thy seed be called: thinking that God was able to raise him up, even

from the dead;" therefore he has added, "from whence also he received

him in a similitude."[305] In whose similitude but His of whom the

apostle says, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up

for us all?"[306] And on this account Isaac also himself carried to

the place of sacrifice the wood on which he was to be offered up,

just as the Lord Himself carried His own cross. Finally, since Isaac

was not to be slain, after his father was forbidden to smite him, who

was that ram by the offering of which that sacrifice was completed

with typical blood? For when Abraham saw him, he was caught by the

horns in a thicket. What, then, did he represent but Jesus, who,

before He was offered up, was crowned with thorns by the Jews?

But let us rather hear the divine words spoken through the angel. For

the Scripture says, "And Abraham stretched forth his hand to take the

knife, that he might slay his son. And the Angel of the Lord called

unto him from heaven, and said, Abraham. And he said, Here am I. And

he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything

unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared

thy beloved son for my sake."[307] It is said, "Now I know," that

is, Now I have made to be known; for God was not previously ignorant

of this. Then, having offered up that ram instead of Isaac his son,

"Abraham," as we read, "called the name of that place The Lord seeth:

as they say this day, In the mount the Lord hath appeared."[308] As it

is said, "Now I know," for Now I have made to be known, so here, "The

Lord sees," for The Lord hath appeared, that is, made Himself to be

seen. "And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham from heaven the

second time, saying, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; because

thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy beloved son for my

sake; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will

multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon

the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess by inheritance the cities of

the adversaries: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth

be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."[309] In this manner

is that promise concerning the calling of the nations in the seed of

Abraham confirmed even by the oath of God, after that burnt-offering

which typified Christ. For He had often promised, but never sworn. And

what is the oath of God, the true and faithful, but a confirmation of

the promise, and a certain reproof to the unbelieving?

After these things Sarah died, in the 127th year of her life, and

the 137th of her husband; for he was ten years older than she, as he

himself says, when a son is promised to him by her: "Shall a son be

born to me that am an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is

ninety years old, bear?"[310] Then Abraham bought a field, in which

he buried his wife. And then, according to Stephen's account, he was

settled in that land, entering then on actual possession of it,--that

is, after the death of his father, who is inferred to have died two

years before.

33. \_Of Rebecca, the grand-daughter of Nahor, whom Isaac

took to wife.\_

Isaac married Rebecca, the grand-daughter of Nahor, his father's

brother, when he was forty years old, that is, in the 140th year of his

father's life, three years after his mother's death. Now when a servant

was sent to Mesopotamia by his father to fetch her, and when Abraham

said to that servant, "Put thy hand under my thigh, and I will make

thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the Lord of the earth,

that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son Isaac of the daughters of

the Canaanites,"[311] what else was pointed out by this, but that the

Lord, the God of heaven, and the Lord of the earth, was to come in the

flesh which was to be derived from that thigh? Are these small tokens

of the foretold truth which we see fulfilled in Christ?

34. \_What is meant by Abraham's marrying Keturah after

Sarah's death.\_

What did Abraham mean by marrying Keturah after Sarah's death? Far

be it from us to suspect him of incontinence, especially when he

had reached such an age and such sanctity of faith. Or was he still

seeking to beget children, though he held fast, with most approved

faith, the promise of God that his children should be multiplied out

of Isaac as the stars of heaven and the dust of the earth? And yet,

if Hagar and Ishmael, as the apostle teaches us, signified the carnal

people of the old covenant, why may not Keturah and her sons also

signify the carnal people who think they belong to the new covenant?

For both are called both the wives and the concubines of Abraham; but

Sarah is never called a concubine (but only a wife). For when Hagar

is given to Abraham, it is written, "And Sarai, Abram's wife, took

Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Abram had dwelt ten years

in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his

wife."[312] And of Keturah, whom he took after Sarah's departure, we

read, "Then again Abraham took a wife, whose name was Keturah."[313]

Lo, both are called wives, yet both are found to have been

concubines; for the Scripture afterward says, "And Abraham gave his

whole estate unto Isaac his son. But unto the sons of his concubines

Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from his son Isaac, (while

he yet lived,) eastward, unto the east country."[314] Therefore the

sons of the concubines, that is, the heretics and the carnal Jews,

have some gifts, but do not attain the promised kingdom; "For they

which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of

God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed, of

whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called."[315] For I do

not see why Keturah, who was married after the wife's death, should

be called a concubine, except on account of this mystery. But if any

one is unwilling to put such meanings on these things, he need not

calumniate Abraham. For what if even this was provided against the

heretics who were to be the opponents of second marriages, so that it

might be shown that it was no sin in the case of the father of many

nations himself, when, after his wife's death, he married again? And

Abraham died when he was 175 years old, so that he left his son Isaac

seventy-five years old, having begotten him when 100 years old.

35. \_What was indicated by the divine answer about the twins

still shut up in the womb of Rebecca their mother.\_

Let us now see how the times of the city of God run on from this point

among Abraham's descendants. In the time from the first year of Isaac's

life to the seventieth, when his sons were born, the only memorable

thing is, that when he prayed God that his wife, who was barren,

might bear, and the Lord granted what he sought, and she conceived,

the twins leapt while still enclosed in her womb. And when she was

troubled by this struggle, and inquired of the Lord, she received this

answer: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall

be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall overcome the

other people, and the elder shall serve the younger."[316] The Apostle

Paul would have us understand this as a great instance of grace;[317]

for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or

evil, the younger is chosen without any good desert, and the elder is

rejected, when beyond doubt, as regards original sin, both were alike,

and as regards actual sin, neither had any. But the plan of the work

on hand does not permit me to speak more fully of this matter now, and

I have said much about it in other works. Only that saying, "The elder

shall serve the younger," is understood by our writers, almost without

exception, to mean that the elder people, the Jews, shall serve the

younger people, the Christians. And truly, although this might seem

to be fulfilled in the Idumean nation, which was born of the elder

(who had two names, being called both Esau and Edom, whence the name

Idumeans), because it was afterwards to be overcome by the people

which sprang from the younger, that is, by the Israelites, and was to

become subject to them; yet it is more suitable to believe that, when

it was said, "The one people shall overcome the other people, and the

elder shall serve the younger," that prophecy meant some greater thing;

and what is that except what is evidently fulfilled in the Jews and

Christians?

36. \_Of the oracle and blessing which Isaac received, just as

his father did, being beloved for his sake.\_

Isaac also received such an oracle as his father had often received.

Of this oracle it is thus written: "And there was a famine over the

land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And

Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the

Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; but dwell

in the land which I shall tell thee of. And abide in this land, and I

will be with thee, and will bless thee: unto thee and unto thy seed

I will give all this land; and I will establish mine oath, which I

sware unto Abraham thy father: and I will multiply thy seed as the

stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all this land: and in

thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because

that Abraham thy father obeyed my voice, and kept my precepts, my

commandments, my righteousness, and my laws."[318] This patriarch

neither had another wife, nor any concubine, but was content with

the twin-children begotten by one act of generation. He also was

afraid, when he lived among strangers, of being brought into danger

owing to the beauty of his wife, and did like his father in calling

her his sister, and not telling that she was his wife; for she was

his near blood-relation by the father's and mother's side. She also

remained untouched by the strangers, when it was known she was his

wife. Yet we ought not to prefer him to his father because he knew

no woman besides his one wife. For beyond doubt the merits of his

father's faith and obedience were greater, inasmuch as God says it

is for his sake He does Isaac good: "In thy seed," He says, "shall

all the nations of the earth be blessed, because that Abraham thy

father obeyed my voice, and kept my precepts, my commandments, my

statutes, and my laws." And again in another oracle He says, "I am

the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and

will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's

sake."[319] So that we must understand how chastely Abraham acted,

because imprudent men, who seek some support for their own wickedness

in the Holy Scriptures, think he acted through lust. We may also

learn this, not to compare men by single good things, but to consider

everything in each; for it may happen that one man has something in

his life and character in which he excels another, and it may be far

more excellent than that in which the other excels him. And thus,

according to sound and true judgment, while continence is preferable

to marriage, yet a believing married man is better than a continent

unbeliever; for the unbeliever is not only less praiseworthy, but is

even highly detestable. We must conclude, then, that both are good;

yet so as to hold that the married man who is most faithful and most

obedient is certainly better than the continent man whose faith and

obedience are less. But if equal in other things, who would hesitate

to prefer the continent man to the married?

37. \_Of the things mystically prefigured in Esau and Jacob.\_

Isaac's two sons, Esau and Jacob, grew up together. The primacy of

the elder was transferred to the younger by a bargain and agreement

between them, when the elder immoderately lusted after the lentiles the

younger had prepared for food, and for that price sold his birthright

to him, confirming it with an oath. We learn from this that a person

is to be blamed, not for the kind of food he eats, but for immoderate

greed. Isaac grew old, and old age deprived him of his eyesight. He

wished to bless the elder son, and instead of the elder, who was hairy,

unwittingly blessed the younger, who put himself under his father's

hands, having covered himself with kid-skins, as if bearing the sins

of others. Lest we should think this guile of Jacob's was fraudulent

guile, instead of seeking in it the mystery of a great thing, the

Scripture has predicted in the words just before, "Esau was a cunning

hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a simple man, dwelling at

home."[320] Some of our writers have interpreted this, "without guile."

But whether the Greek ἄπλαστος means "without guile," or "simple," or

rather "without feigning," in the receiving of that blessing what is

the guile of the man without guile? What is the guile of the simple,

what the fiction of the man who does not lie, but a profound mystery

of the truth? But what is the blessing itself? "See," he says, "the

smell of my son is as the smell of a full field which the Lord hath

blessed: therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the

fruitfulness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let nations

serve thee, and princes adore thee: and be lord of thy brethren, and

let thy father's sons adore thee: cursed be he that curseth thee,

and blessed be he that blesseth thee."[321] The blessing of Jacob is

therefore a proclamation of Christ to all nations. It is this which

has come to pass, and is now being fulfilled. Isaac is the law and the

prophecy: even by the mouth of the Jews Christ is blessed by prophecy

as by one who knows not, because it is itself not understood. The

world like a field is filled with the odour of Christ's name: His is

the blessing of the dew of heaven, that is, of the showers of divine

words; and of the fruitfulness of the earth, that is, of the gathering

together of the peoples: His is the plenty of corn and wine, that is,

the multitude that gathers bread and wine in the sacrament of His body

and blood. Him the nations serve, Him princes adore. He is the Lord of

His brethren, because His people rules over the Jews. Him His Father's

sons adore, that is, the sons of Abraham according to faith; for He

Himself is the son of Abraham according to the flesh. He is cursed that

curseth Him, and he that blesseth Him is blessed. Christ, I say, who

is ours is blessed, that is, truly spoken of out of the mouths of the

Jews, when, although erring, they yet sing the law and the prophets,

and think they are blessing another for whom they erringly hope. So,

when the elder son claims the promised blessing, Isaac is greatly

afraid, and wonders when he knows that he has blessed one instead of

the other, and demands who he is; yet he does not complain that he has

been deceived, yea, when the great mystery is revealed to him, in his

secret heart he at once eschews anger, and confirms the blessing. "Who

then," he says, "hath hunted me venison, and brought it me, and I have

eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him, and he shall be

blessed?"[322] Who would not rather have expected the curse of an angry

man here, if these things had been done in an earthly manner, and not

by inspiration from above? O things done, yet done prophetically; on

the earth, yet celestially; by men, yet divinely! If everything that

is fertile of so great mysteries should be examined carefully, many

volumes would be filled; but the moderate compass fixed for this work

compels us to hasten to other things.

38. \_Of Jacob's mission to Mesopotamia to get a wife, and of the

vision which he saw in a dream by the way, and of his getting

four women when he sought one wife.\_

Jacob was sent by his parents to Mesopotamia that he might take a

wife there. These were his father's words on sending him: "Thou

shalt not take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites. Arise, fly

to Mesopotamia, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father, and

take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's

brother. And my God bless thee, and increase thee, and multiply

thee; and thou shalt be an assembly of peoples; and give to thee the

blessing of Abraham thy father, and to thy seed after thee; that

thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou dwellest, which God gave

unto Abraham."[323] Now we understand here that the seed of Jacob is

separated from Isaac's other seed which came through Esau. For when

it is said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called,"[324] by this seed is

meant solely the city of God; so that from it is separated Abraham's

other seed, which was in the son of the bond woman, and which was

to be in the sons of Keturah. But until now it had been uncertain

regarding Isaac's twin-sons whether that blessing belonged to both or

only to one of them; and if to one, which of them it was. This is now

declared when Jacob is prophetically blessed by his father, and it is

said to him, "And thou shalt be an assembly of peoples, and God give

to thee the blessing of Abraham thy father."

When Jacob was going to Mesopotamia, he received in a dream an

oracle, of which it is thus written: "And Jacob went out from the

well of the oath,[325] and went to Haran. And he came to a place,

and slept there, for the sun was set; and he took of the stones of

the place, and put them at his head, and slept in that place, and

dreamed. And behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it

reached to heaven; and the angels of God ascended and descended by

it. And the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the God of Abraham

thy father, and the God of Isaac; fear not: the land whereon thou

sleepest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall

be as the dust of the earth; and it shall be spread abroad to the

sea, and to Africa, and to the north, and to the east: and all the

tribes of the earth shall be blessed in thee and in thy seed. And,

behold, I am with thee, to keep thee in all thy way wherever thou

goest, and I will bring thee back into this land; for I will not

leave thee, until I have done all which I have spoken to thee of. And

Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this

place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful

is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is

the gate of heaven. And Jacob arose, and took the stone that he had

put under his head there, and set it up for a memorial, and poured

oil upon the top of it. And Jacob called the name of that place the

house of God."[326] This is prophetic. For Jacob did not pour oil on

the stone in an idolatrous way, as if making it a god; neither did he

adore that stone, or sacrifice to it. But since the name of Christ

comes from the chrism or anointing, something pertaining to the great

mystery was certainly represented in this. And the Saviour Himself

is understood to bring this latter to remembrance in the gospel,

when He says of Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is

no guile!"[327] because Israel who saw this vision is no other than

Jacob. And in the same place He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto

you, Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and

descending upon the Son of man."

Jacob went on to Mesopotamia to take a wife from thence. And the

divine Scripture points out how, without unlawfully desiring any of

them, he came to have four women, of whom he begat twelve sons and

one daughter; for he had come to take only one. But when one was

falsely given him in place of the other, he did not send her away

after unwittingly using her in the night, lest he should seem to

have put her to shame; but as at that time, in order to multiply

posterity, no law forbade a plurality of wives, he took her also to

whom alone he had promised marriage. As she was barren, she gave her

handmaid to her husband that she might have children by her; and her

elder sister did the same thing in imitation of her, although she

had borne, because she desired to multiply progeny. We do not read

that Jacob sought any but one, or that he used many, except for the

purpose of begetting offspring, saving conjugal rights; and he would

not have done this, had not his wives, who had legitimate power over

their own husband's body, urged him to do it. So he begat twelve sons

and one daughter by four women. Then he entered into Egypt by his son

Joseph, who was sold by his brethren for envy, and carried there, and

who was there exalted.

39. \_The reason why Jacob was also called Israel.\_

As I said a little ago, Jacob was also called Israel, the name which

was most prevalent among the people descended from him. Now this name

was given him by the angel who wrestled with him on the way back from

Mesopotamia, and who was most evidently a type of Christ. For when

Jacob overcame him, doubtless with his own consent, that the mystery

might be represented, it signified Christ's passion, in which the

Jews are seen overcoming Him. And yet he besought a blessing from the

very angel he had overcome; and so the imposition of this name was

the blessing. For Israel means \_seeing God\_,[328] which will at last

be the reward of all the saints. The angel also touched him on the

breadth of the thigh when he was overcoming him, and in that way made

him lame. So that Jacob was at one and the same time blessed and lame:

blessed in those among that people who believed in Christ, and lame in

the unbelieving. For the breadth of the thigh is the multitude of the

family. For there are many of that race of whom it was prophetically

said beforehand, "And they have halted in their paths."[329]

40. \_How it is said that Jacob went into Egypt with seventy-five

souls, when most of those who are mentioned were born at a

later period.\_

Seventy-five men are reported to have entered Egypt along with Jacob,

counting him with his children. In this number only two women are

mentioned, one a daughter, the other a grand-daughter. But when

the thing is carefully considered, it does not appear that Jacob's

offspring was so numerous on the day or year when he entered Egypt.

There are also included among them the great-grandchildren of Joseph,

who could not possibly be born already. For Jacob was then 130 years

old, and his son Joseph thirty-nine; and as it is plain that he

took a wife when he was thirty or more, how could he in nine years

have great-grandchildren by the children whom he had by that wife?

Now, since Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, could not even

have children, for Jacob found them boys under nine years old when

he entered Egypt, in what way are not only their sons but their

grandsons reckoned among those seventy-five who then entered Egypt

with Jacob? For there is reckoned there Machir the son of Manasseh,

grandson of Joseph, and Machir's son, that is, Gilead, grandson of

Manasseh, great-grandson of Joseph; there, too, is he whom Ephraim,

Joseph's other son, begot, that is, Shuthelah, grandson of Joseph,

and Shuthelah's son Ezer, grandson of Ephraim, and great-grandson

of Joseph, who could not possibly be in existence when Jacob came

into Egypt, and there found his grandsons, the sons of Joseph,

their grandsires, still boys under nine years of age.[330] But

doubtless, when the Scripture mentions Jacob's entrance into Egypt

with seventy-five souls, it does not mean one day, or one year,

but that whole time as long as Joseph lived, who was the cause of

his entrance. For the same Scripture speaks thus of Joseph: "And

Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his brethren, and all his father's

house: and Joseph lived 110 years, and saw Ephraim's children

of the third generation."[331] That is, his great-grandson, the

third from Ephraim; for the third generation means son, grandson,

great-grandson. Then it is added, "The children also of Machir, the

son of Manasseh, were born upon Joseph's knees."[332] And this is

that grandson of Manasseh, and great-grandson of Joseph. But the

plural number is employed according to scriptural usage; for the one

daughter of Jacob is spoken of as daughters, just as in the usage

of the Latin tongue \_liberi\_ is used in the plural for children

even when there is only one. Now, when Joseph's own happiness is

proclaimed, because he could see his great-grandchildren, it is by

no means to be thought they already existed in the thirty-ninth year

of their great-grandsire Joseph, when his father Jacob came to him

in Egypt. But those who diligently look into these things will the

less easily be mistaken, because it is written, "These are the names

of the sons of Israel who entered into Egypt along with Jacob their

father."[333] For this means that the seventy-five are reckoned along

with him, not that they were all with him when he entered Egypt; for,

as I have said, the whole period during which Joseph, who occasioned

his entrance, lived, is held to be the time of that entrance.

41. \_Of the blessing which Jacob promised in Judah his son.\_

If, on account of the Christian people in whom the city of God

sojourns in the earth, we look for the flesh of Christ in the seed

of Abraham, setting aside the sons of the concubines, we have Isaac;

if in the seed of Isaac, setting aside Esau, who is also Edom, we

have Jacob, who also is Israel; if in the seed of Israel himself,

setting aside the rest, we have Judah, because Christ sprang of the

tribe of Judah. Let us hear, then, how Israel, when dying in Egypt,

in blessing his sons, prophetically blessed Judah. He says: "Judah,

thy brethren shall praise thee: thy hands shall be on the back of

thine enemies; thy father's children shall adore thee. Judah is a

lion's whelp: from the sprouting, my son, thou art gone up: lying

down, thou hast slept as a lion, and as a lion's whelp; who shall

awake him? A prince shall not be lacking out of Judah, and a leader

from his thighs, until the things come that are laid up for him; and

He shall be the expectation of the nations. Binding his foal unto

the vine, and his ass's foal to the choice vine; he shall wash his

robe in wine, and his clothes in the blood of the grape: his eyes

are red with wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk."[334] I have

expounded these words in disputing against Faustus the Manichæan; and

I think it is enough to make the truth of this prophecy shine, to

remark that the death of Christ is predicted by the word about his

lying down, and not the necessity, but the voluntary character of His

death, in the title of lion. That power He Himself proclaims in the

gospel, saying, "I have the power of laying down my life, and I have

the power of taking it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it

down of myself, and take it again."[335] So the lion roared, so He

fulfilled what He said. For to this power what is added about the

resurrection refers, "Who shall awake him?" This means that no man

but Himself has raised Him, who also said of His own body, "Destroy

this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."[336] And the very

nature of His death, that is, the height of the cross, is understood

by the single word, "Thou art gone up." The evangelist explains what

is added, "Lying down, thou hast slept," when he says, "He bowed

His head, and gave up the ghost."[337] Or at least His burial is

to be understood, in which He lay down sleeping, and whence no man

raised Him, as the prophets did some, and as He Himself did others;

but He Himself rose up as if from sleep. As for His robe which He

washes in wine, that is, cleanses from sin in His own blood, of which

blood those who are baptized know the mystery, so that he adds, "And

his clothes in the blood of the grape," what is it but the Church?

"And his eyes are red with wine," [these are] His spiritual people

drunken with His cup, of which the psalm sings, "And thy cup that

makes drunken, how excellent it is!" "And his teeth are whiter than

milk,"[338]--that is, the nutritive words which, according to the

apostle, the babes drink, being as yet unfit for solid food.[339]

And it is He in whom the promises of Judah were laid up, so that

until they come, princes, that is, the kings of Israel, shall never

be lacking out of Judah. "And He is the expectation of the nations."

This is too plain to need exposition.

42. \_Of the sons of Joseph, whom Jacob blessed, prophetically

changing his hands.\_

Now, as Isaac's two sons, Esau and Jacob, furnished a type of the

two people, the Jews and the Christians (although as pertains to

carnal descent it was not the Jews but the Idumeans who came of the

seed of Esau, nor the Christian nations but rather the Jews who came

of Jacob's; for the type holds only as regards the saying, "The

elder shall serve the younger"[340]), so the same thing happened in

Joseph's two sons; for the elder was a type of the Jews, and the

younger of the Christians. For when Jacob was blessing them, and laid

his right hand on the younger, who was at his left, and his left

hand on the elder, who was at his right, this seemed wrong to their

father, and he admonished his father by trying to correct his mistake

and show him which was the elder. But he would not change his hands,

but said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and

he also shall be exalted; but his younger brother shall be greater

than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations."[341] And

these two promises show the same thing. For that one is to become

"a people;" this one "a multitude of nations." And what can be more

evident than that these two promises comprehend the people of Israel,

and the whole world of Abraham's seed, the one according to the

flesh, the other according to faith?

43. \_Of the times of Moses and Joshua the son of Nun, of the

judges, and thereafter of the kings, of whom Saul was the

first, but David is to be regarded as the chief, both by the

oath and by merit.\_

Jacob being dead, and Joseph also, during the remaining 144 years

until they went out of the land of Egypt that nation increased to an

incredible degree, even although wasted by so great persecutions,

that at one time the male children were murdered at their birth,

because the wondering Egyptians were terrified at the too great

increase of that people. Then Moses, being stealthily kept from

the murderers of the infants, was brought to the royal house, God

preparing to do great things by him, and was nursed and adopted

by the daughter of Pharaoh (that was the name of all the kings of

Egypt), and became so great a man that he--yea, rather God, who had

promised this to Abraham, by him--drew that nation, so wonderfully

multiplied, out of the yoke of hardest and most grievous servitude

it had borne there. At first, indeed, he fled thence (we are told he

fled into the land of Midian), because, in defending an Israelite,

he had slain an Egyptian, and was afraid. Afterward, being divinely

commissioned in the power of the Spirit of God, he overcame the

magi of Pharaoh who resisted him. Then, when the Egyptians would

not let God's people go, ten memorable plagues were brought by Him

upon them,--the water turned into blood, the frogs and lice, the

flies, the death of the cattle, the boils, the hail, the locusts, the

darkness, the death of the first-born. At last the Egyptians were

destroyed in the Red Sea while pursuing the Israelites, whom they had

let go when at length they were broken by so many great plagues. The

divided sea made a way for the Israelites who were departing, but,

returning on itself, it overwhelmed their pursuers with its waves.

Then for forty years the people of God went through the desert,

under the leadership of Moses, when the tabernacle of testimony was

dedicated, in which God was worshipped by sacrifices prophetic of

things to come, and that was after the law had been very terribly

given in the mount, for its divinity was most plainly attested by

wonderful signs and voices. This took place soon after the exodus

from Egypt, when the people had entered the desert, on the fiftieth

day after the passover was celebrated by the offering up of a lamb,

which is so completely a type of Christ, foretelling that through

His sacrificial passion He should go from this world to the Father

(for \_pascha\_ in the Hebrew tongue means \_transit\_), that when the

new covenant was revealed, after Christ our passover was offered

up, the Holy Spirit came from heaven on the fiftieth day; and He is

called in the gospel the Finger of God, because He recalls to our

remembrance the things done before by way of types, and because the

tables of that law are said to have been written by the finger of God.

On the death of Moses, Joshua the son of Nun ruled the people,

and led them into the land of promise, and divided it among them.

By these two wonderful leaders wars were also carried on most

prosperously and wonderfully, God calling to witness that they had

got these victories not so much on account of the merit of the Hebrew

people as on account of the sins of the nations they subdued. After

these leaders there were judges, when the people were settled in

the land of promise, so that, in the meantime, the first promise

made to Abraham began to be fulfilled about the one nation, that

is, the Hebrew, and about the land of Canaan; but not as yet the

promise about all nations, and the whole wide world, for that was

to be fulfilled, not by the observances of the old law, but by the

advent of Christ in the flesh, and by the faith of the gospel. And

it was to prefigure this that it was not Moses, who received the law

for the people on Mount Sinai, that led the people into the land of

promise, but Joshua, whose name also was changed at God's command, so

that he was called Jesus. But in the times of the judges prosperity

alternated with adversity in war, according as the sins of the people

and the mercy of God were displayed.

We come next to the times of the kings. The first who reigned was

Saul; and when he was rejected and laid low in battle, and his

offspring rejected so that no kings should arise out of it, David

succeeded to the kingdom, whose son Christ is chiefly called. He was

made a kind of starting-point and beginning of the advanced youth of

God's people, who had passed a kind of age of puberty from Abraham to

this David. And it is not in vain that the evangelist Matthew records

the generations in such a way as to sum up this first period from

Abraham to David in fourteen generations. For from the age of puberty

man begins to be capable of generation; therefore he starts the list

of generations from Abraham, who also was made the father of many

nations when he got his name changed. So that previously this family

of God's people was in its childhood, from Noah to Abraham; and for

that reason the first language was then learned, that is, the Hebrew.

For man begins to speak in childhood, the age succeeding infancy,

which is so termed because then he cannot speak.[342] And that first

age is quite drowned in oblivion, just as the first age of the human

race was blotted out by the flood; for who is there that can remember

his infancy? Wherefore in this progress of the city of God, as the

previous book contained that first age, so this one ought to contain

the second and third ages, in which third age, as was shown by the

heifer of three years old, the she-goat of three years old, and the

ram of three years old, the yoke of the law was imposed, and there

appeared abundance of sins, and the beginning of the earthly kingdom

arose, in which there were not lacking spiritual men, of whom the

turtle-dove and pigeon represented the mystery.

FOOTNOTES:

[221] Gen. ix. 25.

[222] Gen. ix. 26, 27.

[223] See \_Contra Faust.\_ xii. c. 22 sqq.

[224] Song of Solomon i. 3.

[225] 1 Cor. xi. 19.

[226] Prov. x. 5 (LXX.).

[227] Matt. vii. 20.

[228] Phil. i. 18.

[229] Isa. v. 7.

[230] Matt. xx. 22.

[231] Matt. xxvi. 39.

[232] 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

[233] 1 Cor. i. 25.

[234] Augustine here follows the Greek version, which introduces the

name Elisa among the sons of Japheth, though not found in the Hebrew.

It is not found in the Complutensian Greek translation, nor in the

MSS. used by Jerome.

[235] Gen. x. 21.

[236] Gen. xi. 1-9.

[237] Ex. x.

[238] Ps. xcv. 6.

[239] Job xv. 13.

[240] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

[241] Gen. i. 26.

[242] Gen. xi. 6.

[243] Virgil, \_Æneid\_, iv. 592.

[244] Here Augustine remarks on the addition of the particle \_ne\_ to

the word \_non\_, which he has made to bring out the sense.

[245] Gen. i. 24.

[246] Pliny, \_Hist. Nat.\_ vii. 2; Aulus Gellius, \_Noct. Att.\_ ix. 4.

[247] From πυγμή, a cubit.

[248] Gen. x. 25.

[249] Ps. xiv. 3, 4, liii. 3, 4.

[250] Gen. x. 25.

[251] Josh. xxiv. 2.

[252] Gen. xi. 27-29.

[253] Gen. xi. 31.

[254] Gen. xxiv. 10.

[255] Judith v. 5-9.

[256] Gen. xi. 32.

[257] Gen. xii. 1.

[258] Gen. xii. 4.

[259] Gen. xi. 1.

[260] Gen. xii. 1.

[261] Acts vii. 2, 3.

[262] Acts vii. 4.

[263] Gen. xii. 1.

[264] Various reading, "of our Lord Jesus Christ."

[265] Gen. xii. 1-3.

[266] Acts vii. 2.

[267] Gen. xii. 7.

[268] Gen. xiii. 8, 9.

[269] Gen. xiii. 14-17.

[270] Various reading, "the express promise."

[271] Ps. cx. 4.

[272] Rom. iv. 3; Gen. xv. 6.

[273] Gen. xv. 7.

[274] Gen. xv. 9-21.

[275] Luke i. 34.

[276] Luke i. 35.

[277] Various reading, "who are to remain."

[278] Matt. xxiv. 21.

[279] Gen. xi. 32.

[280] Gal. iii. 17.

[281] 1 Cor. vii. 4.

[282] Gen. xvi. 6.

[283] Gen. xv. 4.

[284] Gen. xvii. 1-22. The passage is given in full by Augustine.

[285] Gen. xvii. 14.

[286] Rom. v. 12, 19.

[287] Gen. ii. 17.

[288] Ecclus. xv. 17.

[289] Rom. iv. 15.

[290] Ps. cxix. 119. Augustine and the Vulgate follow the LXX.

[291] Gen. xvii. 5, 6, 16.

[292] Heb. xi. 11.

[293] Heb. xi. 12.

[294] Gen. xviii. 2, 3.

[295] Gen. xix. 2.

[296] Gen. xix. 16-19.

[297] Gen. xix. 21.

[298] Heb. xiii. 2.

[299] Gen. xviii. 18.

[300] Gen. xx. 12.

[301] Gen. xxi. 6.

[302] Gal. iv. 24-26.

[303] Gen. xxi. 12, 13.

[304] Rom. ix. 7, 8.

[305] Heb. xi. 17-19.

[306] Rom. viii. 32.

[307] Gen. xxii. 10-12.

[308] Gen. xxii. 14.

[309] Gen. xxii. 15-18.

[310] Gen. xvii. 17.

[311] Gen. xxiv. 2, 3.

[312] Gen. xvi. 3.

[313] Gen. xxv. 1.

[314] Gen. xxv. 5, 6.

[315] Rom. ix. 7, 8.

[316] Gen. xxv. 23.

[317] Rom. ix. 10-13.

[318] Gen. xxvi. 1-5.

[319] Gen. xxvi. 24.

[320] Gen. xxv. 27.

[321] Gen. xxvii. 27-29.

[322] Gen. xxvii. 33.

[323] Gen. xxviii. 1-4.

[324] Gen. xxi. 12.

[325] Beer-sheba.

[326] Gen. xxviii. 10-19.

[327] John i. 47, 51.

[328] Gen. xxxii. 28: Israel = "a prince of God;" ver. 30: Peniel =

"the face of God."

[329] Ps. xviii. 45.

[330] Augustine here follows the Septuagint, which at Gen. xlvi. 20

adds these names to those of Manasseh and Ephraim, and at ver. 27

gives the whole number as seventy-five.

[331] Gen. l. 22, 23.

[332] Gen. l. 23.

[333] Gen. xlvi. 8.

[334] Gen. xlix. 8-12.

[335] John x. 18.

[336] John ii. 19.

[337] John xix. 30.

[338] Gen. xlix. 12.

[339] 1 Pet. ii. 2; 1 Cor. iii. 2.

[340] Gen. xxv. 23.

[341] Gen. xlviii. 19.

[342] \_Infans\_, from \_in\_, not, and \_fari\_, to speak.

BOOK SEVENTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

IN THIS BOOK THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF GOD IS TRACED DURING THE

PERIOD OF THE KINGS AND PROPHETS FROM SAMUEL TO DAVID, EVEN TO

CHRIST; AND THE PROPHECIES WHICH ARE RECORDED IN THE BOOK OF

KINGS, PSALMS, AND THOSE OF SOLOMON, ARE INTERPRETED OF CHRIST

AND THE CHURCH.

1. \_Of the prophetic age.\_

By the favour of God we have treated distinctly of His promises made

to Abraham, that both the nation of Israel according to the flesh, and

all nations according to faith, should be his seed, and the City of

God, proceeding according to the order of time, will point[343] out how

they were fulfilled. Having therefore in the previous book come down

to the reign of David, we shall now treat of what remains, so far as

may seem sufficient for the object of this work, beginning at the same

reign. Now, from the time when holy Samuel began to prophesy, and ever

onward until the people of Israel was led captive into Babylonia, and

until, according to the prophecy of holy Jeremiah, on Israel's return

thence after seventy years, the house of God was built anew, this whole

period is the prophetic age. For although both the patriarch Noah

himself, in whose days the whole earth was destroyed by the flood, and

others before and after him down to this time when there began to be

kings over the people of God, may not undeservedly be styled prophets,

on account of certain things pertaining to the city of God and the

kingdom of heaven, which they either predicted or in any way signified

should come to pass, and especially since we read that some of them,

as Abraham and Moses, were expressly so styled, yet those are most

and chiefly called the days of the prophets from the time when Samuel

began to prophesy, who at God's command first anointed Saul to be king,

and, on his rejection, David himself, whom others of his issue should

succeed as long as it was fitting they should do so. If, therefore,

I wished to rehearse all that the prophets have predicted concerning

Christ, while the city of God, with its members dying and being born

in constant succession, ran its course through those times, this work

would extend beyond all bounds. First, because the Scripture itself,

even when, in treating in order of the kings and of their deeds and

the events of their reigns, it seems to be occupied in narrating as

with historical diligence the affairs transacted, will be found, if

the things handled by it are considered with the aid of the Spirit of

God, either more, or certainly not less, intent on foretelling things

to come than on relating things past. And who that thinks even a little

about it does not know how laborious and prolix a work it would be,

and how many volumes it would require to search this out by thorough

investigation and demonstrate it by argument? And then, because of that

which without dispute pertains to prophecy, there are so many things

concerning Christ and the kingdom of heaven, which is the city of God,

that to explain these a larger discussion would be necessary than the

due proportion of this work admits of. Therefore I shall, if I can, so

limit myself, that in carrying through this work, I may, with God's

help, neither say what is superfluous nor omit what is necessary.

2. \_At what time the promise of God was fulfilled concerning

the land of Canaan, which even carnal Israel got in possession.\_

In the preceding book we said, that in the promise of God to Abraham

two things were promised from the beginning, the one, namely, that his

seed should possess the land of Canaan, which was intimated when it was

said, "Go into a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a

great nation;"[344] but the other far more excellent, concerning not

the carnal but the spiritual seed, by which he is the father, not of

the one nation of Israel, but of all nations who follow the footsteps

of his faith, which began to be promised in these words, "And in thee

shall all families of the earth be blessed."[345] And thereafter we

showed by yet many other proofs that these two things were promised.

Therefore the seed of Abraham, that is, the people of Israel according

to the flesh, already was in the land of promise; and there, not only

by holding and possessing the cities of the enemies, but also by having

kings, had already begun to reign, the promises of God concerning

that people being already in great part fulfilled: not only those

that were made to those three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and

whatever others were made in their times, but those also that were

made through Moses himself, by whom the same people was set free from

servitude in Egypt, and by whom all bygone things were revealed in

his times, when he led the people through the wilderness. But neither

by the illustrious leader Jesus the son of Nun, who led that people

into the land of promise, and, after driving out the nations, divided

it among the twelve tribes according to God's command, and died; nor

after him, in the whole time of the judges, was the promise of God

concerning the land of Canaan fulfilled, that it should extend from

some river of Egypt even to the great river Euphrates; nor yet was it

still prophesied as to come, but its fulfilment was expected. And it

was fulfilled through David, and Solomon his son, whose kingdom was

extended over the whole promised space; for they subdued all those

nations, and made them tributary. And thus, under those kings, the seed

of Abraham was established in the land of promise according to the

flesh, that is, in the land of Canaan, so that nothing yet remained to

the complete fulfilment of that earthly promise of God, except that,

so far as pertains to temporal prosperity, the Hebrew nation should

remain in the same land by the succession of posterity in an unshaken

state even to the end of this mortal age, if it obeyed the laws of the

Lord its God. But since God knew it would not do this, He used His

temporal punishments also for training His few faithful ones in it, and

for giving needful warning to those who should afterwards be in all

nations, in whom the other promise, revealed in the New Testament, was

about to be fulfilled through the incarnation of Christ.

3. \_Of the threefold meaning of the prophecies, which are to be

referred now to the earthly, now to the heavenly Jerusalem, and

now again to both.\_

Wherefore just as that divine oracle to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and

all the other prophetic signs or sayings which are given in the earlier

sacred writings, so also the other prophecies from this time of the

kings pertain partly to the nation of Abraham's flesh, and partly to

that seed of his in which all nations are blessed as fellow-heirs of

Christ by the New Testament, to the possessing of eternal life and the

kingdom of the heavens. Therefore they pertain partly to the bond maid

who gendereth to bondage, that is, the earthly Jerusalem, which is in

bondage with her children; but partly to the free city of God, that is,

the true Jerusalem eternal in the heavens, whose children are all those

that live according to God in the earth: but there are some things

among them which are understood to pertain to both,--to the bond maid

properly, to the free woman figuratively.[346]

Therefore prophetic utterances of three kinds are to be found;

forasmuch as there are some relating to the earthly Jerusalem, some

to the heavenly, and some to both. I think it proper to prove what I

say by examples. The prophet Nathan was sent to convict king David

of heinous sin, and predict to him what future evils should be

consequent on it. Who can question that this and the like pertain

to the terrestrial city, whether publicly, that is, for the safety

or help of the people, or privately, when there are given forth for

each one's private good divine utterances whereby something of the

future may be known for the use of temporal life? But where we read,

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make for the

house of Israel, and for the house of Judah, a new testament: not

according to the testament that I settled for their fathers in the

day when I laid hold of their hand to lead them out of the land of

Egypt; because they continued not in my testament, and I regarded

them not, saith the Lord. For this is the testament that I will make

for the house of Israel: after those days, saith the Lord, I will

give my laws in their mind, and will write them upon their hearts,

and I will see to them; and I will be to them a God, and they shall

be to me a people;"[347]--without doubt this is prophesied to the

Jerusalem above, whose reward is God Himself, and whose chief and

entire good it is to have Him, and to be His. But this pertains

to both, that the city of God is called Jerusalem, and that it is

prophesied the house of God shall be in it; and this prophecy seems

to be fulfilled when king Solomon builds that most noble temple.

For these things both happened in the earthly Jerusalem, as history

shows, and were types of the heavenly Jerusalem. And this kind of

prophecy, as it were compacted and commingled of both the others in

the ancient canonical books, containing historical narratives, is

of very great significance, and has exercised and exercises greatly

the wits of those who search holy writ. For example, what we read

of historically as predicted and fulfilled in the seed of Abraham

according to the flesh, we must also inquire the allegorical meaning

of, as it is to be fulfilled in the seed of Abraham according to

faith. And so much is this the case, that some have thought there

is nothing in these books either foretold and effected, or effected

although not foretold, that does not insinuate something else which

is to be referred by figurative signification to the city of God

on high, and to her children who are pilgrims in this life. But

if this be so, then the utterances of the prophets, or rather the

whole of those Scriptures that are reckoned under the title of the

Old Testament, will be not of three, but of two different kinds.

For there will be nothing there which pertains to the terrestrial

Jerusalem only, if whatever is there said and fulfilled of or

concerning her signifies something which also refers by allegorical

prefiguration to the celestial Jerusalem; but there will be only

two kinds, one that pertains to the free Jerusalem, the other to

both. But just as, I think, they err greatly who are of opinion

that none of the records of affairs in that kind of writings mean

anything more than that they so happened, so I think those very

daring who contend that the whole gist of their contents lies in

allegorical significations. Therefore I have said they are threefold,

not twofold. Yet, in holding this opinion, I do not blame those who

may be able to draw out of everything there a spiritual meaning,

only saving, first of all, the historical truth. For the rest, what

believer can doubt that those things are spoken vainly which are such

that, whether said to have been done or to be yet to come, they do

not beseem either human or divine affairs? Who would not recall these

to spiritual understanding if he could, or confess that they should

be recalled by him who is able?

4. \_About the prefigured change of the Israelitic kingdom and

priesthood, and about the things Hannah the mother of Samuel

prophesied, personating the Church.\_

Therefore the advance of the city of God, where it reached the times

of the kings, yielded a figure, when, on the rejection of Saul,

David first obtained the kingdom on such a footing that thenceforth

his descendants should reign in the earthly Jerusalem in continual

succession; for the course of affairs signified and foretold, what is

not to be passed by in silence, concerning the change of things to

come, what belongs to both Testaments, the Old and the New,--where the

priesthood and kingdom are changed by one who is a priest, and at the

same time a king, new and everlasting, even Christ Jesus. For both the

substitution in the ministry of God, on Eli's rejection as priest, of

Samuel, who executed at once the office of priest and judge, and the

establishment of David in the kingdom, when Saul was rejected, typified

this of which I speak. And Hannah herself, the mother of Samuel, who

formerly was barren, and afterwards was gladdened with fertility, does

not seem to prophesy anything else, when she exultingly pours forth

her thanksgiving to the Lord, on yielding up to God the same boy she

had born and weaned with the same piety with which she had vowed him.

For she says, "My heart is made strong in the Lord, and my horn is

exalted in my God; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; I am made

glad in Thy salvation. Because there is none holy as the Lord; and none

is righteous as our God: there is none holy save Thee. Do not glory

so proudly, and do not speak lofty things, neither let vaunting talk

come out of your mouth: for a God of knowledge is the Lord, and a God

preparing His curious designs. The bow of the mighty hath He made weak,

and the weak are girded with strength. They that were full of bread are

diminished; and the hungry have passed beyond the earth: for the barren

hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. The

Lord killeth and maketh alive: He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth

up again. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich: He bringeth low and

lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the

beggar from the dunghill, that He may set him among the mighty of

[His] people, and maketh them inherit the throne of glory; giving the

vow to him that voweth, and He hath blessed the years of the just: for

man is not mighty in strength. The Lord shall make His adversary weak:

the Lord is holy. Let not the prudent glory in his prudence; and let

not the mighty glory in his might; and let not the rich glory in his

riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, to understand and know

the Lord, and to do judgment and justice in the midst of the earth. The

Lord hath ascended into the heavens, and hath thundered: He shall judge

the ends of the earth, for He is righteous: and He giveth strength to

our kings, and shall exalt the horn of His Christ."[348]

Do you say that these are the words of a single weak woman giving

thanks for the birth of a son? Can the mind of men be so much averse

to the light of truth as not to perceive that the sayings this

woman pours forth exceed her measure? Moreover, he who is suitably

interested in these things which have already begun to be fulfilled

even in this earthly pilgrimage also, does he not apply his mind, and

perceive, and acknowledge, that through this woman--whose very name,

which is Hannah, means "His grace"--the very Christian religion, the

very city of God, whose king and founder is Christ, in fine, the very

grace of God, hath thus spoken by the prophetic Spirit, whereby the

proud are cut off so that they fall, and the humble are filled so

that they rise, which that hymn chiefly celebrates? Unless perchance

any one will say that this woman prophesied nothing, but only lauded

God with exulting praise on account of the son whom she had obtained

in answer to prayer. What then does she mean when she says, "The

bow of the mighty hath He made weak, and the weak are girded with

strength; they that were full of bread are diminished, and the hungry

have gone beyond the earth; for the barren hath born seven, and she

that hath many children is waxed feeble?" Had she herself born seven,

although she had been barren? She had only one when she said that;

neither did she bear seven afterwards, nor six, with whom Samuel

himself might be the seventh, but three males and two females. And

then, when as yet no one was king over that people, whence, if she

did not prophesy, did she say what she puts at the end, "He giveth

strength to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of His Christ?"

Therefore let the Church of Christ, the city of the great King,[349]

full of grace, prolific of offspring, let her say what the prophecy

uttered about her so long before by the mouth of this pious mother

confesses, "My heart is made strong in the Lord, and my horn is

exalted in my God." Her heart is truly made strong, and her horn

is truly exalted, because not in herself, but in the Lord her God.

"My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;" because even in pressing

straits the word of God is not bound, not even in preachers who are

bound.[350] "I am made glad," she says, "in Thy salvation." This is

Christ Jesus Himself, whom old Simeon, as we read in the Gospel,

embracing as a little one, yet recognising as great, said, "Lord, now

lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy

salvation."[351] Therefore may the Church say, "I am made glad in Thy

salvation. For there is none holy as the Lord, and none is righteous

as our God;" as holy and sanctifying, just and justifying.[352]

"There is none holy beside Thee;" because no one becomes so except

by reason of Thee. And then it follows, "Do not glory so proudly,

and do not speak lofty things, neither let vaunting talk come out of

your mouth. For a God of knowledge is the Lord." He knows you even

when no one knows; for "he who thinketh himself to be something when

he is nothing deceiveth himself."[353] These things are said to the

adversaries of the city of God who belong to Babylon, who presume in

their own strength, and glory in themselves, not in the Lord; of whom

are also the carnal Israelites, the earth-born inhabitants of the

earthly Jerusalem, who, as saith the apostle, "being ignorant of the

righteousness of God,"[354] that is, which God, who alone is just,

and the justifier, gives to man, "and wishing to establish their

own," that is, which is as it were procured by their own selves,

not bestowed by Him, "are not subject to the righteousness of God,"

just because they are proud, and think they are able to please God

with their own, not with that which is of God, who is the God of

knowledge, and therefore also takes the oversight of consciences,

there beholding the thoughts of men that they are vain,[355] if they

are of men, and are not from Him. "And preparing," she says, "His

curious designs." What curious designs do we think these are, save

that the proud must fall, and the humble rise? These curious designs

she recounts, saying, "The bow of the mighty is made weak, and the

weak are girded with strength." The bow is made weak, that is, the

intention of those who think themselves so powerful, that without the

gift and help of God they are able by human sufficiency to fulfil the

divine commandments; and those are girded with strength whose inward

cry is, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak."[356]

"They that were full of bread," she says, "are diminished, and the

hungry have gone beyond the earth." Who are to be understood as full of

bread except those same who were as if mighty, that is, the Israelites,

to whom were committed the oracles of God?[357] But among that people

the children of the bond maid were diminished,--by which word minus,

although it is Latin, the idea is well expressed that from being

greater they were made less,--because, even in the very bread, that

is, the divine oracles, which the Israelites alone of all nations have

received, they savour earthly things. But the nations to whom that law

was not given, after they have come through the New Testament to these

oracles, by thirsting much have gone beyond the earth, because in them

they have savoured not earthly, but heavenly things. And the reason why

this is done is as it were sought; "for the barren," she says, "hath

born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble." Here

all that had been prophesied hath shone forth to those who understood

the number seven, which signifies the perfection of the universal

Church. For which reason also the Apostle John writes to the seven

churches,[358] showing in that way that he writes to the totality of

the one Church; and in the Proverbs of Solomon it is said aforetime,

prefiguring this, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath strengthened

her seven pillars."[359] For the city of God was barren in all nations

before that child arose whom we see.[360] We also see that the temporal

Jerusalem, who had many children, is now waxed feeble. Because,

whoever in her were sons of the free woman were her strength; but now,

forasmuch as the letter is there, and not the spirit, having lost her

strength, she is waxed feeble.

"The Lord killeth and maketh alive:" He has killed her who had many

children, and made this barren one alive, so that she has born seven.

Although it may be more suitably understood that He has made those same

alive whom He has killed. For she, as it were, repeats that by adding,

"He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth up." To whom truly the apostle

says, "If ye be dead with Christ, seek those things which are above,

where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."[361] Therefore they are

killed by the Lord in a salutary way, so that he adds, "Savour things

which are above, not things on the earth;" so that these are they who,

hungering, have passed beyond the earth. "For ye are dead," he says:

behold how God savingly kills! Then there follows, "And your life is

hid with Christ in God:" behold how God makes the same alive! But does

He bring them down to hell and bring them up again? It is without

controversy among believers that we best see both parts of this work

fulfilled in Him, to wit, our Head, with whom the apostle has said our

life is hid in God. "For when He spared not His own Son, but delivered

Him up for us all,"[362] in that way, certainly, He has killed Him.

And forasmuch as He raised Him up again from the dead, He has made Him

alive again. And since His voice is acknowledged in the prophecy, "Thou

wilt not leave my soul in hell,"[363] He has brought Him down to hell

and brought Him up again. By this poverty of His we are made rich;[364]

for "the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich." But that we may know what

this is, let us hear what follows: "He bringeth low and lifteth up;"

and truly He humbles the proud and exalts the humble. Which we also

read elsewhere, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the

humble."[365] This is the burden of the entire song of this woman whose

name is interpreted "His grace."

Farther, what is added, "He raiseth up the poor from the earth," I

understand of none better than of Him who, as was said a little ago,

"was made poor for us, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might

be made rich." For He raised Him from the earth so quickly that His

flesh did not see corruption. Nor shall I divert from Him what is

added, "And raiseth up the poor from the dunghill." For indeed he who

is the poor man is also the beggar.[366] But by the dunghill from which

he is lifted up we are with the greatest reason to understand the

persecuting Jews, of whom the apostle says, when telling that when he

belonged to them he persecuted the Church, "What things were gain to

me, those I counted loss for Christ; and I have counted them not only

loss, but even dung, that I might win Christ."[367] Therefore that poor

one is raised up from the earth above all the rich, and that beggar is

lifted up from that dunghill above all the wealthy, "that he may sit

among the mighty of the people," to whom He says, "Ye shall sit upon

twelve thrones,"[368] "and to make them inherit the throne of glory."

For these mighty ones had said, "Lo, we have forsaken all and followed

Thee." They had most mightily vowed this vow.

But whence do they receive this, except from Him of whom it is here

immediately said, "Giving the vow to him that voweth?" Otherwise they

would be of those mighty ones whose bow is weakened. "Giving," she

saith, "the vow to him that voweth." For no one could vow anything

acceptable to God, unless he received from Him that which he might

vow. There follows, "And He hath blessed the years of the just," to

wit, that he may live for ever with Him to whom it is said, "And

Thy years shall have no end." For there the years abide; but here

they pass away, yea, they perish: for before they come they are not,

and when they shall have come they shall not be, because they bring

their own end with them. Now of these two, that is, "giving the vow

to him that voweth," and "He hath blessed the years of the just,"

the one is what we do, the other what we receive. But this other

is not received from God, the liberal giver, until He, the helper,

Himself has enabled us for the former; "for man is not mighty in

strength." "The Lord shall make his adversary weak," to wit, him who

envies the man that vows, and resists him, lest he should fulfil

what he has vowed. Owing to the ambiguity of the Greek, it may also

be understood "his own adversary." For when God has begun to possess

us, immediately he who had been our adversary becomes His, and is

conquered by us; but not by our own strength, "for man is not mighty

in strength." Therefore "the Lord shall make His own adversary weak,

the Lord is holy," that he may be conquered by the saints, whom the

Lord, the Holy of holies, hath made saints. For this reason, "let

not the prudent glory in his prudence, and let not the mighty glory

in his might, and let not the rich glory in his riches; but let him

that glorieth glory in this,--to understand and know the Lord, and to

do judgment and justice in the midst of the earth." He in no small

measure understands and knows the Lord who understands and knows that

even this, that he can understand and know the Lord, is given to him

by the Lord. "For what hast thou," saith the apostle, "that thou hast

not received? But if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as

if thou hadst not received it?"[369] That is, as if thou hadst of

thine own self whereof thou mightest glory. Now, he does judgment and

justice who lives aright. But he lives aright who yields obedience to

God when He commands. "The end of the commandment," that is, to which

the commandment has reference, "is charity out of a pure heart, and

a good conscience, and faith unfeigned." Moreover, this "charity,"

as the Apostle John testifies, "is of God."[370] Therefore to do

justice and judgment is of God. But what is "in the midst of the

earth?" For ought those who dwell in the ends of the earth not to do

judgment and justice? Who would say so? Why, then, is it added, "In

the midst of the earth?" For if this had not been added, and it had

only been said, "To do judgment and justice," this commandment would

rather have pertained to both kinds of men,--both those dwelling

inland and those on the sea-coast. But lest any one should think

that, after the end of the life led in this body, there remains a

time for doing judgment and justice which he has not done while he

was in the flesh, and that the divine judgment can thus be escaped,

"in the midst of the earth" appears to me to be said of the time

when every one lives in the body; for in this life every one carries

about his own earth, which, on a man's dying, the common earth takes

back, to be surely returned to him on his rising again. Therefore "in

the midst of the earth," that is, while our soul is shut up in this

earthly body, judgment and justice are to be done, which shall be

profitable for us hereafter, when "every one shall receive according

to that he hath done in the body, whether good or bad."[371] For when

the apostle there says "in the body," he means in the time he has

lived in the body. Yet if any one blaspheme with malicious mind and

impious thought, without any member of his body being employed in it,

he shall not therefore be guiltless because he has not done it with

bodily motion, for he will have done it in that time which he has

spent in the body. In the same way we may suitably understand what we

read in the psalm, "But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought

salvation in the midst of the earth;"[372] so that the Lord Jesus

may be understood to be our God who is before the worlds, because by

Him the worlds were made, working our salvation in the midst of the

earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt in an earthly body.

Then after Hannah has prophesied in these words, that he who glorieth

ought to glory not in himself at all, but in the Lord, she says, on

account of the retribution which is to come on the day of judgment,

"The Lord hath ascended into the heavens, and hath thundered: He

shall judge the ends of the earth, for He is righteous." Throughout

she holds to the order of the creed of Christians: For the Lord

Christ has ascended into heaven, and is to come thence to judge the

quick and dead.[373] For, as saith the apostle, "Who hath ascended

but He who hath also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He

that descended is the same also that ascended up above all heavens,

that He might fill all things."[374] Therefore He hath thundered

through His clouds, which He hath filled with His Holy Spirit when

He ascended up. Concerning which the bond maid Jerusalem that is,

the unfruitful vineyard is threatened in Isaiah the prophet that

they shall rain no showers upon her. But "He shall judge the ends

of the earth" is spoken as if it had been said, "even the extremes

of the earth." For it does not mean that He shall not judge the

other parts of the earth, who, without doubt, shall judge all men.

But it is better to understand by the extremes of the earth the

extremes of man, since those things shall not be judged which, in

the middle time, are changed for the better or the worse, but the

ending in which he shall be found who is judged. For which reason

it is said, "He that shall persevere even unto the end, the same

shall be saved."[375] He, therefore, who perseveringly does judgment

and justice in the midst of the earth shall not be condemned when

the extremes of the earth shall be judged. "And giveth," she saith,

"strength to our kings," that He may not condemn them in judging.

He giveth them strength whereby as kings they rule the flesh, and

conquer the world in Him who hath poured out His blood for them.

"And shall exalt the horn of His Christ." For He of whom it was said

above, "The Lord hath ascended into the heavens," meaning the Lord

Christ, Himself, as it is said here, "shall exalt the horn of His

Christ." Who, therefore, is the Christ of His Christ? Does it mean

that He shall exalt the horn of each one of His believing people,

as she says in the beginning of this hymn, "Mine horn is exalted in

my God?" For we can rightly call all those christs who are anointed

with His chrism, forasmuch as the whole body with its head is one

Christ.[376] These things hath Hannah, the mother of Samuel, the holy

and much-praised man, prophesied, in which, indeed, the change of the

ancient priesthood was then figured and is now fulfilled, since she

that had many children is waxed feeble, that the barren who hath

born seven might have the new priesthood in Christ.

5. \_Of those things which a man of God spake by the Spirit to Eli

the priest, signifying that the priesthood which had been

appointed according to Aaron was to be taken away.\_

But this is said more plainly by a man of God sent to Eli the priest

himself, whose name indeed is not mentioned, but whose office and

ministry show him to have been indubitably a prophet. For it is

thus written: "And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said, Thus

saith the Lord, I plainly revealed myself unto thy father's house,

when they were in the land of Egypt slaves in Pharaoh's house; and I

chose thy father's house out of all the sceptres of Israel to fill

the office of priest for me, to go up to my altar, to burn incense

and wear the ephod; and I gave thy father's house for food all the

offerings made by fire of the children of Israel. Wherefore then hast

thou looked at mine incense and at mine offerings with an impudent

eye, and hast glorified thy sons above me, to bless the first-fruits

of every sacrifice in Israel before me? Therefore thus saith the Lord

God of Israel, I said thy house and thy father's house should walk

before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for

them that honour me will I honour, and he that despiseth me shall be

despised. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thy seed, and

the seed of thy father's house, and thou shalt never have an old man

in my house. And I will cut off the man of thine from mine altar, so

that his eyes shall be consumed, and his heart shall melt away; and

every one of thy house that is left shall fall by the sword of men.

And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon these thy two

sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according

to all that is in mine heart and in my soul; and I will build him

a sure house, and he shall walk before my Christ for ever. And it

shall come to pass that he who is left in thine house shall come to

worship him with a piece of money, saying, Put me into one part of

thy priesthood, that I may eat bread."[377]

We cannot say that this prophecy, in which the change of the ancient

priesthood is foretold with so great plainness, was fulfilled in

Samuel; for although Samuel was not of another tribe than that which

had been appointed by God to serve at the altar, yet he was not of

the sons of Aaron, whose offspring was set apart that the priests

might be taken out of it. And thus by that transaction also the same

change which should come to pass through Christ Jesus is shadowed

forth, and the prophecy itself in deed, not in word, belonged to the

Old Testament properly, but figuratively to the New, signifying by

the fact just what was said by the word to Eli the priest through the

prophet. For there were afterwards priests of Aaron's race, such as

Zadok and Abiathar during David's reign, and others in succession,

before the time came when those things which were predicted so long

before about the changing of the priesthood behoved to be fulfilled

by Christ. But who that now views these things with a believing eye

does not see that they are fulfilled? Since, indeed, no tabernacle,

no temple, no altar, no sacrifice, and therefore no priest either,

has remained to the Jews, to whom it was commanded in the law of

God that he should be ordained of the seed of Aaron; which is also

mentioned here by the prophet, when he says, "Thus saith the Lord

God of Israel, I said thy house and thy father's house shall walk

before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, That be far from me;

for them that honour me will I honour, and he that despiseth me

shall be despised." For that in naming his father's house he does

not mean that of his immediate father, but that of Aaron, who first

was appointed priest, to be succeeded by others descended from him,

is shown by the preceding words, when he says, "I was revealed unto

thy father's house, when they were in the land of Egypt slaves in

Pharaoh's house; and I chose thy father's house out of all the

sceptres of Israel to fill the office of priest for me." Which of

the fathers in that Egyptian slavery, but Aaron, was his father,

who, when they were set free, was chosen to the priesthood? It was

of his lineage, therefore, he has said in this passage it should

come to pass that they should no longer be priests; which already

we see fulfilled. If faith be watchful, the things are before us:

they are discerned, they are grasped, and are forced on the eyes of

the unwilling, so that they are seen: "Behold the days come," he

says, "that I will cut off thy seed, and the seed of thy father's

house, and thou shalt never have an old man in mine house. And I

will cut off the man of thine from mine altar, so that his eyes

shall be consumed and his heart shall melt away." Behold the days

which were foretold have already come. There is no priest after the

order of Aaron; and whoever is a man of his lineage, when he sees

the sacrifice of the Christians prevailing over the whole world, but

that great honour taken away from himself, his eyes fail and his soul

melts away consumed with grief.

But what follows belongs properly to the house of Eli, to whom these

things were said: "And every one of thine house that is left shall fall

by the sword of men. And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come

upon these thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die

both of them." This, therefore, is made a sign of the change of the

priesthood from this man's house, by which it is signified that the

priesthood of Aaron's house is to be changed. For the death of this

man's sons signified the death not of the men, but of the priesthood

itself of the sons of Aaron. But what follows pertains to that Priest

whom Samuel typified by succeeding this one. Therefore the things which

follow are said of Christ Jesus the true Priest of the New Testament:

"And I will raise me up a faithful Priest that shall do according to

all that is in mine heart and in my soul; and I will build Him a sure

house." The same is the eternal Jerusalem above. "And He shall walk,"

saith He, "before my Christ always." "He shall walk" means "he shall be

conversant with," just as He had said before of Aaron's house, "I said

that thine house and thy father's house shall walk before me for ever."

But what He says, "He shall walk before my Christ," is to be understood

entirely of the house itself, not of the priest, who is Christ Himself,

the Mediator and Saviour. His house, therefore, shall walk before Him.

"Shall walk" may also be understood to mean from death to life, all the

time this mortality passes through, even to the end of this world. But

where God says, "Who will do all that is in mine heart and in my soul,"

we must not think that God has a soul, for He is the Author of souls;

but this is said of God tropically, not properly, just as He is said to

have hands and feet, and other corporal members. And, lest it should

be supposed from such language that man in the form of this flesh is

made in the image of God, wings also are ascribed to Him, which man has

not at all; and it is said to God, "Hide me under the shadow of Thy

wings,"[378] that men may understand that such things are said of that

ineffable nature not in proper but in figurative words.

But what is added, "And it shall come to pass that he who is left in

thine house shall come to worship Him," is not said properly of the

house of this Eli, but of that Aaron, the men of which remained even

to the advent of Jesus Christ, of which race there are not wanting

men even to this present. For of that house of Eli it had already

been said above, "And every one of thine house that is left shall

fall by the sword of men." How, therefore, could it be truly said

here, "And it shall come to pass that every one that is left shall

come to worship him," if that is true, that no one shall escape the

avenging sword, unless he would have it understood of those who

belong to the race of that whole priesthood after the order of Aaron?

Therefore, if it is of these the predestinated remnant, about whom

another prophet has said, "The remnant shall be saved;"[379] whence

the apostle also says, "Even so then at this time also the remnant

according to the election of grace is saved;"[380] since it is easily

understood to be of such a remnant that it is said, "He that is left

in thine house," assuredly he believes in Christ; just as in the time

of the apostle very many of that nation believed; nor are there now

wanting those, although very few, who yet believe, and in them is

fulfilled what this man of God has here immediately added, "He shall

come to worship him with a piece of money;" to worship whom, if not

that Chief Priest, who is also God? For in that priesthood after the

order of Aaron men did not come to the temple or altar of God for the

purpose of worshipping the priest. But what is that he says, "With

a piece of money," if not the short word of faith, about which the

apostle quotes the saying, "A consummating and shortening word will

the Lord make upon the earth?"[381] But that money is put for the

word the psalm is a witness, where it is sung, "The words of the Lord

are pure words, money tried with the fire."[382]

What then does he say who comes to worship the priest of God, even

the Priest who is God? "Put me into one part of Thy priesthood, to

eat bread." I do not wish to be set in the honour of my fathers,

which is none; put me in a part of Thy priesthood. For "I have

chosen to be mean in Thine house;"[383] I desire to be a member, no

matter what, or how small, of Thy priesthood. By the priesthood he

here means the people itself, of which He is the Priest who is the

Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.[384] This people

the Apostle Peter calls "a holy people, a royal priesthood."[385] But

some have translated, "Of Thy sacrifice," not "Of Thy priesthood,"

which no less signifies the same Christian people. Whence the Apostle

Paul says, "We being many are one bread, one body."[386] [And again

he says, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice."[387]] What,

therefore, he has added, to "eat bread," also elegantly expresses

the very kind of sacrifice of which the Priest Himself says, "The

bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."[388]

The same is the sacrifice not after the order of Aaron, but after

the order of Melchisedec:[389] let him that readeth understand.[390]

Therefore this short and salutarily humble confession, in which it is

said, "Put me in a part of Thy priesthood, to eat bread," is itself

the piece of money, for it is both brief, and it is the Word of God

who dwells in the heart of one who believes. For because He had said

above, that He had given for food to Aaron's house the sacrificial

victims of the Old Testament, where He says, "I have given thy

father's house for food all things which are offered by fire of the

children of Israel," which indeed were the sacrifices of the Jews;

therefore here He has said, "To eat bread," which is in the New

Testament the sacrifice of the Christians.

6. \_Of the Jewish priesthood and kingdom, which, although promised

to be established for ever, did not continue; so that other

things are to be understood to which eternity is assured.\_

While, therefore, these things now shine forth as clearly as they

were loftily foretold, still some one may not vainly be moved to

ask, How can we be confident that all things are to come to pass

which are predicted in these books as about to come, if this very

thing which is there divinely spoken, "Thine house and thy father's

house shall walk before me for ever," could not have effect? For we

see that priesthood has been changed; and there can be no hope that

what was promised to that house may some time be fulfilled, because

that which succeeds on its being rejected and changed is rather

predicted as eternal. He who says this does not yet understand, or

does not recollect, that this very priesthood after the order of

Aaron was appointed as the shadow of a future eternal priesthood; and

therefore, when eternity is promised to it, it is not promised to the

mere shadow and figure, but to what is shadowed forth and prefigured

by it. But lest it should be thought the shadow itself was to remain,

therefore its mutation also behoved to be foretold.

In this way, too, the kingdom of Saul himself, who certainly was

reprobated and rejected, was the shadow of a kingdom yet to come which

should remain to eternity. For, indeed, the oil with which he was

anointed, and from that chrism he is called Christ, is to be taken in a

mystical sense, and is to be understood as a great mystery; which David

himself venerated so much in him, that he trembled with smitten heart

when, being hid in a dark cave, which Saul also entered when pressed

by the necessity of nature, he had come secretly behind him and cut

off a small piece of his robe, that he might be able to prove how he

had spared him when he could have killed him, and might thus remove

from his mind the suspicion through which he had vehemently persecuted

the holy David, thinking him his enemy. Therefore he was much afraid

lest he should be accused of violating so great a mystery in Saul,

because he had thus meddled even his clothes. For thus it is written:

"And David's heart smote him because he had taken away the skirt of

his cloak."[391] But to the men with him, who advised him to destroy

Saul thus delivered up into his hands, he saith, "The Lord forbid that

I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's christ, to lay my hand

upon him, because he is the Lord's christ." Therefore he showed so

great reverence to this shadow of what was to come, not for its own

sake, but for the sake of what it prefigured. Whence also that which

Samuel says to Saul, "Since thou hast not kept my commandment which

the Lord commanded thee, whereas now the Lord would have prepared thy

kingdom over Israel for ever, yet now thy kingdom shall not continue

for thee; and the Lord will seek Him a man after His own heart, and

the Lord will command him to be prince over His people, because thou

hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee,"[392] is not to be

taken as if God had settled that Saul himself should reign for ever,

and afterwards, on his sinning, would not keep this promise; nor was He

ignorant that he would sin, but He had established his kingdom that it

might be a figure of the eternal kingdom. Therefore he added, "Yet now

thy kingdom shall not continue \_for thee\_." Therefore what it signified

has stood and shall stand; but it shall not stand for this man, because

he himself was not to reign for ever, nor his offspring; so that at

least that word "for ever" might seem to be fulfilled through his

posterity one to another. "And the Lord," he saith, "will seek Him a

man," meaning either David or the Mediator of the New Testament,[393]

who was figured in the chrism with which David also and his offspring

was anointed. But it is not as if He knew not where he was that God

thus seeks Him a man, but, speaking through a man, He speaks as a man,

and in this sense seeks us. For not only to God the Father, but also

to His Only-begotten, who came to seek what was lost,[394] we had been

known already even so far as to be chosen in Him before the foundation

of the world.[395] "He will seek him" therefore means, He will have His

own (just as if He had said, Whom He already has known to be His own

He will show to others to be His friend). Whence in Latin this word

(\_quærit\_) receives a preposition and becomes \_acquirit\_ (acquires),

the meaning of which is plain enough; although even without the

addition of the preposition \_quærere\_ is understood as \_acquirere\_,

whence gains are called \_quæstus\_.

7. \_Of the disruption of the kingdom of Israel, by which the

perpetual division of the spiritual from the carnal Israel was

prefigured.\_

Again Saul sinned through disobedience, and again Samuel says to him

in the word of the Lord, "Because thou hast despised the word of the

Lord, the Lord hath despised thee, that thou mayest not be king over

Israel."[396] And again for the same sin, when Saul confessed it, and

prayed for pardon, and besought Samuel to return with him to appease

the Lord, he said, "I will not return with thee: for thou hast

despised the word of the Lord, and the Lord will despise thee that

thou mayest not be king over Israel. And Samuel turned his face to go

away, and Saul laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and rent it.

And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel

out of thine hand this day, and will give it to thy neighbour, who

is good above thee, and will divide Israel in twain. And He will not

be changed, neither will He repent: for He is not as a man, that He

should repent; who threatens and does not persist."[397] He to whom

it is said, "The Lord will despise thee that thou mayest not be king

over Israel," and "The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel out of

thine hand this day," reigned forty years over Israel,--that is, just

as long a time as David himself,--yet heard this in the first period

of his reign, that we may understand it was said because none of his

race was to reign, and that we may look to the race of David, whence

also is sprung, according to the flesh,[398] the Mediator between God

and men, the man Christ Jesus.[399]

But the Scripture has not what is read in most Latin copies, "The Lord

hath rent the kingdom of Israel out of thine hand this day," but just

as we have set it down it is found in the Greek copies, "The Lord hath

rent the kingdom from Israel out of thine hand;" that the words "out

of thine hand" may be understood to mean "from Israel." Therefore this

man figuratively represented the people of Israel, which was to lose

the kingdom, Christ Jesus our Lord being about to reign, not carnally,

but spiritually. And when it is said of Him, "And will give it to thy

neighbour," that is to be referred to the fleshly kinship, for Christ,

according to the flesh, was of Israel, whence also Saul sprang. But

what is added, "Good above thee," may indeed be understood, "Better

than thee," and indeed some have thus translated it; but it is better

taken thus, "Good above thee," as meaning that because He is good,

therefore He must be above thee, according to that other prophetic

saying, "Till I put all Thine enemies under Thy feet."[400] And among

them is Israel, from whom, as His persecutor, Christ took away the

kingdom; although the Israel in whom there was no guile may have been

there too, a sort of grain, as it were, of that chaff. For certainly

thence came the apostles, thence so many martyrs, of whom Stephen,

is the first, thence so many churches, which the Apostle Paul names,

magnifying God in their conversion.

Of which thing I do not doubt what follows is to be understood, "And

will divide Israel in twain," to wit, into Israel pertaining to the

bond woman, and Israel pertaining to the free. For these two kinds were

at first together, as Abraham still clave to the bond woman, until the

barren, made, fruitful by the grace of God, cried, "Cast out the bond

woman and her son."[401] We know, indeed, that on account of the sin of

Solomon, in the reign of his son Rehoboam Israel was divided in two,

and continued so, the separate parts having their own kings, until that

whole nation was overthrown with a great destruction, and carried away

by the Chaldeans. But what was this to Saul, when, if any such thing

was threatened, it would be threatened against David himself, whose son

Solomon was? Finally, the Hebrew nation is not now divided internally,

but is dispersed through the earth indiscriminately, in the fellowship

of the same error. But that division with which God threatened the

kingdom and people in the person of Saul, who represented them, is

shown to be eternal and unchangeable by this which is added, "And He

will not be changed, neither will He repent: for He is not as a man,

that He should repent; who threatens and does not persist,"--that is, a

man threatens and does not persist, but not God, who does not repent

like man. For when we read that He repents, a change of circumstance

is meant, flowing from the divine immutable foreknowledge. Therefore,

when God is said not to repent, it is to be understood that He does not

change.

We see that this sentence concerning this division of the people

of Israel, divinely uttered in these words, has been altogether

irremediable and quite perpetual. For whoever have turned, or are

turning, or shall turn thence to Christ, it has been according to the

foreknowledge of God, not according to the one and the same nature of

the human race. Certainly none of the Israelites, who, cleaving to

Christ, have continued in Him, shall ever be among those Israelites

who persist in being His enemies even to the end of this life, but

shall for ever remain in the separation which is here foretold.

For the Old Testament, from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to

bondage,[402] profiteth nothing, unless because it bears witness to

the New Testament. Otherwise, however long Moses is read, the veil is

put over their heart; but when any one shall turn thence to Christ,

the veil shall be taken away.[403] For the very desire of those who

turn is changed from the old to the new, so that each no longer

desires to obtain carnal but spiritual felicity. Wherefore that great

prophet Samuel himself, before he had anointed Saul, when he had

cried to the Lord for Israel, and He had heard him, and when he had

offered a whole burnt-offering, as the aliens were coming to battle

against the people of God, and the Lord thundered above them and

they were confused, and fell before Israel and were overcome; [then]

he took one stone and set it up between the old and new Massephat

(Mizpeh), and called its name Ebenezer, which means "the stone of the

helper," and said, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."[404] Massephat

is interpreted "desire." That stone of the helper is the mediation of

the Saviour, by which we go from the old Massephat to the new,--that

is, from the desire with which carnal happiness was expected in

the carnal kingdom to the desire with which the truest spiritual

happiness is expected in the kingdom of heaven; and since nothing is

better than that, the Lord helpeth us hitherto.

8. \_Of the promises made to David in his son, which are in no wise

fulfilled in Solomon, but most fully in Christ.\_

And now I see I must show what, pertaining to the matter I treat of,

God promised to David himself, who succeeded Saul in the kingdom,

whose change prefigured that final change on account of which all

things were divinely spoken, all things were committed to writing.

When many things had gone prosperously with king David, he thought to

make a house for God, even that temple of most excellent renown which

was afterwards built by king Solomon his son. While he was thinking

of this, the word of the Lord came to Nathan the prophet, which he

brought to the king, in which, after God had said that a house should

not be built unto Him by David himself, and that in all that long

time He had never commanded any of His people to build Him a house of

cedar, he says, "And now thus shalt thou say unto my servant David,

Thus saith God Almighty, I took thee from the sheep-cote that thou

mightest be for a ruler over my people in Israel: and I was with thee

whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies from

before thy face, and have made thee a name, according to the name of

the great ones who are over the earth. And I will appoint a place for

my people Israel, and will plant him, and he shall dwell apart, and

shall be troubled no more; and the son of wickedness shall not humble

him any more, as from the beginning, from the days when I appointed

judges over my people Israel. And I will give thee rest from all

thine enemies, and the Lord will tell [hath told] thee, because thou

shalt build an house for Him. And it shall come to pass when thy days

be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, that I will

raise up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels,

and I will prepare his kingdom. He shall build me an house for my

name; and I will order his throne even to eternity. I will be his

Father, and he shall be my son. And if he commit iniquity, I will

chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of

men: but my mercy I will not take away from him, as I took it away

from those whom I put away from before my face. And his house shall

be faithful, and his kingdom even for evermore before me, and his

throne shall be set up even for evermore."[405]

He who thinks this grand promise was fulfilled in Solomon greatly errs;

for he attends to the saying, "He shall build me an house," but he

does not attend to the saying, "His house shall be faithful, and his

kingdom for evermore before me." Let him therefore attend and behold

the house of Solomon full of strange women worshipping false gods,

and the king himself, aforetime wise, seduced by them, and cast down

into the same idolatry: and let him not dare to think that God either

promised this falsely, or was unable to foreknow that Solomon and his

house would become what they did. But we ought not to be in doubt here,

or to see the fulfilment of these things save in Christ our Lord, who

was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,[406] lest we

should vainly and uselessly look for some other here, like the carnal

Jews. For even they understand this much, that the son whom they read

of in that place as promised to David was not Solomon; so that, with

wonderful blindness to Him who was promised and is now declared with

so great manifestation, they say they hope for another. Indeed, even

in Solomon there appeared some image of the future event, in that he

built the temple, and had peace according to his name (for Solomon

means "pacific"), and in the beginning of his reign was wonderfully

praiseworthy; but while, as a shadow of Him that should come, he

foreshowed Christ our Lord, he did not also in his own person resemble

Him. Whence some things concerning him are so written as if they were

prophesied of himself, while the Holy Scripture, prophesying even by

events, somehow delineates in him the figure of things to come. For,

besides the books of divine history, in which his reign is narrated,

the 72d Psalm also is inscribed in the title with his name, in which so

many things are said which cannot at all apply to him, but which apply

to the Lord Christ with such evident fitness as makes it quite apparent

that in the one the figure is in some way shadowed forth, but in the

other the truth itself is presented. For it is known within what bounds

the kingdom of Solomon was enclosed; and yet in that psalm, not to

speak of other things, we read, "He shall have dominion from sea even

to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth,"[407] which we see

fulfilled in Christ. Truly he took the beginning of His reigning from

the river where John baptized; for, when pointed out by him, He began

to be acknowledged by the disciples, who called Him not only Master,

but also Lord.

Nor was it for any other reason that, while his father David was

still living, Solomon began to reign, which happened to none other of

their kings, except that from this also it might be clearly apparent

that it was not himself this prophecy spoken to his father signified

beforehand, saying, "And it shall come to pass when thy days be

fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, that I will raise

up thy seed which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will prepare

His kingdom." How, therefore, shall it be thought on account of what

follows, "He shall build me an house," that this Solomon is prophesied,

and not rather be understood on account of what precedes, "When thy

days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise

up thy seed after thee," that another pacific One is promised, who is

foretold as about to be raised up, not before David's death, as he was,

but after it? For however long the interval of time might be before

Jesus Christ came, beyond doubt it was after the death of king David,

to whom He was so promised, that He behoved to come, who should build

an house of God, not of wood and stone, but of men, such as we rejoice

He does build. For to this house, that is, to believers, the apostle

saith, "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."[408]

9. \_How like the prophecy about Christ in the\_ 89\_th Psalm is

to the things promised in Nathan's prophecy in the Books of

Samuel.\_

Wherefore also in the 89th Psalm, of which the title is, "An

instruction for himself by Ethan the Israelite," mention is made

of the promises God made to king David, and some things are there

added similar to those found in the Book of Samuel, such as this,

"I have sworn to David my servant that I will prepare his seed for

ever."[409] And again, "Then thou spakest in vision to thy sons, and

saidst, I have laid help upon the mighty One, and have exalted the

chosen One out of my people. I have found David my servant, and with

my holy oil I have anointed him. For mine hand shall help him, and

mine arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not prevail against

him, and the son of iniquity shall harm him no more. And I will beat

down his foes from before his face, and those that hate him will I

put to flight. And my truth and my mercy shall be with him, and in my

name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea,

and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my

Father, my God, and the undertaker of my salvation. Also I will make

him my first-born, high among the kings of the earth. My mercy will I

keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall be faithful (sure)

with him. His seed also will I set for ever and ever, and his throne

as the days of heaven."[410] Which words, when rightly understood,

are all understood to be about the Lord Jesus Christ, under the

name of David, on account of the form of a servant, which the same

Mediator assumed[411] from the virgin of the seed of David.[412] For

immediately something is said about the sins of his children, such

as is set down in the Book of Samuel, and is more readily taken as

if of Solomon. For there, that is, in the Book of Samuel, he says,

"And if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men,

and with the stripes of the sons of men; but my mercy will I not take

away from him,"[413] meaning by stripes the strokes of correction.

Hence that saying, "Touch ye not my christs."[414] For what else

is that than, Do not harm them? But in the psalm, when speaking as

if of David, He says something of the same kind there too. "If his

children," saith He, "forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

if they profane my righteousnesses, and keep not my commandments;

I will visit their iniquities with the rod, and their faults with

stripes: but my mercy I will not make void from him."[415] He did not

say "from them," although He spoke of his children, not of himself;

but he said "from him," which means the same thing if rightly

understood. For of Christ Himself, who is the head of the Church,

there could not be found any sins which required to be divinely

restrained by human correction, mercy being still continued; but they

are found in His body and members, which is His people. Therefore

in the Book of Samuel it is said, "iniquity of Him," but in the

psalm, "of His children," that we may understand that what is said

of His body is in some way said of Himself. Wherefore also, when

Saul persecuted His body, that is, His believing people, He Himself

saith from heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"[416] Then

in the following words of the psalm He says, "Neither will I hurt in

my truth, nor profane my covenant, and the things that proceed from

my lips I will not disallow. Once have I sworn by my holiness, if I

lie unto David,"[417]--that is, I will in no wise lie unto David; for

Scripture is wont to speak thus. But what that is in which He will

not lie, He adds, saying, "His seed shall endure for ever, and his

throne as the sun before me, and as the moon perfected for ever, and

a faithful witness in heaven."[418]

10. \_How different the acts in the kingdom of the earthly Jerusalem

are from those which God had promised, so that the truth of the

promise should be understood to pertain to the glory of the

other King and kingdom.\_

That it might not be supposed that a promise so strongly expressed

and confirmed was fulfilled in Solomon, as if he hoped for, yet did

not find it, he says, "But Thou hast cast off, and hast brought to

nothing, O Lord."[419] This truly was done concerning the kingdom

of Solomon among his posterity, even to the overthrow of the

earthly Jerusalem itself, which was the seat of the kingdom, and

especially the destruction of the very temple which had been built by

Solomon. But lest on this account God should be thought to have done

contrary to His promise, immediately he adds, "Thou hast delayed Thy

Christ."[420] Therefore he is not Solomon, nor yet David himself, if

the Christ of the Lord is delayed. For while all the kings are called

His christs, who were consecrated with that mystical chrism, not only

from king David downwards, but even from that Saul who first was

anointed king of that same people, David himself indeed calling him

the Lord's christ, yet there was one true Christ, whose figure they

bore by the prophetic unction, who, according to the opinion of men,

who thought he was to be understood as come in David or in Solomon,

was long delayed, but who, according as God had disposed, was to come

in His own time. The following part of this psalm goes on to say what

in the meantime, while He was delayed, was to become of the kingdom

of the earthly Jerusalem, where it was hoped He would certainly

reign: "Thou hast overthrown the covenant of Thy servant; Thou hast

profaned in the earth his sanctuary. Thou hast broken down all his

walls; Thou hast put his strongholds in fear. All that pass by the

way spoil him; he is made a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set

up the right hand of his enemies; Thou hast made all his enemies to

rejoice. Thou hast turned aside the help of his sword, and hast not

helped him in war. Thou hast destroyed him from cleansing; Thou hast

dashed down his seat to the ground. Thou hast shortened the days of

his seat; Thou hast poured confusion over him."[421] All these things

came upon Jerusalem the bond woman, in which some also reigned who

were children of the free woman, holding that kingdom in temporary

stewardship, but holding the kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose

children they were, in true faith, and hoping in the true Christ. But

how these things came upon that kingdom, the history of its affairs

points out if it is read.

11. \_Of the substance of the people of God, which through His

assumption of flesh is in Christ, who alone had power to

deliver His own soul from hell.\_

But after having prophesied these things, the prophet betakes him

to praying to God; yet even the very prayer is prophecy: "How long,

Lord, dost Thou turn away in the end?"[422] "Thy face" is understood,

as it is elsewhere said, "How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from

me?"[423] For therefore some copies have here not "dost," but "wilt

Thou turn away;" although it could be understood, "Thou turnest

away Thy mercy, which Thou didst promise to David." But when he

says, "in the end," what does it mean, except even to the end? By

which end is to be understood the last time, when even that nation

is to believe in Christ Jesus, before which end what He has just

sorrowfully bewailed must come to pass. On account of which it is

also added here, "Thy wrath shall burn like fire. Remember what is

my substance."[424] This cannot be better understood than of Jesus

Himself, the substance of His people, of whose nature His flesh

is. "For not in vain," he says, "hast Thou made all the sons of

men."[425] For unless the one Son of man had been the substance of

Israel, through which Son of man many sons of men should be set free,

all the sons of men would have been made wholly in vain. But now

indeed all mankind through the fall of the first man has fallen from

the truth into vanity; for which reason another psalm says, "Man is

like to vanity: his days pass away as a shadow;"[426] yet God has not

made all the sons of men in vain, because He frees many from vanity

through the Mediator Jesus, and those whom He did not foreknow as to

be delivered, He made not wholly in vain in the most beautiful and

most just ordination of the whole rational creation, for the use of

those who were to be delivered, and for the comparison of the two

cities by mutual contrast. Thereafter it follows, "Who is the man

that shall live, and shall not see death? shall he snatch his soul

from the hand of hell?"[427] Who is this but that substance of Israel

out of the seed of David, Christ Jesus, of whom the apostle says,

that "rising from the dead He now dieth not, and death shall no more

have dominion over Him?"[428] For He shall so live and not see death,

that yet He shall have been dead; but shall have delivered His soul

from the hand of hell, whither He had descended in order to loose

some from the chains of hell; but He hath delivered it by that power

of which He says in the Gospel, "I have the power of laying down my

life, and I have the power of taking it again."[429]

12. \_To whose person the entreaty for the promises is to be

understood to belong, when he says in the psalm, "Where are

Thine ancient compassions, Lord?" etc.\_

But the rest of this psalm runs thus: "Where are Thine ancient

compassions, Lord, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?

Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants, which I have borne in

my bosom of many nations; wherewith Thine enemies have reproached, O

Lord, wherewith they have reproached the change of Thy Christ."[430]

Now it may with very good reason be asked whether this is spoken in

the person of those Israelites who desired that the promise made to

David might be fulfilled to them; or rather of the Christians, who

are Israelites not after the flesh but after the Spirit.[431] This

certainly was spoken or written in the time of Ethan, from whose

name this psalm gets its title, and that was the same as the time of

David's reign; and therefore it would not have been said, "Where are

Thine ancient compassions, Lord, which Thou hast sworn unto David

in Thy truth?" unless the prophet had assumed the person of those

who should come long afterwards, to whom that time when these things

were promised to David was ancient. But it may be understood thus,

that many nations, when they persecuted the Christians, reproached

them with the passion of Christ, which Scripture calls His change,

because by dying He is made immortal. The change of Christ, according

to this passage, may also be understood to be reproached by the

Israelites, because, when they hoped He would be theirs, He was made

the Saviour of the nations; and many nations who have believed in

Him by the New Testament now reproach them who remain in the old

with this: so that it is said, "Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy

servants;" because through the Lord's not forgetting, but rather

pitying them, even they after this reproach are to believe. But what

I have put first seems to me the most suitable meaning. For to the

enemies of Christ who are reproached with this, that Christ hath left

them, turning to the Gentiles,[432] this speech is incongruously

assigned, "Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants," for such

Jews are not to be styled the servants of God; but these words fit

those who, if they suffered great humiliations through persecution

for the name of Christ, could call to mind that an exalted kingdom

had been promised to the seed of David, and in desire of it, could

say not despairingly, but as asking, seeking, knocking,[433] "Where

are Thine ancient compassions, Lord, which Thou swarest unto David

in Thy truth? Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants, that I

have borne in my bosom of many nations;" that is, have patiently

endured in my inward parts. "That Thine enemies have reproached,

O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the change of Thy Christ,"

not thinking it a change, but a consumption.[434] But what does

"Remember, Lord," mean, but that Thou wouldst have compassion,

and wouldst for my patiently borne humiliation reward me with the

excellency which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth? But if we

assign these words to the Jews, those servants of God who, on the

conquest of the earthly Jerusalem, before Jesus Christ was born after

the manner of men, were led into captivity, could say such things,

understanding the change of Christ, because indeed through Him was

to be surely expected, not an earthly and carnal felicity, such as

appeared during the few years of king Solomon, but a heavenly and

spiritual felicity; and when the nations, then ignorant of this

through unbelief, exulted over and insulted the people of God for

being captives, what else was this than ignorantly to reproach with

the change of Christ those who understand the change of Christ?

And therefore what follows when this psalm is concluded, "Let the

blessing of the Lord be for evermore, amen, amen," is suitable enough

for the whole people of God belonging to the heavenly Jerusalem,

whether for those things that lay hid in the Old Testament before

the New was revealed, or for those that, being now revealed in the

New Testament, are manifestly discerned to belong to Christ. For the

blessing of the Lord in the seed of David does not belong to any

particular time, such as appeared in the days of Solomon, but is for

evermore to be hoped for, in which most certain hope it is said,

"Amen, amen;" for this repetition of the word is the confirmation of

that hope. Therefore David understanding this, says in the second

Book of Kings, in the passage from which we digressed to this

psalm,[435] "Thou hast spoken also for Thy servant's house for a

great while to come."[436] Therefore also a little after he says,

"Now begin, and bless the house of Thy servant for evermore," etc.,

because the son was then about to be born from whom his posterity

should be continued to Christ, through whom his house should be

eternal, and should also be the house of God. For it is called the

house of David on account of David's race; but the selfsame is called

the house of God on account of the temple of God, made of men, not

of stones, where shall dwell for evermore the people with and in

their God, and God with and in His people, so that God may fill His

people, and the people be filled with their God, while God shall be

all in all, Himself their reward in peace who is their strength in

war. Therefore, when it is said in the words of Nathan, "And the

Lord will tell thee what an house thou shalt build for Him,"[437] it

is afterwards said in the words of David, "For Thou, Lord Almighty,

God of Israel, hast opened the ear of Thy servant, saying, I will

build thee an house."[438] For this house is built both by us through

living well, and by God through helping us to live well; for "except

the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it."[439]

And when the final dedication of this house shall take place, then

what God here says by Nathan shall be fulfilled, "And I will appoint

a place for my people Israel, and will plant him, and he shall dwell

apart, and shall be troubled no more; and the son of iniquity shall

not humble him any more, as from the beginning, from the days when I

appointed judges over my people Israel."[440]

13. \_Whether the truth of this promised peace can be ascribed to

those times passed away under Solomon.\_

Whoever hopes for this so great good in this world, and in this

earth, his wisdom is but folly. Can any one think it was fulfilled

in the peace of Solomon's reign? Scripture certainly commends that

peace with excellent praise as a shadow of that which is to come.

But this opinion is to be vigilantly opposed, since after it is

said, "And the son of iniquity shall not humble him any more," it is

immediately added, "as from the beginning, from the days in which I

appointed judges over my people Israel."[441] For the judges were

appointed over that people from the time when they received the land

of promise, before kings had begun to be there. And certainly the

son of iniquity, that is, the foreign enemy, humbled him through

periods of time in which we read that peace alternated with wars; and

in that period longer times of peace are found than Solomon had, who

reigned forty years. For under that judge who is called Ehud there

were eighty years of peace.[442] Be it far from us, therefore, that

we should believe the times of Solomon are predicted in this promise,

much less indeed those of any other king whatever. For none other

of them reigned in such great peace as he; nor did that nation ever

at all hold that kingdom so as to have no anxiety lest it should be

subdued by enemies: for in the very great mutability of human affairs

such great security is never given to any people, that it should not

dread invasions hostile to this life. Therefore the place of this

promised peaceful and secure habitation is eternal, and of right

belongs eternally to Jerusalem the free mother, where the genuine

people of Israel shall be: for this name is interpreted "Seeing God;"

in the desire of which reward a pious life is to be led through faith

in this miserable pilgrimage.[443]

14. \_Of David's concern in the writing of the Psalms.\_

In the progress of the city of God through the ages, therefore, David

first reigned in the earthly Jerusalem as a shadow of that which

was to come. Now David was a man skilled in songs, who dearly loved

musical harmony, not with a vulgar delight, but with a believing

disposition, and by it served his God, who is the true God, by the

mystical representation of a great thing. For the rational and

well-ordered concord of diverse sounds in harmonious variety suggests

the compact unity of the well-ordered city. Then almost all his

prophecy is in psalms, of which a hundred and fifty are contained in

what we call the Book of Psalms, of which some will have it those

only were made by David which are inscribed with his name. But there

are also some who think none of them were made by him except those

which are marked "Of David;" but those which have in the title "For

David" have been made by others who assumed his person. Which opinion

is refuted by the voice of the Saviour Himself in the Gospel, when He

says that David himself by the Spirit said Christ was his Lord; for

the 110th Psalm begins thus, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou

at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."[444]

And truly that very psalm, like many more, has in the title, not

"of David," but "for David." But those seem to me to hold the more

credible opinion, who ascribe to him the authorship of all these

hundred and fifty psalms, and think that he prefixed to some of them

the names even of other men, who prefigured something pertinent to

the matter, but chose to have no man's name in the titles of the

rest, just as God inspired him in the management of this variety,

which, although dark, is not meaningless. Neither ought it to move

one not to believe this, that the names of some prophets who lived

long after the times of king David are read in the inscriptions of

certain psalms in that book, and that the things said there seem to

be spoken as it were by them. Nor was the prophetic Spirit unable to

reveal to king David, when he prophesied, even these names of future

prophets, so that he might prophetically sing something which should

suit their persons; just as it was revealed to a certain prophet that

king Josiah should arise and reign after more than three hundred

years, who predicted his future deeds also along with his name.[445]

15. \_Whether all the things prophesied in the Psalms concerning

Christ and His Church should be taken up in the text of this work.\_

And now I see it may be expected of me that I shall open up in this

part of this book what David may have prophesied in the Psalms

concerning the Lord Jesus Christ or His Church. But although I

have already done so in one instance, I am prevented from doing as

that expectation seems to demand, rather by the abundance than the

scarcity of matter. For the necessity of shunning prolixity forbids

my setting down all things; yet I fear lest if I select some I shall

appear to many, who know these things, to have passed by the more

necessary. Besides, the proof that is adduced ought to be supported

by the context of the whole psalm, so that at least there may be

nothing against it if everything does not support it; lest we should

seem, after the fashion of the centos, to gather for the thing we

wish, as it were verses out of a grand poem, what shall be found

to have been written not about it, but about some other and widely

different thing. But ere this could be pointed out in each psalm, the

whole of it must be expounded; and how great a work that would be,

the volumes of others, as well as our own, in which we have done it,

show well enough. Let him then who will, or can, read these volumes,

and he will find out how many and great things David, at once king

and prophet, has prophesied concerning Christ and His Church, to wit,

concerning the King and the city which He has built.

16. \_Of the things pertaining to Christ and the Church, said

either openly or tropically in the\_ 45\_th Psalm.\_

For whatever direct and manifest prophetic utterances there may be

about anything, it is necessary that those which are tropical should

be mingled with them; which, chiefly on account of those of slower

understanding, thrust upon the more learned the laborious task of

clearing up and expounding them. Some of them, indeed, on the very

first blush, as soon as they are spoken, exhibit Christ and the

Church, although some things in them that are less intelligible

remain to be expounded at leisure. We have an example of this in that

same Book of Psalms: "My heart bubbled up a good matter: I utter my

words to the king. My tongue is the pen of a scribe, writing swiftly.

Thy form is beautiful beyond the sons of men; grace is poured out

in Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee for evermore. Gird Thy

sword about Thy thigh, O Most Mighty. With Thy goodliness and Thy

beauty go forward, proceed prosperously, and reign, because of Thy

truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall

lead Thee forth wonderfully. Thy sharp arrows are most powerful. The

people shall fall under Thee: in the heart of the King's enemies.

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a rod of direction is the

rod of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hast hated

iniquity: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil

of exultation above Thy fellows. Myrrh and drops, and cassia from

Thy vestments, from the houses of ivory: out of which the daughters

of kings have delighted Thee in Thine honour."[446] Who is there, no

matter how slow, but must here recognise Christ whom we preach, and

in whom we believe, if he hears that He is God, whose throne is for

ever and ever, and that He is anointed by God, as God indeed anoints,

not with a visible, but with a spiritual and intelligible chrism? For

who is so untaught in this religion, or so deaf to its far and wide

spread fame, as not to know that Christ is named from this chrism,

that is, from this anointing? But when it is acknowledged that this

King is Christ, let each one who is already subject to Him who reigns

because of truth, meekness, and righteousness, inquire at his leisure

into these other things that are here said tropically: how His form

is beautiful beyond the sons of men, with a certain beauty that is

the more to be loved and admired the less it is corporeal; and what

His sword, arrows, and other things of that kind may be, which are

set down, not properly, but tropically.

Then let him look upon His Church, joined to her so great Husband

in spiritual marriage and divine love, of which it is said in

these words which follow, "The queen stood upon Thy right hand in

gold-embroidered vestments, girded about with variety. Hearken, O

daughter, and look, and incline thine ear; forget also thy people,

and thy father's house. Because the King hath greatly desired thy

beauty; for He is the Lord thy God. And the daughters of Tyre shall

worship Him with gifts; the rich among the people shall entreat Thy

face. The daughter of the King has all her glory within, in golden

fringes, girded about with variety. The virgins shall be brought

after her to the King: her neighbours shall be brought to Thee.

They shall be brought with gladness and exultation: they shall be

led into the temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, sons shall

be born to thee: thou shalt establish them as princes over all the

earth. They shall be mindful of thy name in every generation and

descent. Therefore shall the people acknowledge thee for evermore,

even for ever and ever."[447] I do not think any one is so stupid

as to believe that some poor woman is here praised and described,

as the spouse, to wit, of Him to whom it is said, "Thy throne, O

God, is for ever and ever: a rod of direction is the rod of Thy

kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore

God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of exultation above

Thy fellows;"[448] that is, plainly, Christ above Christians. For

these are His fellows, out of the unity and concord of whom in all

nations that queen is formed, as it is said of her in another psalm,

"The city of the great King."[449] The same is Sion spiritually,

which name in Latin is interpreted \_speculatio\_ (discovery); for

she descries the great good of the world to come, because her

attention is directed thither. In the same way she is also Jerusalem

spiritually, of which we have already said many things. Her enemy is

the city of the devil, Babylon, which is interpreted "confusion."

Yet out of this Babylon this queen is in all nations set free by

regeneration, and passes from the worst to the best King,--that is,

from the devil to Christ. Wherefore it is said to her, "Forget thy

people and thy father's house." Of this impious city those also are

a portion who are Israelites only in the flesh and not by faith,

enemies also of this great King Himself, and of His queen. For

Christ, having come to them, and been slain by them, has the more

become the King of others, whom He did not see in the flesh. Whence

our King Himself says through the prophecy of a certain psalm, "Thou

wilt deliver me from the contradictions of the people; Thou wilt make

me head of the nations. A people whom I have not known hath served

me: in the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed me."[450] Therefore

this people of the nations, which Christ did not know in His bodily

presence, yet has believed in that Christ as announced to it; so that

it might be said of it with good reason, "In the hearing of the ear

it hath obeyed me," for "faith is by hearing."[451] This people, I

say, added to those who are the true Israelites both by the flesh and

by faith, is the city of God, which has brought forth Christ Himself

according to the flesh, since He was in these Israelites only. For

thence came the Virgin Mary, in whom Christ assumed flesh that He

might be man. Of which city another psalm says, "Mother Sion, shall

a man say, and the man is made in her, and the Highest Himself hath

founded her."[452] Who is this Highest, save God? And thus Christ,

who is God, before He became man through Mary in that city, Himself

founded it by the patriarchs and prophets. As therefore was said

by prophecy so long before to this queen, the city of God, what we

already can see fulfilled, "Instead of thy fathers, sons are born

to thee; thou shalt make them princes over all the earth;"[453] so

out of her sons truly are set up even her fathers [princes] through

all the earth, when the people, coming together to her, confess to

her with the confession of eternal praise for ever and ever. Beyond

doubt, whatever interpretation is put on what is here expressed

somewhat darkly in figurative language, ought to be in agreement with

these most manifest things.

17. \_Of those things in the\_ 110\_th Psalm which relate to

the priesthood of Christ, and in the\_ 22\_d to His passion.\_

Just as in that psalm also where Christ is most openly proclaimed

as Priest, even as He is here as King, "The Lord said unto my

Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy

footstool."[454] That Christ sits on the right hand of God the Father

is believed, not seen; that His enemies also are put under His feet

doth not yet appear; it is being done, [therefore] it will appear

at last: yea, this is now believed, afterward it shall be seen. But

what follows, "The Lord will send forth the rod of Thy strength out

of Sion, and rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies,"[455] is so

clear, that to deny it would imply not merely unbelief and mistake,

but downright impudence. And even enemies must certainly confess

that out of Sion has been sent the law of Christ which we call the

gospel, and acknowledge as the rod of His strength. But that He rules

in the midst of His enemies, these same enemies among whom He rules

themselves bear witness, gnashing their teeth and consuming away, and

having power to do nothing against Him. Then what he says a little

after, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent,"[456] by which

words He intimates that what He adds is immutable, "Thou art a priest

for ever after the order of Melchizedek,"[457] who is permitted to

doubt of whom these things are said, seeing that now there is nowhere

a priesthood and sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and everywhere

men offer under Christ as the Priest, which Melchizedek showed when

he blessed Abraham? Therefore to these manifest things are to be

referred, when rightly understood, those things in the same psalm

that are set down a little more obscurely, and we have already made

known in our popular sermons how these things are to be rightly

understood. So also in that where Christ utters through prophecy the

humiliation of His passion, saying, "They pierced my hands and feet;

they counted all my bones. Yea, they looked and stared at me."[458]

By which words he certainly meant His body stretched out on the

cross, with the hands and feet pierced and perforated by the striking

through of the nails, and that He had in that way made Himself a

spectacle to those who looked and stared. And he adds, "They parted

my garments among them, and over my vesture they cast lots."[459]

How this prophecy has been fulfilled the Gospel history narrates.

Then, indeed, the other things also which are said there less openly

are rightly understood when they agree with those which shine with

so great clearness; especially because those things also which we do

not believe as past, but survey as present, are beheld by the whole

world, being now exhibited just as they are read of in this very

psalm as predicted so long before. For it is there said a little

after, "All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the

Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him;

for the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule the nations."

18. \_Of the\_ 3\_d\_, 41\_st\_, 15\_th\_, \_and\_ 68\_th Psalms, in which

the death and resurrection of the Lord are prophesied.\_

About His resurrection also the oracles of the Psalms are by no

means silent. For what else is it that is sung in His person in the

3d Psalm, "I laid me down and took a sleep, [and] I awaked, for

the Lord shall sustain me?"[460] Is there perchance any one so

stupid as to believe that the prophet chose to point it out to us as

something great that He had slept and risen up, unless that sleep

had been death, and that awaking the resurrection, which behoved to

be thus prophesied concerning Christ? For in the 41st Psalm also it

is shown much more clearly, where in the person of the Mediator, in

the usual way, things are narrated as if past which were prophesied

as yet to come, since these things which were yet to come were in

the predestination and foreknowledge of God as if they were done,

because they were certain. He says, "Mine enemies speak evil of me;

When shall he die, and his name perish? And if he came in to see

me, his heart spake vain things: he gathered iniquity to himself.

He went out of doors, and uttered it all at once. Against me all

mine enemies whisper together: against me do they devise evil. They

have planned an unjust thing against me. Shall not he that sleeps

also rise again?"[461] These words are certainly so set down here

that he may be understood to say nothing else than if he said, Shall

not He that died recover life again? The previous words clearly

show that His enemies have meditated and planned His death, and

that this was executed by him who came in to see, and went out to

betray. But to whom does not Judas here occur, who, from being His

disciple, became His betrayer? Therefore because they were about to

do what they had plotted,--that is, were about to kill Him,--he,

to show them that with useless malice they were about to kill Him

who should rise again, so adds this verse, as if he said, What vain

thing are you doing? What will be your crime will be my sleep. "Shall

not He that sleeps also rise again?" And yet he indicates in the

following verses that they should not commit so great an impiety with

impunity, saying, "Yea, the man of my peace in whom I trusted, who

ate my bread, hath enlarged the heel over me;"[462] that is, hath

trampled me under foot. "But Thou," he saith, "O Lord, be merciful

unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them."[463] Who can

now deny this who sees the Jews, after the passion and resurrection

of Christ, utterly rooted up from their abodes by warlike slaughter

and destruction? For, being slain by them, He has risen again, and

has requited them meanwhile by temporary discipline, save that for

those who are not corrected He keeps it in store for the time when He

shall judge the quick and the dead.[464] For the Lord Jesus Himself,

in pointing out that very man to the apostles as His betrayer,

quoted this very verse of this psalm, and said it was fulfilled in

Himself: "He that ate my bread enlarged the heel over me." But what

he says, "In whom I trusted," does not suit the head but the body.

For the Saviour Himself was not ignorant of him concerning whom He

had already said before, "One of you is a devil."[465] But He is

wont to assume the person of His members, and to ascribe to Himself

what should be said of them, because the head and the body is one

Christ;[466] whence that saying in the Gospel, "I was an hungered,

and ye gave me to eat."[467] Expounding which, He says, "Since ye

did it to one of the least of mine, ye did it to me."[468] Therefore

He said that He had trusted, because His disciples then had trusted

concerning Judas; for he was numbered with the apostles.[469]

But the Jews do not expect that the Christ whom they expect will

die; therefore they do not think ours to be Him whom the law and the

prophets announced, but feign to themselves I know not whom of their

own, exempt from the suffering of death. Therefore, with wonderful

emptiness and blindness, they contend that the words we have set down

signify, not death and resurrection, but sleep and awaking again. But

the 16th Psalm also cries to them, "Therefore my heart is jocund, and

my tongue hath exulted; moreover, my flesh also shall rest in hope:

for Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou give Thine

Holy One to see corruption."[470] Who but He that rose again the

third day could say His flesh had rested in this hope; that His soul,

not being left in hell, but speedily returning to it, should revive

it, that it should not be corrupted as corpses are wont to be, which

they can in no wise say of David the prophet and king? The 68th Psalm

also cries out, "Our God is the God of salvation: even of the Lord

the exit was by death."[471] What could be more openly said? For the

God of salvation is the Lord Jesus, which is interpreted Saviour, or

Healing One. For this reason this name was given, when it was said

before He was born of the virgin: "Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and

shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their

sins."[472] Because His blood was shed for the remission of their

sins, it behoved Him to have no other exit from this life than death.

Therefore, when it had been said, "Our God is the God of salvation,"

immediately it was added, "Even of the Lord the exit was by death,"

in order to show that we were to be saved by His dying. But that

saying is marvellous, "Even of the Lord," as if it was said, Such is

that life of mortals, that not even the Lord Himself could go out of

it otherwise save through death.

19. \_Of the\_ 69\_th Psalm, in which the obstinate unbelief of

the Jews is declared.\_

But when the Jews will not in the least yield to the testimonies of

this prophecy, which are so manifest, and are also brought by events to

so clear and certain a completion, certainly that is fulfilled in them

which is written in that psalm which here follows. For when the things

which pertain to His passion are prophetically spoken there also in the

person, of Christ, that is mentioned which is unfolded in the Gospel:

"They gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar

for drink."[473] And as it were after such a feast and dainties in this

way given to Himself, presently He brings in [these words]: "Let their

table become a trap before them, and a retribution, and an offence: let

their eyes be dimmed that they see not, and their back be always bowed

down,"[474] etc. Which things are not spoken as wished for, but are

predicted under the prophetic form of wishing. What wonder, then, if

those whose eyes are dimmed that they see not do not see these manifest

things? What wonder if those do not look up at heavenly things whose

back is always bowed down that they may grovel among earthly things?

For these words transferred from the body signify mental faults. Let

these things which have been said about the Psalms, that is, about king

David's prophecy, suffice, that we may keep within some bound. But let

those readers excuse us who knew them all before; and let them not

complain about those perhaps stronger proofs which they know or think I

have passed by.

20. \_Of David's reign and merit; and of his son Solomon, and that

prophecy relating to Christ which is found either in those

books which are joined to those written by him, or in those

which are indubitably his.\_

David therefore reigned in the earthly Jerusalem, a son of the heavenly

Jerusalem, much praised by the divine testimony; for even his faults

are overcome by great piety, through the most salutary humility of

his repentance, that he is altogether one of those of whom he himself

says, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins

are covered."[475] After him Solomon his son reigned over the same

whole people, who, as was said before, began to reign while his father

was still alive. This man, after good beginnings, made a bad end. For

indeed "prosperity, which wears out the minds of the wise,"[476] hurt

him more than that wisdom profited him, which even yet is and shall

hereafter be renowned, and was then praised far and wide. He also is

found to have prophesied in his books, of which three are received as

of canonical authority, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs.

But it has been customary to ascribe to Solomon other two, of which

one is called Wisdom, the other Ecclesiasticus, on account of some

resemblance of style,--but the more learned have no doubt that they

are not his; yet of old the Church, especially the Western, received

them into authority,--in the one of which, called the Wisdom of

Solomon, the passion of Christ is most openly prophesied. For indeed

His impious murderers are quoted as saying, "Let us lie in wait for

the righteous, for he is unpleasant to us, and contrary to our works;

and he upbraideth us with our transgressions of the law, and objecteth

to our disgrace the transgressions of our education. He professeth to

have the knowledge of God, and he calleth himself the Son of God. He

was made to reprove our thoughts. He is grievous for us even to behold;

for his life is unlike other men's, and his ways are different. We

are esteemed of him as counterfeits; and he abstaineth from our ways

as from filthiness. He extols the latter end of the righteous; and

glorieth that he hath God for his Father. Let us see, therefore, if

his words be true; and let us try what shall happen to him, and we

shall know what shall be the end of him. For if the righteous be the

Son of God, He will undertake for him, and deliver him out of the hand

of those that are against him. Let us put him to the question with

contumely and torture, that we may know his reverence, and prove his

patience. Let us condemn him to the most shameful death; for by His

own sayings He shall be respected. These things did they imagine, and

were mistaken; for their own malice hath quite blinded them."[477] But

in Ecclesiasticus the future faith of the nations is predicted in this

manner: "Have mercy upon us, O God, Ruler of all, and send Thy fear

upon all the nations: lift up Thine hand over the strange nations, and

let them see Thy power. As Thou wast sanctified in us before them, so

be Thou sanctified in them before us, and let them acknowledge Thee,

according as we also have acknowledged Thee; for there is not a God

beside Thee, O Lord."[478] We see this prophecy in the form of a wish

and prayer fulfilled through Jesus Christ. But the things which are

not written in the canon of the Jews cannot be quoted against their

contradictions with so great validity.

But as regards those three books which it is evident are Solomon's,

and held canonical by the Jews, to show what of this kind may be

found in them pertaining to Christ and the Church demands a laborious

discussion, which, if now entered on, would lengthen this work

unduly. Yet what we read in the Proverbs of impious men saying, "Let

us unrighteously hide in the earth the righteous man; yea, let us

swallow him up alive as hell, and let us take away his memory from

the earth: let us seize his precious possession,"[479] is not so

obscure that it may not be understood, without laborious exposition,

of Christ and His possession the Church. Indeed, the gospel parable

about the wicked husbandmen shows that our Lord Jesus Himself said

something like it: "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the

inheritance shall be ours."[480] In like manner also that passage in

this same book, on which we have already touched[481] when we were

speaking of the barren woman who hath born seven, must soon after

it was uttered have come to be understood of only Christ and the

Church by those who knew that Christ was the Wisdom of God. "Wisdom

hath builded her an house, and hath set up seven pillars; she hath

sacrificed her victims, she hath mingled her wine in the bowl; she

hath also furnished her table. She hath sent her servants summoning

to the bowl with excellent proclamation, saying, Who is simple,

let him turn aside to me. And to the void of sense she hath said,

Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled

for you."[482] Here certainly we perceive that the Wisdom of God,

that is, the Word co-eternal with the Father, hath builded Him an

house, even a human body in the virgin womb, and hath subjoined the

Church to it as members to a head, hath slain the martyrs as victims,

hath furnished a table with wine and bread, where appears also the

priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, and hath called the simple

and the void of sense, because, as saith the apostle, "He hath chosen

the weak things of this world that He might confound the things which

are mighty."[483] Yet to these weak ones she saith what follows,

"Forsake simplicity, that ye may live; and seek prudence, that ye may

have life."[484] But to be made partakers of this table is itself to

begin to have life. For when he says in another book, which is called

Ecclesiastes, "There is no good for a man, except that he should eat

and drink,"[485] what can he be more credibly understood to say, than

what belongs to the participation of this table which the Mediator of

the New Testament Himself, the Priest after the order of Melchizedek,

furnishes with His own body and blood? For that sacrifice has

succeeded all the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were slain

as a shadow of that which was to come; wherefore also we recognise

the voice in the 40th Psalm as that of the same Mediator speaking

through prophesy, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire;

but a body hast Thou perfected for me."[486] Because, instead of all

these sacrifices and oblations, His body is offered, and is served up

to the partakers of it. For that this Ecclesiastes, in this sentence

about eating and drinking, which he often repeats, and very much

commends, does not savour the dainties of carnal pleasures, is made

plain enough when he says, "It is better to go into the house of

mourning than to go into the house of feasting."[487] And a little

after He says, "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,

and the heart of the simple in the house of feasting."[488] But I

think that more worthy of quotation from this book which relates to

both cities, the one of the devil, the other of Christ, and to their

kings, the devil and Christ: "Woe to thee, O land," he says, "when

thy king is a youth, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art

thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat

in season, in fortitude, and not in confusion!"[489] He has called

the devil a youth, because of the folly and pride, and rashness and

unruliness, and other vices which are wont to abound at that age;

but Christ is the Son of nobles, that is, of the holy patriarchs,

of those belonging to the free city, of whom He was begotten in

the flesh. The princes of that and other cities are eaters in the

morning, that is, before the suitable hour, because they do not

expect the seasonable felicity, which is the true, in the world to

come, desiring to be speedily made happy with the renown of this

world, but the princes of the city of Christ patiently wait for the

time of a blessedness that is not fallacious. This is expressed by

the words, "in fortitude, and not in confusion," because hope does

not deceive them, of which the apostle says, "But hope maketh not

ashamed."[490] A psalm also saith, "For they that hope in Thee shall

not be put to shame."[491] But now the Song of Songs is a certain

spiritual pleasure of holy minds, in the marriage of that King and

Queen-city, that is, Christ and the Church. But this pleasure is

wrapped up in allegorical veils, that the Bridegroom may be more

ardently desired, and more joyfully unveiled, and may appear; to whom

it is said in this same song, "Equity hath delighted Thee;"[492] and

the bride who those hears, "Charity is in thy delights."[493] We pass

over many things in silence, in our desire to finish this work.

21. \_Of the kings after Solomon, both in Judah and Israel.\_

The other kings of the Hebrews after Solomon are scarcely found to have

prophesied, through certain enigmatic words or actions of theirs, what

may pertain to Christ and the Church, either in Judah or Israel; for

so were the parts of that people styled, when, on account of Solomon's

offence, from the time of Rehoboam his son, who succeeded him in the

kingdom, it was divided by God as a punishment. The ten tribes, indeed,

which Jeroboam the servant of Solomon received, being appointed the

king in Samaria, were distinctively called Israel, although this had

been the name of that whole people; but the two tribes, namely, of

Judah and Benjamin, which for David's sake, lest the kingdom should

be wholly wrenched from his race, remained subject to the city of

Jerusalem, were called Judah, because that was the tribe whence David

sprang. But Benjamin, the other tribe which, as was said, belonged

to the same kingdom, was that whence Saul sprang before David. But

these two tribes together, as was said, were called Judah, and were

distinguished by this name from Israel, which was the distinctive title

of the ten tribes under their own king. For the tribe of Levi, because

it was the priestly one, bound to the servitude of God, not of the

kings, was reckoned the thirteenth. For Joseph, one of the twelve sons

of Israel, did not, like the others, form one tribe, but two, Ephraim

and Manasseh. Yet the tribe of Levi also belonged more to the kingdom

of Jerusalem, where was the temple of God whom it served. On the

division of the people, therefore, Rehoboam, son of Solomon, reigned in

Jerusalem as the first king of Judah, and Jeroboam, servant of Solomon,

in Samaria as king of Israel. And when Rehoboam wished as a tyrant

to pursue that separated part with war, the people were prohibited

from fighting with their brethren by God, who told them through a

prophet that He had done this; whence it appeared that in this matter

there had been no sin either of the king or people of Israel, but the

accomplished will of God the avenger. When this was known, both parts

settled down peaceably, for the division made was not religious but

political.

22. \_Of Jeroboam, who profaned the people put under him by the

impiety of idolatry, amid which, however, God did not cease

to inspire the prophets, and to guard many from the crime of

idolatry.\_

But Jeroboam king of Israel, with perverse mind, not believing in God,

whom he had proved true in promising and giving him the kingdom, was

afraid lest, by coming to the temple of God which was in Jerusalem,

where, according to the divine law, that whole nation was to come in

order to sacrifice, the people should be seduced from him, and return

to David's line as the seed royal; and set up idolatry in his kingdom,

and with horrible impiety beguiled the people, ensnaring them to the

worship of idols with himself. Yet God did not altogether cease to

reprove by the prophets, not only that king, but also his successors

and imitators in his impiety, and the people too. For there the great

and illustrious prophets Elijah and Elisha his disciple arose, who also

did many wonderful works. Even there, when Elijah said, "O Lord, they

have slain Thy prophets, they have digged down Thine altars; and I am

left alone, and they seek my life," it was answered that seven thousand

men were there who had not bowed the knee to Baal.[494]

23. \_Of the varying condition of both the Hebrew kingdoms, until

the people of both were at different times led into captivity,

Judah being afterwards recalled into his kingdom, which finally

passed into the power of the Romans.\_

So also in the kingdom of Judah pertaining to Jerusalem prophets were

not lacking even in the times of succeeding kings, just as it pleased

God to send them, either for the prediction of what was needful,

or for correction of sin and instruction in righteousness;[495]

for there, too, although far less than in Israel, kings arose who

grievously offended God by their impieties, and, along with their

people, who were like them, were smitten with moderate scourges. The

no small merits of the pious kings there are praised indeed. But we

read that in Israel the kings were, some more, others less, yet all

wicked. Each part, therefore, as the divine providence either ordered

or permitted, was both lifted up by prosperity and weighed down by

adversity of various kinds; and it was afflicted not only by foreign,

but also by civil wars with each other, in order that by certain

existing causes the mercy or anger of God might be manifested; until,

by His growing indignation, that whole nation was by the conquering

Chaldeans not only overthrown in its abode, but also for the most

part transported to the lands of the Assyrians,--first, that part

of the thirteen tribes called Israel, but afterwards Judah also,

when Jerusalem and that most noble temple was cast down,--in which

lands it rested seventy years in captivity. Being after that time

sent forth thence, they rebuilt the overthrown temple. And although

very many stayed in the lands of the strangers, yet the kingdom no

longer had two separate parts, with different kings over each, but

in Jerusalem there was one prince over them; and at certain times,

from every direction wherever they were, and from whatever place

they could, they all came to the temple of God which was there. Yet

not even then were they without foreign enemies and conquerors; yea,

Christ found them tributaries of the Romans.

24. \_Of the prophets, who either were the last among the Jews, or

whom the gospel history reports about the time of Christ's

nativity.\_

But in that whole time after they returned from Babylon, after

Malachi, Haggai, and Zechariah, who then prophesied, and Ezra, they

had no prophets down to the time of the Saviour's advent except

another Zechariah, the father of John, and Elisabeth his wife, when

the nativity of Christ was already close at hand; and when He was

already born, Simeon the aged, and Anna a widow, and now very old;

and, last of all, John himself, who, being a young man, did not

predict that Christ, now a young man, was to come, but by prophetic

knowledge pointed Him out although unknown; for which reason the

Lord Himself says, "The law and the prophets were until John."[496]

But the prophesying of these five is made known to us in the gospel,

where the virgin mother of our Lord herself is also found to have

prophesied before John. But this prophecy of theirs the wicked Jews

do not receive; but those innumerable persons received it who from

them believed the gospel. For then truly Israel was divided in two,

by that division which was foretold by Samuel the prophet to king

Saul as immutable. But even the reprobate Jews hold Malachi, Haggai,

Zechariah, and Ezra as the last received into canonical authority.

For there are also writings of these, as of others, who being but

a very few in the great multitude of prophets, have written those

books which have obtained canonical authority, of whose predictions

it seems good to me to put in this work some which pertain to Christ

and His Church; and this, by the Lord's help, shall be done more

conveniently in the following book, that we may not further burden

this one, which is already too long.

FOOTNOTES:

[343] "Has pointed."

[344] Gen. xii. 1, 2.

[345] Gen. xii. 3.

[346] Gal. iv. 22-31.

[347] Heb. viii. 8-10.

[348] 1 Sam. ii. 1-10.

[349] Ps. xlviii. 2.

[350] 2 Tim. ii. 9; Eph. vi. 20.

[351] Luke ii. 25-30.

[352] Rom. iii. 26?

[353] Gal. vi. 3.

[354] Rom. x. 3.

[355] Ps. xciv. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 20.

[356] Ps. vi. 2.

[357] Rom. iii. 2.

[358] Rev. i. 4.

[359] Prov. ix. 1.

[360] "By whom we see her made fruitful."

[361] Col. iii. 1-3.

[362] Rom. viii. 32.

[363] Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27, 31.

[364] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

[365] Jas. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.

[366] "For the poor man is the same as the beggar."

[367] Phil. iii. 7, 8.

[368] Matt. xix. 27, 28.

[369] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

[370] 1 John iv. 7.

[371] 2 Cor. v. 10.

[372] Ps. lxxiv. 12.

[373] Acts x. 42.

[374] Eph. iv. 9, 10.

[375] Matt. xxiv. 13.

[376] 1 Cor. 12.

[377] 1 Sam. ii. 27-36.

[378] Ps. xvii. 8.

[379] Isa. x. 21.

[380] Rom. xi. 5.

[381] Isa. xxviii. 22; Rom. ix 28.

[382] Ps. xii. 6.

[383] Ps. lxxxiv. 10.

[384] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[385] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

[386] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[387] Rom. xii. 1.

[388] John vi. 51.

[389] Heb. vii. 11, 27.

[390] Matt. xxiv. 15.

[391] 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 6.

[392] 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14.

[393] Heb. ix. 15.

[394] Luke xix. 10.

[395] Eph. i. 4.

[396] 1 Sam. xv. 23.

[397] 1 Sam. xv. 26-29.

[398] Rom. i. 3.

[399] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[400] Ps. cx. 1.

[401] Gen. xxi. 10.

[402] Gal. iv. 25.

[403] 2 Cor. iii. 15, 16.

[404] 1 Sam. vii. 9-12.

[405] 2 Sam. vii. 8-16.

[406] Rom. i. 3.

[407] Ps. lxxii. 8.

[408] 1 Cor. iii. 17.

[409] Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4.

[410] Ps. lxxxix. 19-29.

[411] Phil. ii. 7.

[412] Matt. i. 1, 18; Luke i. 27.

[413] 2 Sam. vii, 14, 15.

[414] Ps. cv. 15.

[415] Ps. lxxxix. 30-33.

[416] Acts ix. 4.

[417] Ps. lxxxix. 34, 35.

[418] Ps. lxxxix. 36, 37.

[419] Ps. lxxxix. 38.

[420] Ps. lxxxix. 38.

[421] Ps. lxxxix. 39-45.

[422] Ps. lxxxix. 46.

[423] Ps. xiii. 1.

[424] Ps. lxxxix. 46, 47.

[425] Ps. lxxxix. 47.

[426] Ps. cxliv. 4.

[427] Ps. lxxxix. 48.

[428] Rom. vi. 9.

[429] John x. 18.

[430] Ps. lxxxix. 49-51.

[431] Rom. iii. 28, 29.

[432] Acts xiii. 46.

[433] Matt. vii. 7, 8.

[434] Another reading, "consummation."

[435] See above, chap. viii.

[436] 2 Sam. vii. 19.

[437] 2 Sam. vii. 8.

[438] 2 Sam. vii. 27.

[439] Ps. cxxvii. 1.

[440] 2 Sam. vii. 10, 11.

[441] 2 Sam. vii. 10, 11.

[442] Judg. iii. 30.

[443] Israel = "a prince of God;" Peniel = "the face of God" (Gen.

xxxii. 28-30).

[444] Ps. cx. 1, quoted in Matt. xxii. 44.

[445] 1 Kings xiii. 2; fulfilled 2 Kings xxiii. 15-17.

[446] Ps. xlv. 1-9.

[447] Ps. xlv. 9-17.

[448] Ps. xlv. 7.

[449] Ps. xlviii. 2.

[450] Ps. xviii. 43.

[451] Rom. x. 5.

[452] Ps. lxxxvii. 5.

[453] Ps. xlv. 16.

[454] Ps. cx. 1.

[455] Ps. cx. 2.

[456] Ps. cx. 4.

[457] Ps. cx. 4.

[458] Ps. xxii. 16, 17.

[459] Ps. xxii. 18, 19.

[460] Ps. iii. 5.

[461] Ps. xli. 5-8.

[462] Ps. xli. 9.

[463] Ps. xli. 10.

[464] 2 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Pet. iv. 5.

[465] John vi. 70.

[466] 1 Cor. xii. 12.

[467] Matt. xxv. 35.

[468] Matt. xxv. 40.

[469] Acts i. 17.

[470] Ps. xvi. 9, 10.

[471] Ps. lxviii. 20.

[472] Matt. i. 21.

[473] Ps. lxix. 21; Matt. xxvii. 34, 48.

[474] Ps. lxix. 22, 23.

[475] Ps. xxxii. 1.

[476] Sallust, \_Bel. Cat.\_ c. xi.

[477] Wisd. ii. 12-21.

[478] Ecclus. xxxvi. 1-5.

[479] Prov. i. 11-13.

[480] Matt. xxi. 38.

[481] Ch. 4.

[482] Prov. ix. 1-5 (ver. 1 is quoted above in ch. 4).

[483] 1 Cor. i. 27.

[484] Prov. ix. 6.

[485] Eccles. ii. 24, iii. 13, v. 18, viii. 15.

[486] Ps. xl. 6.

[487] Eccles. vii. 2.

[488] Eccles. vii. 4.

[489] Eccles. x. 16, 17.

[490] Rom. v. 5.

[491] Ps. lxix. 6. ?

[492] Cant. i. 4.

[493] Cant. vii. 6.

[494] 1 Kings xix. 10, 14, 15.

[495] 2 Tim. 16.

[496] Matt. xi. 13.

BOOK EIGHTEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

AUGUSTINE TRACES THE PARALLEL COURSES OF THE EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY

CITIES FROM THE TIME OF ABRAHAM TO THE END OF THE WORLD; AND

ALLUDES TO THE ORACLES REGARDING CHRIST, BOTH THOSE UTTERED BY

THE SIBYLS, AND THOSE OF THE SACRED PROPHETS WHO WROTE AFTER

THE FOUNDATION OF ROME, HOSEA, AMOS, ISAIAH, MICAH, AND THEIR

SUCCESSORS.

1. \_Of those things down to the times of the Saviour which have

been discussed in the seventeen books.\_

I promised to write of the rise, progress, and appointed end of the two

cities, one of which is God's, the other this world's, in which, so

far as mankind is concerned, the former is now a stranger. But first

of all I undertook, so far as His grace should enable me, to refute

the enemies of the city of God, who prefer their gods to Christ its

founder, and fiercely hate Christians with the most deadly malice. And

this I have done in the first ten books. Then, as regards my threefold

promise which I have just mentioned, I have treated distinctly, in the

four books which follow the tenth, of the rise of both cities. After

that, I have proceeded from the first man down to the flood in one

book, which is the fifteenth of this work; and from that again down to

Abraham our work has followed both in chronological order. From the

patriarch Abraham down to the time of the Israelite kings, at which

we close our sixteenth book, and thence down to the advent of Christ

Himself in the flesh, to which period the seventeenth book reaches,

the city of God appears from my way of writing to have run its course

alone; whereas it did not run its course alone in this age, for both

cities, in their course amid mankind, certainly experienced chequered

times together just as from the beginning. But I did this in order

that, first of all, from the time when the promises of God began to

be more clear, down to the virgin birth of Him in whom those things

promised from the first were to be fulfilled, the course of that

city which is God's might be made more distinctly apparent, without

interpolation of foreign matter from the history of the other city,

although down to the revelation of the new covenant it ran its course,

not in light, but in shadow. Now, therefore, I think fit to do what I

passed by, and show, so far as seems necessary, how that other city ran

its course from the times of Abraham, so that attentive readers may

compare the two.

2. \_Of the kings and times of the earthly city which were

synchronous with the times of the saints, reckoning from the

rise of Abraham.\_

The society of mortals spread abroad through the earth everywhere,

and in the most diverse places, although bound together by a certain

fellowship of our common nature, is yet for the most part divided

against itself, and the strongest oppress the others, because all

follow after their own interests and lusts, while what is longed for

either suffices for none, or not for all, because it is not the very

thing. For the vanquished succumb to the victorious, preferring any

sort of peace and safety to freedom itself; so that they who chose

to die rather than be slaves have been greatly wondered at. For

in almost all nations the very voice of nature somehow proclaims,

that those who happen to be conquered should choose rather to be

subject to their conquerors than to be killed by all kinds of warlike

destruction. This does not take place without the providence of God,

in whose power it lies that any one either subdues or is subdued in

war; that some are endowed with kingdoms, others made subject to

kings. Now, among the very many kingdoms of the earth into which, by

earthly interest or lust, society is divided (which we call by the

general name of the city of this world), we see that two, settled and

kept distinct from each other both in time and place, have grown far

more famous than the rest, first that of the Assyrians, then that of

the Romans. First came the one, then the other. The former arose in

the east, and, immediately on its close, the latter in the west. I

may speak of other kingdoms and other kings as appendages of these.

Ninus, then, who succeeded his father Belus, the first king of Assyria,

was already the second king of that kingdom when Abraham was born in

the land of the Chaldees. There was also at that time a very small

kingdom of Sicyon, with which, as from an ancient date, that most

universally learned man Marcus Varro begins, in writing of the Roman

race. For from these kings of Sicyon he passes to the Athenians, from

them to the Latins, and from these to the Romans. Yet very little

is related about these kingdoms, before the foundation of Rome, in

comparison with that of Assyria. For although even Sallust, the Roman

historian, admits that the Athenians were very famous in Greece, yet he

thinks they were greater in fame than in fact. For in speaking of them

he says, "The deeds of the Athenians, as I think, were very great and

magnificent, but yet somewhat less than reported by fame. But because

writers of great genius arose among them, the deeds of the Athenians

were celebrated throughout the world as very great. Thus the virtue

of those who did them was held to be as great as men of transcendent

genius could represent it to be by the power of laudatory words."[497]

This city also derived no small glory from literature and philosophy,

the study of which chiefly flourished there. But as regards empire,

none in the earliest times was greater than the Assyrian, or so widely

extended. For when Ninus the son of Belus was king, he is reported

to have subdued the whole of Asia, even to the boundaries of Libya,

which as to number is called the third part, but as to size is found

to be the half of the whole world. The Indians in the eastern regions

were the only people over whom he did not reign; but after his death

Semiramis his wife made war on them. Thus it came to pass that all

the people and kings in those countries were subject to the kingdom

and authority of the Assyrians, and did whatever they were commanded.

Now Abraham was born in that kingdom among the Chaldees, in the time

of Ninus. But since Grecian affairs are much better known to us than

Assyrian, and those who have diligently investigated the antiquity of

the Roman nation's origin have followed the order of time through the

Greeks to the Latins, and from them to the Romans, who themselves are

Latins, we ought on this account, where it is needful, to mention the

Assyrian kings, that it may appear how Babylon, like a first Rome, ran

its course along with the city of God, which is a stranger in this

world. But the things proper for insertion in this work in comparing

the two cities, that is, the earthly and heavenly, ought to be taken

mostly from the Greek and Latin kingdoms, where Rome herself is like a

second Babylon.

At Abraham's birth, then, the second kings of Assyria and Sicyon

respectively were Ninus and Europs, the first having been Belus

and Ægialeus. But when God promised Abraham, on his departure from

Babylonia, that he should become a great nation, and that in his seed

all nations of the earth should be blessed, the Assyrians had their

seventh king, the Sicyons their fifth; for the son of Ninus reigned

among them after his mother Semiramis, who is said to have been put

to death by him for attempting to defile him by incestuously lying

with him. Some think that she founded Babylon, and indeed she may

have founded it anew. But we have told, in the sixteenth book, when

or by whom it was founded. Now the son of Ninus and Semiramis, who

succeeded his mother in the kingdom, is also called Ninus by some,

but by others Ninias, a patronymic word. Telexion then held the

kingdom of the Sicyons. In his reign times were quiet and joyful to

such a degree, that after his death they worshipped him as a god by

offering sacrifices and by celebrating games, which are said to have

been first instituted on this occasion.

3. \_What kings reigned in Assyria and Sicyon when, according to

the promise, Isaac was born to Abraham in his hundredth year,

and when the twins Esau and Jacob were born of Rebecca to Isaac

in his sixtieth year.\_

In his times also, by the promise of God, Isaac, the son of Abraham,

was born to his father when he was a hundred years old, of Sarah his

wife, who, being barren and old, had already lost hope of issue.

Aralius was then the fifth king of the Assyrians. To Isaac himself,

in his sixtieth year, were born twin-sons, Esau and Jacob, whom

Rebecca his wife bore to him, their grandfather Abraham, who died

on completing a hundred and seventy years, being still alive, and

reckoning his hundred and sixtieth year.[498] At that time there

reigned as the seventh kings,--among the Assyrians, that more

ancient Xerxes, who was also called Balæus; and among the Sicyons,

Thuriachus, or, as some write his name, Thurimachus. The kingdom of

Argos, in which Inachus reigned first, arose in the time of Abraham's

grandchildren. And I must not omit what Varro relates, that the

Sicyons were also wont to sacrifice at the tomb of their seventh king

Thuriachus. In the reign of Armamitres in Assyria and Leucippus in

Sicyon as the eighth kings, and of Inachus as the first in Argos, God

spoke to Isaac, and promised the same two things to him as to his

father,--namely, the land of Canaan to his seed, and the blessing of

all nations in his seed. These same things were promised to his son,

Abraham's grandson, who was at first called Jacob, afterwards Israel,

when Belocus was the ninth king of Assyria, and Phoroneus, the son

of Inachus, reigned as the second king of Argos, Leucippus still

continuing king of Sicyon. In those times, under the Argive king

Phoroneus, Greece was made more famous by the institution of certain

laws and judges. On the death of Phoroneus, his younger brother

Phegous built a temple at his tomb, in which he was worshipped as

God, and oxen were sacrificed to him. I believe they thought him

worthy of so great honour, because in his part of the kingdom (for

their father had divided his territories between them, in which they

reigned during his life) he had founded chapels for the worship of

the gods, and had taught them to measure time by months and years,

and to that extent to keep count and reckoning of events. Men still

uncultivated, admiring him for these novelties, either fancied he

was, or resolved that he should be made, a god after his death. Io

also is said to have been the daughter of Inachus, who was afterwards

called Isis, when she was worshipped in Egypt as a great goddess;

although others write that she came as a queen out of Ethiopia, and

because she ruled extensively and justly, and instituted for her

subjects letters and many useful things, such divine honour was given

her there after she died, that if any one said she had been human, he

was charged with a capital crime.

4. \_Of the times of Jacob and his son Joseph.\_

In the reign of Balæus, the ninth king of Assyria, and Mesappus,

the eighth of Sicyon, who is said by some to have been also called

Cephisos (if indeed the same man had both names, and those who put

the other name in their writings have not rather confounded him with

another man), while Apis was third king of Argos, Isaac died, a

hundred and eighty years old, and left his twin-sons a hundred and

twenty years old. Jacob, the younger of these, belonged to the city

of God about which we write (the elder being wholly rejected), and

had twelve sons, one of whom, called Joseph, was sold by his brothers

to merchants going down to Egypt, while his grandfather Isaac was

still alive. But when he was thirty years of age, Joseph stood before

Pharaoh, being exalted out of the humiliation he endured, because,

in divinely interpreting the king's dreams, he foretold that there

would be seven years of plenty, the very rich abundance of which

would be consumed by seven other years of famine that should follow.

On this account the king made him ruler over Egypt, liberating him

from prison, into which he had been thrown for keeping his chastity

intact; for he bravely preserved it from his mistress, who wickedly

loved him, and told lies to his weakly credulous master, and did not

consent to commit adultery with her, but fled from her, leaving his

garment in her hands when she laid hold of him. In the second of the

seven years of famine Jacob came down into Egypt to his son with all

he had, being a hundred and thirty years old, as he himself said in

answer to the king's question. Joseph was then thirty-nine, if we add

seven years of plenty and two of famine to the thirty he reckoned

when honoured by the king.

5. \_Of Apis king of Argos, whom the Egyptians called Serapis,

and worshipped with divine honours.\_

In these times Apis king of Argos crossed over into Egypt in ships,

and, on dying there, was made Serapis, the chief god of all the

Egyptians. Now Varro gives this very ready reason why, after his

death, he was called, not Apis, but Serapis. The ark in which he

was placed when dead, which every one now calls a sarcophagus, was

then called in Greek σορὸς, and they began to worship him when

buried in it before his temple was built; and from Soros and Apis

he was called first [Sorosapis, or] Sorapis, and then Serapis, by

changing a letter, as easily happens. It was decreed regarding him

also, that whoever should say he had been a man should be capitally

punished. And since in every temple where Isis and Serapis were

worshipped there was also an image which, with finger pressed on

the lips, seemed to warn men to keep silence, Varro thinks this

signifies that it should be kept secret that they had been human.

But that bull which, with wonderful folly, deluded Egypt nourished

with abundant delicacies in honour of him, was not called Serapis,

but Apis, because they worshipped him alive without a sarcophagus. On

the death of that bull, when they sought and found a calf of the same

colour,--that is, similarly marked with certain white spots,--they

believed it was something miraculous, and divinely provided for them.

Yet it was no great thing for the demons, in order to deceive them,

to show to a cow when she was conceiving and pregnant the image

of such a bull, which she alone could see, and by it attract the

breeding passion of the mother, so that it might appear in a bodily

shape in her young, just as Jacob so managed with the spotted rods

that the sheep and goats were born spotted. For what men can do with

real colours and substances, the demons can very easily do by showing

unreal forms to breeding animals.

6. \_Who were kings of Argos, and of Assyria, when Jacob died

in Egypt.\_

Apis, then, who died in Egypt, was not the king of Egypt, but of Argos.

He was succeeded by his son Argus, from whose name the land was called

Argos and the people Argives, for under the earlier kings neither

the place nor the nation as yet had this name. While he then reigned

over Argos, and Eratus over Sicyon, and Balæus still remained king of

Assyria, Jacob died in Egypt a hundred and forty-seven years old, after

he had, when dying, blessed his sons and his grandsons by Joseph, and

prophesied most plainly of Christ, saying in the blessing of Judah, "A

prince shall not fail out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until

those things come which are laid up for him; and He is the expectation

of the nations."[499] In the reign of Argus Greece began to use fruits,

and to have crops of corn in cultivated fields, the seed having been

brought from other countries. Argus also began to be accounted a god

after his death, and was honoured with a temple and sacrifices. This

honour was conferred in his reign, before being given to him, on a

private individual for being the first to yoke oxen in the plough. This

was one Homogyrus, who was struck by lightning.

7. \_Who were kings when Joseph died in Egypt.\_

In the reign of Mamitus, the twelfth king of Assyria, and Plemnæus,

the eleventh of Sicyon, while Argus still reigned over the Argives,

Joseph died in Egypt a hundred and ten years old. After his death,

the people of God, increasing wonderfully, remained in Egypt a

hundred and forty-five years, in tranquillity at first, until those

who knew Joseph were dead. Afterward, through envy of their increase,

and the suspicion that they would at length gain their freedom, they

were oppressed with persecutions and the labours of intolerable

servitude, amid which, however, they still grew, being multiplied

with God-given fertility. During this period the same kingdoms

continued in Assyria and Greece.

8. \_Who were kings when Moses was born, and what gods began to

be worshipped then.\_

When Saphrus reigned as the fourteenth king of Assyria, and

Orthopolis as the twelfth of Sicyon, and Criasus as the fifth of

Argos, Moses was born in Egypt, by whom the people of God were

liberated from the Egyptian slavery, in which they behoved to be

thus tried that they might desire the help of their Creator. Some

have thought that Prometheus lived during the reign of the kings now

named. He is reported to have formed men out of clay, because he was

esteemed the best teacher of wisdom; yet it does not appear what

wise men there were in his days. His brother Atlas is said to have

been a great astrologer; and this gave occasion for the fable that

he held up the sky, although the vulgar opinion about his holding

up the sky appears rather to have been suggested by a high mountain

named after him. Indeed, from those times many other fabulous things

began to be invented in Greece; yet, down to Cecrops king of Athens,

in whose reign that city received its name, and in whose reign God

brought His people out of Egypt by Moses, only a few dead heroes are

reported to have been deified according to the vain superstition of

the Greeks. Among these were Melantomice, the wife of king Criasus,

and Phorbas their son, who succeeded his father as sixth king of the

Argives, and Iasus, son of Triopas, their seventh king, and their

ninth king, Sthenelas, or Stheneleus, or Sthenelus,--for his name

is given differently by different authors. In those times also,

Mercury, the grandson of Atlas by his daughter Maia, is said to have

lived, according to the common report in books. He was famous for his

skill in many arts, and taught them to men, for which they resolved

to make him, and even believed that he deserved to be, a god after

death. Hercules is said to have been later, yet belonging to the same

period; although some, whom I think mistaken, assign him an earlier

date than Mercury. But at whatever time they were born, it is agreed

among grave historians, who have committed these ancient things to

writing, that both were men, and that they merited divine honours

from mortals because they conferred on them many benefits to make

this life more pleasant to them. Minerva was far more ancient than

these; for she is reported to have appeared in virgin age in the

times of Ogyges at the lake called Triton, from which she is also

styled Tritonia, the inventress truly of many works, and the more

readily believed to be a goddess because her origin was so little

known. For what is sung about her having sprung from the head of

Jupiter belongs to the region of poetry and fable, and not to that

of history and real fact. And historical writers are not agreed when

Ogyges flourished, in whose time also a great flood occurred,--not

that greatest one from which no man escaped except those who could

get into the ark, for neither Greek nor Latin history knew of it, yet

a greater flood than that which happened afterward in Deucalion's

time. For Varro begins the book I have already mentioned at this

date, and does not propose to himself, as the starting-point from

which he may arrive at Roman affairs, anything more ancient than the

flood of Ogyges, that is, which happened in the time of Ogyges. Now

our writers of chronicles--first Eusebius, and afterwards Jerome, who

entirely follow some earlier historians in this opinion--relate that

the flood of Ogyges happened more than three hundred years after,

during the reign of Phoroneus, the second king of Argos. But whenever

he may have lived, Minerva was already worshipped as a goddess when

Cecrops reigned in Athens, in whose reign the city itself is reported

to have been rebuilt or founded.

9. \_When the city of Athens was founded, and what reason Varro

assigns for its name.\_

Athens certainly derived its name from Minerva, who in Greek is

called Ἀθηνη, and Varro points out the following reason why it was so

called. When an olive-tree suddenly appeared there, and water burst

forth in another place, these prodigies moved the king to send to

the Delphic Apollo to inquire what they meant and what he should do.

He answered that the olive signified Minerva, the water Neptune, and

that the citizens had it in their power to name their city as they

chose, after either of these two gods whose signs these were. On

receiving this oracle, Cecrops convoked all the citizens of either

sex to give their vote, for it was then the custom in those parts

for the women also to take part in public deliberations. When the

multitude was consulted, the men gave their votes for Neptune, the

women for Minerva; and as the women had a majority of one, Minerva

conquered. Then Neptune, being enraged, laid waste the lands of the

Athenians, by casting up the waves of the sea; for the demons have no

difficulty in scattering any waters more widely. The same authority

said, that to appease his wrath the women should be visited by the

Athenians with the threefold punishment--that they should no longer

have any vote; that none of their children should be named after

their mothers; and that no one should call them Athenians. Thus that

city, the mother and nurse of liberal doctrines, and of so many and

so great philosophers, than whom Greece had nothing more famous and

noble, by the mockery of demons about the strife of their gods, a

male and female, and from the victory of the female one through

the women, received the name of Athens; and, on being damaged by

the vanquished god, was compelled to punish the very victory of

the victress, fearing the waters of Neptune more than the arms of

Minerva. For in the women who were thus punished, Minerva, who had

conquered, was conquered too, and could not even help her voters so

far that, although the right of voting was henceforth lost, and the

mothers could not give their names to the children, they might at

least be allowed to be called Athenians, and to merit the name of

that goddess whom they had made victorious over a male god by giving

her their votes. What and how much could be said about this, if we

had not to hasten to other things in our discourse, is obvious.

10. \_What Varro reports about the term Areopagus, and about

Deucalion's flood.\_

Marcus Varro, however, is not willing to credit lying fables against

the gods, lest he should find something dishonouring to their

majesty; and therefore he will not admit that the Areopagus, the

place where the Apostle Paul disputed with the Athenians, got this

name because Mars, who in Greek is called Ἄρης, when he was charged

with the crime of homicide, and was judged by twelve gods in that

field, was acquitted by the sentence of six; because it was the

custom, when the votes were equal, to acquit rather than condemn.

Against this opinion, which is much most widely published, he tries,

from the notices of obscure books, to support another reason for

this name, lest the Athenians should be thought to have called it

Areopagus from the words "Mars" and "field,"[500] as if it were the

field of Mars, to the dishonour of the gods, forsooth, from whom

he thinks lawsuits and judgments far removed. And he asserts that

this which is said about Mars is not less false than what is said

about the three goddesses, to wit, Juno, Minerva, and Venus, whose

contest for the palm of beauty, before Paris as judge, in order to

obtain the golden apple, is not only related, but is celebrated in

songs and dances amid the applause of the theatres, in plays meant

to please the gods who take pleasure in these crimes of their own,

whether real or fabled. Varro does not believe these things, because

they are incompatible with the nature of the gods and of morality;

and yet, in giving not a fabulous but a historic reason for the name

of Athens, he inserts in his books the strife between Neptune and

Minerva as to whose name should be given to that city, which was so

great that, when they contended by the display of prodigies, even

Apollo dared not judge between them when consulted; but, in order to

end the strife of the gods, just as Jupiter sent the three goddesses

we have named to Paris, so he sent them to men, when Minerva won by

the vote, and yet was defeated by the punishment of her own voters,

for she was unable to confer the title of Athenians on the women who

were her friends, although she could impose it on the men who were

her opponents. In these times, when Cranaos reigned at Athens as the

successor of Cecrops, as Varro writes, but, according to our Eusebius

and Jerome, while Cecrops himself still remained, the flood occurred

which is called Deucalion's, because it occurred chiefly in those

parts of the earth in which he reigned. But this flood did not at all

reach Egypt or its vicinity.

11. \_When Moses led the people out of Egypt; and who were kings

when his successor Joshua the son of Nun died.\_

Moses led the people out of Egypt in the last time of Cecrops king

of Athens, when Ascatades reigned in Assyria, Marathus in Sicyon,

Triopas in Argos; and having led forth the people, he gave them at

Mount Sinai the law he received from God, which is called the Old

Testament, because it has earthly promises, and because, through

Jesus Christ, there was to be a New Testament, in which the kingdom

of heaven should be promised. For the same order behoved to be

observed in this as is observed in each man who prospers in God,

according to the saying of the apostle, "That is not first which is

spiritual, but that which is natural," since, as he says, and that

truly, "The first man of the earth, is earthly; the second man, from

heaven, is heavenly."[501] Now Moses ruled the people for forty years

in the wilderness, and died a hundred and twenty years old, after

he had prophesied of Christ by the types of carnal observances in

the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices, and many other mystic

ordinances. Joshua the son of Nun succeeded Moses, and settled in

the land of promise the people he had brought in, having by divine

authority conquered the people by whom it was formerly possessed. He

also died, after ruling the people twenty-seven years after the death

of Moses, when Amyntas reigned in Assyria as the eighteenth king,

Coracos as the sixteenth in Sicyon, Danaos as the tenth in Argos,

Ericthonius as the fourth in Athens.

12. \_Of the rituals of false gods instituted by the kings of Greece

in the period from Israel's exodus from Egypt down to the death

of Joshua the son of Nun.\_

During this period, that is, from Israel's exodus from Egypt down to

the death of Joshua the son of Nun, through whom that people received

the land of promise, rituals were instituted to the false gods by the

kings of Greece, which, by stated celebration, recalled the memory of

the flood, and of men's deliverance from it, and of that troublous

life they then led in migrating to and fro between the heights and the

plains. For even the Luperci,[502] when they ascend and descend the

sacred path, are said to represent the men who sought the mountain

summits because of the inundation of water, and returned to the

lowlands on its subsidence. In those times, Dionysus, who was also

called Father Liber, and was esteemed a god after death, is said to

have shown the vine to his host in Attica. Then the musical games were

instituted for the Delphic Apollo, to appease his anger, through which

they thought the regions of Greece were afflicted with barrenness,

because they had not defended his temple which Danaos burnt when he

invaded those lands; for they were warned by his oracle to institute

these games. But king Ericthonius first instituted games to him in

Attica, and not to him only, but also to Minerva, in which games the

olive was given as the prize to the victors, because they relate that

Minerva was the discoverer of that fruit, as Liber was of the grape. In

those years Europa is alleged to have been carried off by Xanthus king

of Crete (to whom we find some give another name), and to have borne

him Rhadamanthus, Sarpedon, and Minos, who are more commonly reported

to have been the sons of Jupiter by the same woman. Now those who

worship such gods regard what we have said about Xanthus king of Crete

as true history; but this about Jupiter, which the poets sing, the

theatres applaud, and the people celebrate, as empty fable got up as a

reason for games to appease the deities, even with the false ascription

of crimes to them. In those times Hercules was held in honour in

Tyre, but that was not the same one as he whom we spoke of above. In

the more secret history there are said to have been several who were

called Father Liber and Hercules. This Hercules, whose great deeds are

reckoned as twelve (not including the slaughter of Antæus the African,

because that affair pertains to another Hercules), is declared in their

books to have burned himself on Mount Œta, because he was not able, by

that strength with which he had subdued monsters, to endure the disease

under which he languished. At that time the king, or rather tyrant

Busiris, who is alleged to have been the son of Neptune by Libya the

daughter of Epaphus, is said to have offered up his guests in sacrifice

to the gods. Now it must not be believed that Neptune committed this

adultery, lest the gods should be criminated; yet such things must be

ascribed to them by the poets and in the theatres, that they may be

pleased with them. Vulcan and Minerva are said to have been the parents

of Ericthonius king of Athens, in whose last years Joshua the son of

Nun is found to have died. But since they will have it that Minerva

is a virgin, they say that Vulcan, being disturbed in the struggle

between them, poured out his seed into the earth, and on that account

the man born of it received that name; for in the Greek language ἔρις

is "strife," and χθὼν "earth," of which two words Ericthonius is a

compound. Yet it must be admitted that the more learned disprove

and disown such things concerning their gods, and declare that this

fabulous belief originated in the fact that in the temple at Athens,

which Vulcan and Minerva had in common, a boy who had been exposed was

found wrapped up in the coils of a dragon, which signified that he

would become great, and, as his parents were unknown, he was called

the son of Vulcan and Minerva, because they had the temple in common.

Yet that fable accounts for the origin of his name better than this

history. But what does it matter to us? Let the one in books that speak

the truth edify religious men, and the other in lying fables delight

impure demons. Yet these religious men worship them as gods. Still,

while they deny these things concerning them, they cannot clear them of

all crime, because at their demand they exhibit plays in which the very

things they wisely deny are basely done, and the gods are appeased by

these false and base things. Now, even although the play celebrates an

unreal crime of the gods, yet to delight in the ascription of an unreal

crime is a real one.

13. \_What fables were invented at the time when judges began to

rule the Hebrews.\_

After the death of Joshua the son of Nun, the people of God had judges,

in whose times they were alternately humbled by afflictions on account

of their sins, and consoled by prosperity through the compassion of

God. In those times were invented the fables about Triptolemus, who,

at the command of Ceres, borne by winged snakes, bestowed corn on

the needy lands in flying over them; about that beast the Minotaur,

which was shut up in the Labyrinth, from which men who entered its

inextricable mazes could find no exit; about the Centaurs, whose form

was a compound of horse and man; about Cerberus, the three-headed dog

of hell; about Phryxus and his sister Hellas, who fled, borne by a

winged ram; about the Gorgon, whose hair was composed of serpents,

and who turned those who looked on her into stone; about Bellerophon,

who was carried by a winged horse called Pegasus; about Amphion, who

charmed and attracted the stones by the sweetness of his harp; about

the artificer Dædalus and his son Icarus, who flew on wings they had

fitted on; about Œdipus, who compelled a certain four-footed monster

with a human face, called a sphynx, to destroy herself by casting

herself headlong, having solved the riddle she was wont to propose

as insoluble; about Antæus, who was the son of the earth, for which

reason, on falling on the earth, he was wont to rise up stronger, whom

Hercules slew; and perhaps there are others which I have forgotten.

These fables, easily found in histories containing a true account of

events, bring us down to the Trojan war, at which Marcus Varro has

closed his second book about the race of the Roman people; and they

are so skilfully invented by men as to involve no scandal to the gods.

But whoever have pretended as to Jupiter's rape of Ganymede, a very

beautiful boy, that king Tantalus committed the crime, and the fable

ascribed it to Jupiter; or as to his impregnating Danäe as a golden

shower, that it means that the woman's virtue was corrupted by gold:

whether these things were really done or only fabled in those days,

or were really done by others and falsely ascribed to Jupiter, it is

impossible to tell how much wickedness must have been taken for granted

in men's hearts that they should be thought able to listen to such lies

with patience. And yet they willingly accepted them, when, indeed, the

more devotedly they worshipped Jupiter, they ought the more severely

to have punished those who durst say such things of him. But they not

only were not angry at those who invented these things, but were afraid

that the gods would be angry at them if they did not act such fictions

even in the theatres. In those times Latona bore Apollo, not him of

whose oracle we have spoken above as so often consulted, but him who is

said, along with Hercules, to have fed the flocks of king Admetus; yet

he was so believed to be a god, that very many, indeed almost all, have

believed him to be the selfsame Apollo. Then also Father Liber made

war in India, and led in his army many women called Bacchæ, who were

notable not so much for valour as for fury. Some, indeed, write that

this Liber was both conquered and bound; and some that he was slain

in Persia, even telling where he was buried; and yet in his name, as

that of a god, the unclean demons have instituted the sacred, or rather

the sacrilegious, Bacchanalia, of the outrageous vileness of which the

senate, after many years, became so much ashamed as to prohibit them in

the city of Rome. Men believed that in those times Perseus and his wife

Andromeda were raised into heaven after their death, so that they were

not ashamed or afraid to mark out their images by constellations, and

call them by their names.

14. \_Of the theological poets.\_

During the same period of time arose the poets, who were also called

\_theologues\_, because they made hymns about the gods; yet about such

gods as, although great men, were yet but men, or the elements of

this world which the true God made, or creatures who were ordained as

principalities and powers according to the will of the Creator and

their own merit. And if, among much that was vain and false, they

sang anything of the one true God, yet, by worshipping Him along

with others who are not gods, and showing them the service that is

due to Him alone, they did not serve Him at all rightly; and even

such poets as Orpheus, Musæus, and Linus, were unable to abstain

from dishonouring their gods by fables. But yet these theologues

worshipped the gods, and were not worshipped as gods, although the

city of the ungodly is wont, I know not how, to set Orpheus over

the sacred, or rather sacrilegious, rites of hell. The wife of king

Athamas, who was called Ino, and her son Melicertes, perished by

throwing themselves into the sea, and were, according to popular

belief, reckoned among the gods, like other men of the same times,

[among whom were] Castor and Pollux. The Greeks, indeed, called her

who was the mother of Melicertes, Leucothea, the Latins Matuta; but

both thought her a goddess.

15. \_Of the fall of the kingdom of Argos, when Picus the son of

Saturn first received his father's kingdom of Laurentum.\_

During those times the kingdom of Argos came to an end, being

transferred to Mycene, from which Agamemnon came, and the kingdom of

Laurentum arose, of which Picus son of Saturn was the first king,

when the woman Deborah judged the Hebrews; but it was the Spirit

of God who used her as His agent, for she was also a prophetess,

although her prophecy is so obscure that we could not demonstrate,

without a long discussion, that it was uttered concerning Christ.

Now the Laurentes already reigned in Italy, from whom the origin

of the Roman people is quite evidently derived after the Greeks;

yet the kingdom of Assyria still lasted, in which Lampares was the

twenty-third king when Picus first began to reign at Laurentum. The

worshippers of such gods may see what they are to think of Saturn the

father of Picus, who deny that he was a man; of whom some also have

written that he himself reigned in Italy before Picus his son; and

Virgil in his well-known book says,--

"That race indocile, and through mountains high

Dispersed, he settled, and endowed with laws,

And named their country Latium, because

Latent within their coasts he dwelt secure.

Tradition says the golden ages pure

Began when he was king."[503]

But they regard these as poetic fancies, and assert that the father

of Picus was Sterces rather, and relate that, being a most skilful

husbandman, he discovered that the fields could be fertilized by the

dung of animals, which is called \_stercus\_ from his name. Some say

he was called Stercutius. But for whatever reason they chose to call

him Saturn, it is yet certain they made this Sterces or Stercutius

a god for his merit in agriculture; and they likewise received into

the number of these gods Picus his son, whom they affirm to have

been a famous augur and warrior. Picus begot Faunus, the second king

of Laurentum; and he too is, or was, a god with them. These divine

honours they gave to dead men before the Trojan war.

16. \_Of Diomede, who after the destruction of Troy was placed among

the gods, while his companions are said to have been changed

into birds.\_

Troy was overthrown, and its destruction was everywhere sung and made

well known even to boys; for it was signally published and spread

abroad, both by its own greatness and by writers of excellent style.

And this was done in the reign of Latinus the son of Faunus, from

whom the kingdom began to be called Latium instead of Laurentum. The

victorious Greeks, on leaving Troy destroyed and returning to their own

countries, were torn and crushed by divers and horrible calamities.

Yet even from among them they increased the number of their gods, for

they made Diomede a god. They allege that his return home was prevented

by a divinely imposed punishment, and they prove, not by fabulous and

poetic falsehood, but by historic attestation, that his companions

were turned into birds. Yet they think that, even although he was made

a god, he could neither restore them to the human form by his own

power, nor yet obtain it from Jupiter his king, as a favour granted to

a new inhabitant of heaven. They also say that his temple is in the

island of Diomedæa, not far from Mount Garganus in Apulia, and that

these birds fly round about this temple, and worship in it with such

wonderful obedience, that they fill their beaks with water and sprinkle

it; and if Greeks, or those born of the Greek race, come there, they

are not only still, but fly to meet them; but if they are foreigners,

they fly up at their heads, and wound them with such severe strokes as

even to kill them. For they are said to be well enough armed for these

combats with their hard and large beaks.

17. \_What Varro says of the incredible transformations of men.\_

In support of this story, Varro relates others no less incredible

about that most famous sorceress Circe, who changed the companions

of Ulysses into beasts, and about the Arcadians, who, by lot, swam

across a certain pool, and were turned into wolves there, and lived

in the deserts of that region with wild beasts like themselves.

But if they never fed on human flesh for nine years, they were

restored to the human form on swimming back again through the same

pool. Finally, he expressly names one Demænetus, who, on tasting a

boy offered up in sacrifice by the Arcadians to their god Lycæus

according to their custom, was changed into a wolf, and, being

restored to his proper form in the tenth year, trained himself as

a pugilist, and was victorious at the Olympic games. And the same

historian thinks that the epithet Lycæus was applied in Arcadia to

Pan and Jupiter for no other reason than this metamorphosis of men

into wolves, because it was thought it could not be wrought except by

a divine power. For a wolf is called in Greek λυκὸς, from which the

name Lycæus appears to be formed. He says also that the Roman Luperci

were as it were sprung of the seed of these mysteries.

18. \_What we should believe concerning the transformations which

seem to happen to men through the art of demons.\_

Perhaps our readers expect us to say something about this so great

delusion wrought by the demons; and what shall we say but that men

must fly out of the midst of Babylon?[504] For this prophetic precept

is to be understood spiritually in this sense, that by going forward

in the living God, by the steps of faith, which worketh by love,

we must flee out of the city of this world, which is altogether a

society of ungodly angels and men. Yea, the greater we see the power

of the demons to be in these depths, so much the more tenaciously

must we cleave to the Mediator through whom we ascend from these

lowest to the highest places. For if we should say these things are

not to be credited, there are not wanting even now some who would

affirm that they had either heard on the best authority, or even

themselves experienced, something of that kind. Indeed we ourselves,

when in Italy, heard such things about a certain region there, where

landladies of inns, imbued with these wicked arts, were said to be

in the habit of giving to such travellers as they chose, or could

manage, something in a piece of cheese by which they were changed on

the spot into beasts of burden, and carried whatever was necessary,

and were restored to their own form when the work was done. Yet their

mind did not become bestial, but remained rational and human, just

as Apuleius, in the books he wrote with the title of \_The Golden

Ass\_, has told, or feigned, that it happened to his own self that, on

taking poison, he became an ass, while retaining his human mind.

These things are either false, or so extraordinary as to be with

good reason disbelieved. But it is to be most firmly believed that

Almighty God can do whatever He pleases, whether in punishing or

favouring, and that the demons can accomplish nothing by their

natural power (for their created being is itself angelic, although

made malign by their own fault), except what He may permit, whose

judgments are often hidden, but never unrighteous. And indeed

the demons, if they really do such things as these on which this

discussion turns, do not create real substances, but only change

the appearance of things created by the true God so as to make them

seem to be what they are not. I cannot therefore believe that even

the body, much less the mind, can really be changed into bestial

forms and lineaments by any reason, art, or power of the demons; but

the phantasm of a man, which even in thought or dreams goes through

innumerable changes, may, when the man's senses are laid asleep or

overpowered, be presented to the senses of others in a corporeal

form, in some indescribable way unknown to me, so that men's bodies

themselves may lie somewhere, alive, indeed, yet with their senses

locked up much more heavily and firmly than by sleep, while that

phantasm, as it were embodied in the shape of some animal, may appear

to the senses of others, and may even seem to the man himself to be

changed, just as he may seem to himself in sleep to be so changed,

and to bear burdens; and these burdens, if they are real substances,

are borne by the demons, that men may be deceived by beholding at the

same time the real substance of the burdens and the simulated bodies

of the beasts of burden. For a certain man called Præstantius used

to tell that it had happened to his father in his own house, that

he took that poison in a piece of cheese, and lay in his bed as if

sleeping, yet could by no means be aroused. But he said that after a

few days he as it were woke up and related the things he had suffered

as if they had been dreams, namely, that he had been made a sumpter

horse, and, along with other beasts of burden, had carried provisions

for the soldiers of what is called the Rhœtian Legion, because it was

sent to Rhœtia. And all this was found to have taken place just as

he told, yet it had seemed to him to be his own dream. And another

man declared that in his own house at night, before he slept, he

saw a certain philosopher, whom he knew very well, come to him and

explain to him some things in the Platonic philosophy which he had

previously declined to explain when asked. And when he had asked this

philosopher why he did in his house what he had refused to do at

home, he said, "I did not do it, but I dreamed I had done it." And

thus what the one saw when sleeping was shown to the other when awake

by a phantasmal image.

These things have not come to us from persons we might deem unworthy

of credit, but from informants we could not suppose to be deceiving

us. Therefore what men say and have committed to writing about the

Arcadians being often changed into wolves by the Arcadian gods, or

demons rather, and what is told in song about Circe transforming the

companions of Ulysses,[505] if they were really done, may, in my

opinion, have been done in the way I have said. As for Diomede's

birds, since their race is alleged to have been perpetuated by

constant propagation, I believe they were not made through the

metamorphosis of men, but were slyly substituted for them on their

removal, just as the hind was for Iphigenia, the daughter of king

Agamemnon. For juggleries of this kind could not be difficult for the

demons if permitted by the judgment of God; and since that virgin was

afterward found alive, it is easy to see that a hind had been slyly

substituted for her. But because the companions of Diomede were of

a sudden nowhere to be seen, and afterward could nowhere be found,

being destroyed by bad avenging angels, they were believed to have

been changed into those birds, which were secretly brought there from

other places where such birds were, and suddenly substituted for them

by fraud. But that they bring water in their beaks and sprinkle it

on the temple of Diomede, and that they fawn on men of Greek race

and persecute aliens, is no wonderful thing to be done by the inward

influence of the demons, whose interest it is to persuade men that

Diomede was made a god, and thus to beguile them into worshipping

many false gods, to the great dishonour of the true God; and to

serve dead men, who even in their lifetime did not truly live, with

temples, altars, sacrifices, and priests, all which, when of the

right kind, are due only to the one living and true God.

19. \_That Æneas came into Italy when Abdon the judge ruled over

the Hebrews.\_

After the capture and destruction of Troy, Æneas, with twenty ships

laden with the Trojan relics, came into Italy, when Latinus reigned

there, Menestheus in Athens, Polyphidos in Sicyon, and Tautanos

in Assyria, and Abdon was judge of the Hebrews. On the death of

Latinus, Æneas reigned three years, the same kings continuing in the

above-named places, except that Pelasgus was now king in Sicyon, and

Sampson was judge of the Hebrews, who is thought to be Hercules,

because of his wonderful strength. Now the Latins made Æneas one

of their gods, because at his death he was nowhere to be found.

The Sabines also placed among the gods their first king, Sancus,

[Sangus], or Sanctus, as some call him. At that time Codrus king of

Athens exposed himself \_incognito\_ to be slain by the Peloponnesian

foes of that city, and so was slain. In this way, they say, he

delivered his country. For the Peloponnesians had received a response

from the oracle, that they should overcome the Athenians only on

condition that they did not slay their king. Therefore he deceived

them by appearing in a poor man's dress, and provoking them, by

quarrelling, to murder him. Whence Virgil says, "Or the quarrels of

Codrus."[506] And the Athenians worshipped this man as a god with

sacrificial honours. The fourth king of the Latins was Silvius the

son of Æneas, not by Creüsa, of whom Ascanius the third king was

born, but by Lavinia the daughter of Latinus, and he is said to

have been his posthumous child. Oneus was the twenty-ninth king of

Assyria, Melanthus the sixteenth of the Athenians, and Eli the priest

was judge of the Hebrews; and the kingdom of Sicyon then came to an

end, after lasting, it is said, for nine hundred and fifty-nine years.

20. \_Of the succession of the line of kings among the Israelites

after the times of the judges.\_

While these kings reigned in the places mentioned, the period of the

judges being ended, the kingdom of Israel next began with king Saul,

when Samuel the prophet lived. At that date those Latin kings began

who were surnamed Silvii, having that surname, in addition to their

proper name, from their predecessor, that son of Æneas who was called

Silvius; just as, long afterward, the successors of Cæsar Augustus

were surnamed Cæsars. Saul being rejected, so that none of his issue

should reign, on his death David succeeded him in the kingdom, after

he had reigned forty years. Then the Athenians ceased to have kings

after the death of Codrus, and began to have a magistracy to rule

the republic. After David, who also reigned forty years, his son

Solomon was king of Israel, who built that most noble temple of God

at Jerusalem. In his time Alba was built among the Latins, from which

thereafter the kings began to be styled kings not of the Latins, but

of the Albans, although in the same Latium. Solomon was succeeded

by his son Rehoboam, under whom that people was divided into two

kingdoms, and its separate parts began to have separate kings.

21. \_Of the kings of Latium, the first and twelfth of whom,

Æneas and Aventinus, were made gods.\_

After Æneas, whom they deified, Latium had eleven kings, none of

whom was deified. But Aventinus, who was the twelfth after Æneas,

having been laid low in war, and buried in that hill still called

by his name, was added to the number of such gods as they made for

themselves. Some, indeed, were unwilling to write that he was slain

in battle, but said he was nowhere to be found, and that it was not

from his name, but from the alighting of birds, that hill was called

Aventinus.[507] After this no god was made in Latium except Romulus

the founder of Rome. But two kings are found between these two, the

first of whom I shall describe in the Virgilian verse:

"Next came that Procas, glory of the Trojan race."[508]

That greatest of all kingdoms, the Assyrian, had its long duration

brought to a close in his time, the time of Rome's birth drawing

nigh. For the Assyrian empire was transferred to the Medes after

nearly thirteen hundred and five years, if we include the reign of

Belus, who begot Ninus, and, content with a small kingdom, was the

first king there. Now Procas reigned before Amulius. And Amulius

had made his brother Numitor's daughter, Rhea by name, who was also

called Ilia, a vestal virgin, who conceived twin sons by Mars, as

they will have it, in that way honouring or excusing her adultery,

adding as a proof that a she-wolf nursed the infants when exposed.

For they think this kind of beast belongs to Mars, so that the

she-wolf is believed to have given her teats to the infants, because

she knew they were the sons of Mars her lord; although there are not

wanting persons who say that when the crying babes lay exposed, they

were first of all picked up by I know not what harlot, and sucked

her breasts first (now harlots were called \_lupæ\_, she-wolves, from

which their vile abodes are even yet called \_lupanaria\_), and that

afterwards they came into the hands of the shepherd Faustulus, and

were nursed by Acca his wife. Yet what wonder is it, if, to rebuke

the king who had cruelly ordered them to be thrown into the water,

God was pleased, after divinely delivering them from the water, to

succour, by means of a wild beast giving milk, these infants by whom

so great a city was to be founded? Amulius was succeeded in the

Latian kingdom by his brother Numitor, the grandfather of Romulus;

and Rome was founded in the first year of this Numitor, who from that

time reigned along with his grandson Romulus.

22. \_That Rome was founded when the Assyrian kingdom perished,

at which time Hezekiah reigned in Judah.\_

To be brief, the city of Rome was founded, like another Babylon, and as

it were the daughter of the former Babylon, by which God was pleased

to conquer the whole world, and subdue it far and wide by bringing it

into one fellowship of government and laws. For there were already

powerful and brave peoples and nations trained to arms, who did not

easily yield, and whose subjugation necessarily involved great danger

and destruction as well as great and horrible labour. For when the

Assyrian kingdom subdued almost all Asia, although this was done by

fighting, yet the wars could not be very fierce or difficult, because

the nations were as yet untrained to resist, and neither so many nor

so great as afterward; forasmuch as, after that greatest and indeed

universal flood, when only eight men escaped in Noah's ark, not much

more than a thousand years had passed when Ninus subdued all Asia

with the exception of India. But Rome did not with the same quickness

and facility wholly subdue all those nations of the east and west

which we see brought under the Roman empire, because, in its gradual

increase, in whatever direction it was extended, it found them strong

and warlike. At the time when Rome was founded, then, the people of

Israel had been in the land of promise seven hundred and eighteen

years. Of these years twenty-seven belong to Joshua the son of Nun, and

after that three hundred and twenty-nine to the period of the judges.

But from the time when the kings began to reign there, three hundred

and sixty-two years had passed. And at that time there was a king in

Judah called Ahaz, or, as others compute, Hezekiah his successor, the

best and most pious king, who it is admitted reigned in the times of

Romulus. And in that part of the Hebrew nation called Israel, Hoshea

had begun to reign.

23. \_Of the Erythræan sibyl, who is known to have sung many things

about Christ more plainly than the other sibyls.\_

Some say the Erythræan sibyl prophesied at this time. Now Varro

declares there were many sibyls, and not merely one. This sibyl of

Erythræ certainly wrote some things concerning Christ which are

quite manifest, and we first read them in the Latin tongue in verses

of bad Latin, and unrhythmical, through the unskilfulness, as we

afterward learned, of some interpreter unknown to me. For Flaccianus,

a very famous man, who was also a proconsul, a man of most ready

eloquence and much learning, when we were speaking about Christ,

produced a Greek manuscript, saying that it was the prophecies of

the Erythræan sibyl, in which he pointed out a certain passage which

had the initial letters of the lines so arranged that these words

could be read in them: Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ, which mean,

"Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour." And these verses, of

which the initial letters yield that meaning, contain what follows as

translated by some one into Latin in good rhythm:

Ι Judgment shall moisten the earth with the sweat of its

standard,

Η Ever enduring, behold the King shall come through the ages,

Σ Sent to be here in the flesh, and Judge at the last of the

world.

Ο O God, the believing and faithless alike shall behold Thee

Υ Uplifted with saints, when at last the ages are ended.

Σ Sisted before Him are souls in the flesh for His judgment.

Χ Hid in thick vapours, the while desolate lieth the earth.

Ρ Rejected by men are the idols and long hidden treasures;

Ε Earth is consumed by the fire, and it searcheth the ocean

and heaven;

Ι Issuing forth, it destroyeth the terrible portals of hell.

Σ Saints in their body and soul freedom and light shall

inherit;

Τ Those who are guilty shall burn in fire and brimstone for

ever.

Ο Occult actions revealing, each one shall publish his

secrets;

Σ Secrets of every man's heart God shall reveal in the light.

Θ Then shall be weeping and wailing, yea; and gnashing of

teeth;

Ε Eclipsed is the sun, and silenced the stars in their chorus.

Ο Over and gone is the splendour of moonlight, melted the

heaven.

Υ Uplifted by Him are the valleys, and cast down the

mountains.

Υ Utterly gone among men are distinctions of lofty and lowly.

Ι Into the plains rush the hills, the skies and oceans are

mingled.

Ο Oh, what an end of all things! earth broken in pieces shall

perish;

Σ Swelling together at once shall the waters and flames flow

in rivers.

Σ Sounding the archangel's trumpet shall peal down from

heaven,

Ω Over the wicked who groan in their guilt and their manifold

sorrows.

Τ Trembling, the earth shall be opened, revealing chaos and

hell.

Η Every king before God shall stand in that day to be judged.

Ρ Rivers of fire and of brimstone shall fall from the heavens.

In these Latin verses the meaning of the Greek is correctly given,

although not in the exact order of the lines as connected with the

initial letters; for in three of them, the fifth, eighteenth, and

nineteenth, where the Greek letter Υ occurs, Latin words could not

be found beginning with the corresponding letter, and yielding a

suitable meaning. So that, if we note down together the initial

letters of all the lines in our Latin translation except those

three in which we retain the letter Υ in the proper place, they

will express in five Greek words this meaning, "Jesus Christ the

Son of God, the Saviour." And the verses are twenty-seven, which is

the cube of three. For three times three are nine; and nine itself,

if tripled, so as to rise from the superficial square to the cube,

comes to twenty-seven. But if you join the initial letters of these

five Greek words, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ, which mean, "Jesus

Christ the Son of God, the Saviour," they will make the word ἰχθὺς,

that is, "fish," in which word Christ is mystically understood,

because He was able to live, that is, to exist, without sin in the

abyss of this mortality as in the depth of waters.

But this sibyl, whether she is the Erythræan, or, as some rather

believe, the Cumæan, in her whole poem, of which this is a very small

portion, not only has nothing that can relate to the worship of the

false or feigned gods, but rather speaks against them and their

worshippers in such a way that we might even think she ought to be

reckoned among those who belong to the city of God. Lactantius also

inserted in his work the prophecies about Christ of a certain sibyl,

he does not say which. But I have thought fit to combine in a single

extract, which may seem long, what he has set down in many short

quotations. She says, "Afterward He shall come into the injurious

hands of the unbelieving, and they will give God buffets with profane

hands, and with impure mouth will spit out envenomed spittle; but He

will with simplicity yield His holy back to stripes. And He will

hold His peace when struck with the fist, that no one may find out

what word, or whence, He comes to speak to hell; and He shall be

crowned with a crown of thorns. And they gave Him gall for meat, and

vinegar for His thirst: they will spread this table of inhospitality.

For thou thyself, being foolish, hast not understood thy God,

deluding the minds of mortals, but hast both crowned Him with thorns

and mingled for Him bitter gall. But the veil of the temple shall be

rent; and at midday it shall be darker than night for three hours.

And He shall die the death, taking sleep for three days; and then

returning from hell, He first shall come to the light, the beginning

of the resurrection being shown to the recalled." Lactantius made

use of these sibylline testimonies, introducing them bit by bit in

the course of his discussion as the things he intended to prove

seemed to require, and we have set them down in one connected series,

uninterrupted by comment, only taking care to mark them by capitals,

if only the transcribers do not neglect to preserve them hereafter.

Some writers, indeed, say that the Erythræan sibyl was not in the

time of Romulus, but of the Trojan war.

24. \_That the seven sages flourished in the reign of Romulus, when

the ten tribes which were called Israel were led into captivity

by the Chaldeans, and Romulus, when dead, had divine honours

conferred on him.\_

While Romulus reigned, Thales the Milesian is said to have lived, being

one of the seven sages, who succeeded the theological poets, of whom

Orpheus was the most renowned, and were called Σοφοί, that is, sages.

During that time the ten tribes, which on the division of the people

were called Israel, were conquered by the Chaldeans and led captive

into their lands, while the two tribes which were called Judah, and

had the seat of their kingdom in Jerusalem, remained in the land of

Judea. As Romulus, when dead, could nowhere be found, the Romans, as

is everywhere notorious, placed him among the gods,--a thing which

by that time had already ceased to be done, and which was not done

afterwards till the time of the Cæsars, and then not through error,

but in flattery; so that Cicero ascribes great praises to Romulus,

because he merited such honours not in rude and unlearned times, when

men were easily deceived, but in times already polished and learned,

although the subtle and acute loquacity of the philosophers had not

yet culminated. But although the later times did not deify dead men,

still they did not cease to hold and worship as gods those deified of

old; nay, by images, which the ancients never had, they even increased

the allurements of vain and impious superstition, the unclean demons

effecting this in their heart, and also deceiving them by lying

oracles, so that even the fabulous crimes of the gods, which were not

once imagined by a more polite age, were yet basely acted in the plays

in honour of these same false deities. Numa reigned after Romulus; and

although he had thought that Rome would be better defended the more

gods there were, yet on his death he himself was not counted worthy

of a place among them, as if it were supposed that he had so crowded

heaven that a place could not be found for him there. They report that

the Samian sibyl lived while he reigned at Rome, and when Manasseh

began to reign over the Hebrews,--an impious king, by whom the prophet

Isaiah is said to have been slain.

25. \_What philosophers were famous when Tarquinius Priscus reigned

over the Romans, and Zedekiah over the Hebrews, when Jerusalem

was taken and the temple overthrown.\_

When Zedekiah reigned over the Hebrews, and Tarquinius Priscus,

the successor of Ancus Martius, over the Romans, the Jewish people

was led captive into Babylon, Jerusalem and the temple built by

Solomon being overthrown. For the prophets, in chiding them for

their iniquity and impiety, predicted that these things should come

to pass, especially Jeremiah, who even stated the number of years.

Pittacus of Mitylene, another of the sages, is reported to have lived

at that time. And Eusebius writes that, while the people of God were

held captive in Babylon, the five other sages lived, who must be

added to Thales, whom we mentioned above, and Pittacus, in order to

make up the seven. These are Solon of Athens, Chilo of Lacedæmon,

Periander of Corinth, Cleobulus of Lindus, and Bias of Priene. These

flourished after the theological poets, and were called sages,

because they excelled other men in a certain laudable line of life,

and summed up some moral precepts in epigrammatic sayings. But they

left posterity no literary monuments, except that Solon is alleged

to have given certain laws to the Athenians, and Thales was a natural

philosopher, and left books of his doctrine in short proverbs. In

that time of the Jewish captivity, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and

Xenophanes, the natural philosophers, flourished. Pythagoras also

lived then, and at this time the name philosopher was first used.

26. \_That at the time when the captivity of the Jews was brought

to an end, on the completion of seventy years, the Romans also

were freed from kingly rule.\_

At this time, Cyrus king of Persia, who also ruled the Chaldeans and

Assyrians, having somewhat relaxed the captivity of the Jews, made

fifty thousand of them return in order to rebuild the temple. They only

began the first foundations and built the altar; but, owing to hostile

invasions, they were unable to go on, and the work was put off to the

time of Darius. During the same time also those things were done which

are written in the book of Judith, which, indeed, the Jews are said not

to have received into the canon of the Scriptures. Under Darius king

of Persia, then, on the completion of the seventy years predicted by

Jeremiah the prophet, the captivity of the Jews was brought to an end,

and they were restored to liberty. Tarquin then reigned as the seventh

king of the Romans. On his expulsion, they also began to be free from

the rule of their kings. Down to this time the people of Israel had

prophets; but, although they were numerous, the canonical writings of

only a few of them have been preserved among the Jews and among us. In

closing the previous book, I promised to set down something in this one

about them, and I shall now do so.

27. \_Of the times of the prophets whose oracles are contained in

books, and who sang many things about the call of the Gentiles

at the time when the Roman kingdom began and the Assyrian came

to an end.\_

In order that we may be able to consider these times, let us go back a

little to earlier times. At the beginning of the book of the prophet

Hosea, who is placed first of twelve, it is written, "The word of the

Lord which came to Hosea in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and

Hezekiah, kings of Judah."[509] Amos also writes that he prophesied

in the days of Uzziah, and adds the name of Jeroboam king of Israel,

who lived at the same time.[510] Isaiah the son of Amos--either the

above-named prophet, or, as is rather affirmed, another who was not a

prophet, but was called by the same name--also puts at the head of his

book these four kings named by Hosea, saying by way of preface that

he prophesied in their days.[511] Micah also names the same times as

those of his prophecy, after the days of Uzziah;[512] for he names the

same three kings as Hosea named,--Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. We find

from their own writings that these men prophesied contemporaneously.

To these are added Jonah in the reign of Uzziah, and Joel in that of

Jotham, who succeeded Uzziah. But we can find the date of these two

prophets in the chronicles,[513] not in their own writings, for they

say nothing about it themselves. Now these days extend from Procas king

of the Latins, or his predecessor Aventinus, down to Romulus king of

the Romans, or even to the beginning of the reign of his successor,

Numa Pompilius. Hezekiah king of Judah certainly reigned till then.

So that thus these fountains of prophecy, as I may call them, burst

forth at once during those times when the Assyrian kingdom failed and

the Roman began; so that, just as in the first period of the Assyrian

kingdom Abraham arose, to whom the most distinct promises were made

that all nations should be blessed in his seed, so at the beginning

of the western Babylon, in the time of whose government Christ was to

come in whom these promises were to be fulfilled, the oracles of the

prophets were given not only in spoken but in written words, for a

testimony that so great a thing should come to pass. For although the

people of Israel hardly ever lacked prophets from the time when they

began to have kings, these were only for their own use, not for that of

the nations. But when the more manifestly prophetic Scripture began to

be formed, which was to benefit the nations too, it was fitting that it

should begin when this city was founded which was to rule the nations.

28. \_Of the things pertaining to the gospel of Christ which Hosea

and Amos prophesied.\_

The prophet Hosea speaks so very profoundly that it is laborious

work to penetrate his meaning. But, according to promise, we must

insert something from his book. He says, "And it shall come to pass

that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people,

there they shall be called the sons of the living God."[514] Even the

apostles understood this as a prophetic testimony of the calling of

the nations who did not formerly belong to God; and because this same

people of the Gentiles is itself spiritually among the children of

Abraham, and for that reason is rightly called Israel, therefore he

goes on to say, "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel

shall be gathered together in one, and shall appoint themselves

one headship, and shall ascend from the earth."[515] We should but

weaken the savour of this prophetic oracle if we set ourselves

to expound it. Let the reader but call to mind that corner-stone

and those two walls of partition, the one of the Jews, the other

of the Gentiles,[516] and he will recognise them, the one under

the term sons of Judah, the other as sons of Israel, supporting

themselves by one and the same headship, and ascending from the

earth. But that those carnal Israelites who are now unwilling to

believe in Christ shall afterward believe, that is, their children

shall (for they themselves, of course, shall go to their own place

by dying), this same prophet testifies, saying, "For the children

of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince,

without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, without

manifestations."[517] Who does not see that the Jews are now thus?

But let us hear what he adds: "And afterward shall the children of

Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king,

and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter

days."[518] Nothing is clearer than this prophecy, in which by David,

as distinguished by the title of king, Christ is to be understood,

"who is made," as the apostle says, "of the seed of David according

to the flesh."[519] This prophet has also foretold the resurrection

of Christ on the third day, as it behoved to be foretold, with

prophetic loftiness, when he says, "He will heal us after two days,

and in the third day we shall rise again."[520] In agreement with

this the apostle says to us, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those

things which are above."[521] Amos also prophesies thus concerning

such things: "Prepare thee, that thou mayst invoke thy God, O Israel;

for lo, I am binding the thunder, and creating the spirit, and

announcing to men their Christ."[522] And in another place he says,

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen,

and build up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins,

and will build them up again as in the days of old: that the residue

of men may inquire for me, and all the nations upon whom my name is

invoked, saith the Lord that doeth this."[523]

29. \_What things are predicted by Isaiah concerning Christ and

the Church.\_

The prophecy of Isaiah is not in the book of the twelve prophets, who

are called the minor from the brevity of their writings, as compared

with those who are called the greater prophets because they published

larger volumes. Isaiah belongs to the latter, yet I connect him

with the two above named, because he prophesied at the same time.

Isaiah, then, together with his rebukes of wickedness, precepts of

righteousness, and predictions of evil, also prophesied much more

than the rest about Christ and the Church, that is, about the King

and that city which he founded; so that some say he should be called

an evangelist rather than a prophet. But, in order to finish this

work, I quote only one out of many in this place. Speaking in the

person of the Father, he says, "Behold, my servant shall understand,

and shall be exalted and glorified very much. As many shall be

astonished at Thee."[524] This is about Christ.

But let us now hear what follows about the Church. He says, "Rejoice,

O barren, thou that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that

didst not travail with child: for many more are the children of

the desolate than of her that has an husband."[525] But these must

suffice; and some things in them ought to be expounded; yet I think

those parts sufficient which are so plain that even enemies must be

compelled against their will to understand them.

30. \_What Micah, Jonah, and Joel prophesied in accordance with the

New Testament.\_

The prophet Micah, representing Christ under the figure of a great

mountain, speaks thus: "It shall come to pass in the last days, that

the manifested mountain of the Lord shall be prepared on the tops of

the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people

shall hasten unto it. Many nations shall go, and shall say, Come, let

us go up into the mountain of the Lord, and into the house of the God

of Jacob; and He will show us His way, and we will go in His paths:

for out of Zion shall proceed the law, and the word of the Lord

out of Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke

strong nations afar off."[526] This prophet predicts the very place

in which Christ was born, saying, "And thou, Bethlehem, of the house

of Ephratah, art the least that can be reckoned among the thousands

of Judah; out of thee shall come forth unto me a leader, to be the

prince in Israel; and His going forth is from the beginning, even

from the days of eternity. Therefore will He give them [up] even

until the time when she that travaileth shall bring forth; and the

remnant of His brethren shall be converted to the sons of Israel. And

He shall stand, and see, and feed His flock in the strength of the

Lord, and in the dignity of the name of the Lord His God: for now

shall He be magnified even to the utmost of the earth."[527]

The prophet Jonah, not so much by speech as by his own painful

experience, prophesied Christ's death and resurrection much more

clearly than if he had proclaimed them with his voice. For why was he

taken into the whale's belly and restored on the third day, but that

he might be a sign that Christ should return from the depths of hell

on the third day?

I should be obliged to use many words in explaining all that Joel

prophesies in order to make clear those that pertain to Christ and

the Church. But there is one passage I must not pass by, which the

apostles also quoted when the Holy Spirit came down from above on

the assembled believers according to Christ's promise. He says, "And

it shall come to pass after these things, that I will pour out

my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall

prophesy, and your old men shall dream, and your young men shall see

visions: and even on my servants and mine handmaids in those days

will I pour out my Spirit."[528]

31. \_Of the predictions concerning the salvation of the world

in Christ, in Obadiah, Nahum, and Habakkuk.\_

The date of three of the minor prophets, Obadiah, Nahum, and

Habakkuk, is neither mentioned by themselves nor given in the

chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome. For although they put Obadiah

with Micah, yet when Micah prophesied does not appear from that part

of their writings in which the dates are noted. And this, I think,

has happened through their error in negligently copying the works

of others. But we could not find the two others now mentioned in

the copies of the chronicles which we have; yet because they are

contained in the canon, we ought not to pass them by.

Obadiah, so far as his writings are concerned, the briefest of all

the prophets, speaks against Idumea, that is, the nation of Esau,

that reprobate elder of the twin sons of Isaac and grandsons of

Abraham. Now if, by that form of speech in which a part is put for

the whole, we take Idumea as put for the nations, we may understand

of Christ what he says among other things, "But upon Mount Sion

shall be safety, and there shall be a Holy One."[529] And a little

after, at the end of the same prophecy, he says, "And those who

are saved again shall come up out of Mount Sion, that they may

defend Mount Esau, and it shall be a kingdom to the Lord."[530] It

is quite evident this was fulfilled when those saved again out of

Mount Sion--that is, the believers in Christ from Judea, of whom

the apostles are chiefly to be acknowledged--went up to defend

Mount Esau. How could they defend it except by making safe, through

the preaching of the gospel, those who believed that they might be

"delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom

of God?"[531] This he expressed as an inference, adding, "And it

shall be to the Lord a kingdom." For Mount Sion signifies Judea,

where it is predicted there shall be safety, and a Holy One, that

is, Christ Jesus. But Mount Esau is Idumea, which signifies the

Church of the Gentiles, which, as I have expounded, those saved again

out of Sion have defended that it should be a kingdom to the Lord.

This was obscure before it took place; but what believer does not

find it out now that it is done?

As for the prophet Nahum, through him God says, "I will exterminate

the graven and the molten things: I will make thy burial. For lo,

the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings and announceth peace are

swift upon the mountains! O Judah, celebrate thy festival days,

and perform thy vows; for now they shall not go on any more so as

to become antiquated. It is completed, it is consumed, it is taken

away. He ascendeth who breathes in thy face, delivering thee out of

tribulation."[532] Let him that remembers the gospel call to mind who

hath ascended from hell and breathed the Holy Spirit in the face of

Judah, that is, of the Jewish disciples; for they belong to the New

Testament, whose festival days are so spiritually renewed that they

cannot become antiquated. Moreover, we already see the graven and

molten things, that is, the idols of the false gods, exterminated

through the gospel, and given up to oblivion as of the grave, and we

know that this prophecy is fulfilled in this very thing.

Of what else than the advent of Christ, who was to come, is Habakkuk

understood to say, "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the

vision openly on a tablet of boxwood, that he that readeth these things

may understand. For the vision is yet for a time appointed, and it will

arise in the end, and will not become void: if it tarry, wait for it;

because it will surely come, and will not be delayed?"[533]

32. \_Of the prophecy that is contained in the prayer and song

of Habakkuk.\_

In his prayer, with a song, to whom but the Lord Christ does he say,

"O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and was afraid: O Lord, I have

considered Thy works, and was greatly afraid?"[534] What is this

but the inexpressible admiration of the foreknown, new, and sudden

salvation of men? "In the midst of two living creatures thou shalt be

recognised." What is this but either between the two testaments, or

between the two thieves, or between Moses and Elias talking with Him

on the mount? "While the years draw nigh, Thou wilt be recognised;

at the coming of the time Thou wilt be shown," does not even need

exposition. "While my soul shall be troubled at Him, in wrath Thou

wilt be mindful of mercy." What is this but that He puts Himself

for the Jews, of whose nation He was, who were troubled with great

anger and crucified Christ, when He, mindful of mercy, said, "Father,

forgive them, for they know not what they do?"[535] "God shall come

from Teman, and the Holy One from the shady and close mountain."[536]

What is said here, "He shall come from Teman," some interpret "from

the south," or "from the south-west," by which is signified the

noonday, that is, the fervour of charity and the splendour of truth.

"The shady and close mountain" might be understood in many ways, yet

I prefer to take it as meaning the depth of the divine Scriptures,

in which Christ is prophesied: for in the Scriptures there are many

things shady and close which exercise the mind of the reader; and

Christ comes thence when he who has understanding finds Him there.

"His power covereth up the heavens, and the earth is full of His

praise." What is this but what is also said in the psalm, "Be Thou

exalted, O God, above the heavens; and Thy glory above all the

earth?"[537] "His splendour shall be as the light." What is it but

that the fame of Him shall illuminate believers? "Horns are in His

hands." What is this but the trophy of the cross? "And He hath placed

the firm charity of His strength"[538] needs no exposition. "Before

His face shall go the word, and it shall go forth into the field

after His feet." What is this but that He should both be announced

before His coming hither and after His return hence? "He stood, and

the earth was moved." What is this but that "He stood" for succour,

"and the earth was moved" to believe? "He regarded, and the nations

melted;" that is, He had compassion, and made the people penitent.

"The mountains are broken with violence;" that is, through the power

of those who work miracles the pride of the haughty is broken. "The

everlasting hills flowed down;" that is, they are humbled in time

that they may be lifted up for eternity. "I saw His goings [made]

eternal for His labours;" that is, I beheld His labour of love not

left without the reward of eternity. "The tents of Ethiopia shall

be greatly afraid, and the tents of the land of Midian;" that is,

even those nations which are not under the Roman authority, being

suddenly terrified by the news of Thy wonderful works, shall become

a Christian people. "Wert Thou angry at the rivers, O Lord? or was

Thy fury against the rivers? or was Thy rage against the sea?" This

is said because He does not now come to condemn the world, but that

the world through Him might be saved.[539] "For Thou shalt mount

upon Thy horses, and Thy riding shall be salvation;" that is, Thine

evangelists shall carry Thee, for they are guided by Thee, and Thy

gospel is salvation to them that believe in Thee. "Bending, Thou

wilt bend Thy bow against the sceptres, saith the Lord;" that is,

Thou wilt threaten even the kings of the earth with Thy judgment.

"The earth shall be cleft with rivers;" that is, by the sermons of

those who preach Thee flowing in upon them, men's hearts shall be

opened to make confession, to whom it is said, "Rend your hearts

and not your garments."[540] What does "The people shall see Thee

and grieve" mean, but that in mourning they shall be blessed?[541]

What is "Scattering the waters in marching," but that by walking in

those who everywhere proclaim Thee, Thou wilt scatter hither and

thither the streams of Thy doctrine? What is "The abyss uttered its

voice?" Is it not that the depth of the human heart expressed what it

perceived? The words, "The depth of its phantasy," are an explanation

of the previous verse, for the depth is the abyss; and "Uttered its

voice" is to be understood before them, that is, as we have said,

it expressed what it perceived. Now the phantasy is the vision,

which it did not hold or conceal, but poured forth in confession.

"The sun was raised up, and the moon stood still in her course;"

that is, Christ ascended into heaven, and the Church was established

under her King. "Thy darts shall go in the light;" that is, Thy

words shall not be sent in secret, but openly. For He had said to

His own disciples, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in

the light."[542] "By threatening thou shalt diminish the earth;"

that is, by that threatening Thou shalt humble men. "And in fury

Thou shalt cast down the nations;" for in punishing those who exalt

themselves Thou dashest them one against another. "Thou wentest forth

for the salvation of Thy people, that Thou mightest save Thy Christ;

Thou hast sent death on the heads of the wicked." None of these

words require exposition. "Thou hast lifted up the bonds, even to

the neck." This may be understood even of the good bonds of wisdom,

that the feet may be put into its fetters, and the neck into its

collar. "Thou hast struck off in amazement of mind the bonds" must be

understood for, He lifts up the good and strikes off the bad, about

which it is said to Him, "Thou hast broken asunder my bonds,"[543]

and that "in amazement of mind," that is, wonderfully. "The heads of

the mighty shall be moved in it;" to wit, in that wonder. "They shall

open their teeth like a poor man eating secretly." For some of the

mighty among the Jews shall come to the Lord, admiring His works and

words, and shall greedily eat the bread of His doctrine in secret

for fear of the Jews, just as the Gospel has shown they did. "And

Thou hast sent into the sea Thy horses, troubling many waters," which

are nothing else than many people; for unless all were troubled,

some would not be converted with fear, others pursued with fury. "I

gave heed, and my belly trembled at the voice of the prayer of my

lips; and trembling entered into my bones, and my habit of body was

troubled under me." He gave heed to those things which he said, and

was himself terrified at his own prayer, which he had poured forth

prophetically, and in which he discerned things to come. For when

many people are troubled, he saw the threatening tribulation of the

Church, and at once acknowledged himself a member of it, and said, "I

shall rest in the day of tribulation," as being one of those who are

rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation.[544] "That I may ascend,"

he says, "among the people of my pilgrimage," departing quite from

the wicked people of his carnal kinship, who are not pilgrims in

this earth, and do not seek the country above.[545] "Although the

fig-tree," he says, "shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the

vines; the labour of the olive shall lie, and the fields shall yield

no meat; the sheep shall be cut off from the meat, and there shall

be no oxen in the stalls." He sees that nation which was to slay

Christ about to lose the abundance of spiritual supplies, which, in

prophetic fashion, he has set forth by the figure of earthly plenty.

And because that nation was to suffer such wrath of God, because,

being ignorant of the righteousness of God, it wished to establish

its own,[546] he immediately says, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord;

I will joy in God my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He

will set my feet in completion; He will place me above the heights,

that I may conquer in His song," to wit, in that song of which

something similar is said in the psalm, "He set my feet upon a rock,

and directed my goings, and put in my mouth a new song, a hymn to our

God."[547] He therefore conquers in the song of the Lord, who takes

pleasure in His praise, not in his own; that "He that glorieth, let

him glory in the Lord."[548] But some copies have, "I will joy in God

my Jesus," which seems to me better than the version of those who,

wishing to put it in Latin, have not set down that very name which

for us it is dearer and sweeter to name.

33. \_What Jeremiah and Zephaniah have, by the prophetic Spirit,

spoken before concerning Christ and the calling of the nations.\_

Jeremiah, like Isaiah, is one of the greater prophets, not of

the minor, like the others from whose writings I have just given

extracts. He prophesied when Josiah reigned in Jerusalem, and Ancus

Martius at Rome, when the captivity of the Jews was already at

hand; and he continued to prophesy down to the fifth month of the

captivity, as we find from his writings. Zephaniah, one of the minor

prophets, is put along with him, because he himself says that he

prophesied in the days of Josiah; but he does not say till when.

Jeremiah thus prophesied not only in the times of Ancus Martius, but

also in those of Tarquinius Priscus, whom the Romans had for their

fifth king. For he had already begun to reign when that captivity

took place. Jeremiah, in prophesying of Christ, says, "The breath

of our mouth, the Lord Christ, was taken in our sins,"[549] thus

briefly showing both that Christ is our Lord and that He suffered for

us. Also in another place he says, "This is my God, and there shall

none other be accounted of in comparison of Him; who hath found out

all the way of prudence, and hath given it to Jacob His servant,

and to Israel His beloved: afterward He was seen on the earth, and

conversed with men."[550] Some attribute this testimony not to

Jeremiah, but to his secretary, who was called Baruch; but it is more

commonly ascribed to Jeremiah. Again the same prophet says concerning

Him, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up

unto David a righteous shoot, and a King shall reign and shall be

wise, and shall do judgment and justice in the earth. In those days

Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently: and this

is the name which they shall call Him, Our righteous Lord."[551] And

of the calling of the nations which was to come to pass, and which

we now see fulfilled, he thus spoke: "O Lord my God, and my refuge

in the day of evils, to Thee shall the nations come from the utmost

end of the earth, saying, Truly our fathers have worshipped lying

images, wherein there is no profit."[552] But that the Jews, by whom

He behoved even to be slain, were not going to acknowledge Him, this

prophet thus intimates: "Heavy is the heart through all; and He is

a man, and who shall know Him?"[553] That passage also is his which

I have quoted in the seventeenth book concerning the new testament,

of which Christ is the Mediator. For Jeremiah himself says, "Behold,

the days come, saith the Lord, that I will complete over the house of

Jacob a new testament," and the rest, which may be read there.[554]

For the present I shall put down those predictions about Christ by

the prophet Zephaniah, who prophesied with Jeremiah. "Wait ye upon

me, saith the Lord, in the day of my resurrection, in the future;

because it is my determination to assemble the nations, and gather

together the kingdoms."[555] And again he says, "The Lord will be

terrible upon them, and will exterminate all the gods of the earth;

and they shall worship Him every man from his place, even all the

isles of the nations."[556] And a little after he says, "Then will

I turn to the people a tongue, and to His offspring, that they may

call upon the name of the Lord, and serve Him under one yoke. From

the borders of the rivers of Ethiopia shall they bring sacrifices

unto me. In that day thou shalt not be confounded for all thy curious

inventions, which thou hast done impiously against me: for then I

will take away from thee the naughtiness of thy trespass; and thou

shalt no more magnify thyself above thy holy mountain. And I will

leave in thee a meek and humble people, and they who shall be left of

Israel shall fear the name of the Lord."[557] These are the remnant

of whom the apostle quotes that which is elsewhere prophesied:

"Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the

sea, a remnant shall be saved."[558] These are the remnant of that

nation who have believed in Christ.

34. \_Of the prophecy of Daniel and Ezekiel, other two of the

greater prophets.\_

Daniel and Ezekiel, other two of the greater prophets, also first

prophesied in the very captivity of Babylon. Daniel even defined the

time when Christ was to come and suffer by the exact date. It would

take too long to show this by computation, and it has been done often

by others before us. But of His power and glory he has thus spoken:

"I saw in a night vision, and, behold, one like the Son of man was

coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the Ancient

of days, and He was brought into His presence. And to Him there was

given dominion, and honour, and a kingdom: and all people, tribes,

and tongues shall serve Him. His power is an everlasting power, which

shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed."[559]

Ezekiel also, speaking prophetically in the person of God the Father,

thus foretells Christ, speaking of Him in the prophetic manner as

David because He assumed flesh of the seed of David, and on account

of that form of a servant in which He was made man, He who is the Son

of God is also called the servant of God. He says, "And I will set

up over my sheep one Shepherd, who will feed them, even my servant

David; and He shall feed them, and He shall be their shepherd. And

I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince in the

midst of them. I the Lord have spoken."[560] And in another place

he says, "And one King shall be over them all: and they shall no

more be two nations, neither shall they be divided any more into two

kingdoms: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their

idols, and their abominations, and all their iniquities. And I will

save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned,

and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be

their God. And my servant David shall be king over them, and there

shall be one Shepherd for them all."[561]

35. \_Of the prophecy of the three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah,

and Malachi.\_

There remain three minor prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,

who prophesied at the close of the captivity. Of these Haggai more

openly prophesies of Christ and the Church thus briefly: "Thus

saith the Lord of hosts, Yet one little while, and I will shake the

heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will

move all nations, and the desired of all nations shall come."[562]

The fulfilment of this prophecy is in part already seen, and in part

hoped for in the end. For He moved the heaven by the testimony of

the angels and the stars, when Christ became incarnate. He moved the

earth by the great miracle of His birth of the virgin. He moved the

sea and the dry land, when Christ was proclaimed both in the isles

and in the whole world. So we see all nations moved to the faith; and

the fulfilment of what follows, "And the desired of all nations shall

come," is looked for at His last coming. For ere men can desire and

wait for Him, they must believe and love Him.

Zechariah says of Christ and the Church, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter

of Sion; shout joyfully, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King

shall come unto thee, just and the Saviour; Himself poor, and

mounting an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass: and His dominion

shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the

earth."[563] How this was done, when the Lord Christ on His journey

used a beast of burden of this kind, we read in the Gospel, where,

also, as much of this prophecy is quoted as appears sufficient for

the context. In another place, speaking in the Spirit of prophecy

to Christ Himself of the remission of sins through His blood, he

says, "Thou also, by the blood of Thy testament, hast sent forth Thy

prisoners from the lake wherein is no water."[564] Different opinions

may be held, consistently with right belief, as to what he meant by

this lake. Yet it seems to me that no meaning suits better than that

of the depth of human misery, which is, as it were, dry and barren,

where there are no streams of righteousness, but only the mire of

iniquity. For it is said of it in the Psalms, "And He led me forth

out of the lake of misery, and from the miry clay."[565]

Malachi, foretelling the Church which we now behold propagated through

Christ, says most openly to the Jews, in the person of God, "I have no

pleasure in you, and I will not accept a gift at your hand. For from

the rising even to the going down of the sun, my name is great among

the nations; and in every place sacrifice shall be made, and a pure

oblation shall be offered unto my name: for my name shall be great

among the nations, saith the Lord."[566] Since we can already see

this sacrifice offered to God in every place, from the rising of the

sun to his going down, through Christ's priesthood after the order of

Melchisedec, while the Jews, to whom it was said, "I have no pleasure

in you, neither will I accept a gift at your hand," cannot deny that

their sacrifice has ceased, why do they still look for another Christ,

when they read this in the prophecy, and see it fulfilled, which could

not be fulfilled except through Him? And a little after he says of Him,

in the person of God, "My covenant was with Him of life and peace; and

I gave to Him that He might fear me with fear, and be afraid before

my name. The law of truth was in His mouth: directing in peace He

hath walked with me, and hath turned many away from iniquity. For the

Priest's lips shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at His

mouth: for He is the Angel of the Lord Almighty."[567] Nor is it to

be wondered at that Christ Jesus is called the Angel of the Almighty

God. For just as He is called a servant on account of the form of a

servant in which He came to men, so He is called an angel on account

of the \_evangel\_ which He proclaimed to men. For if we interpret these

Greek words, \_evangel\_ is "good news," and \_angel\_ is "messenger."

Again he says of Him, "Behold I will send mine angel, and He will look

out the way before my face: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly

come into His temple, even the Angel of the testament, whom ye desire.

Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty, and who shall abide the day

of His entry, or who shall stand at His appearing?"[568] In this place

he has foretold both the first and second advent of Christ: the first,

to wit, of which he says, "And He shall come suddenly into His temple;"

that is, into His flesh, of which He said in the Gospel, "Destroy this

temple, and in three days I will raise it up again."[569] And of the

second advent he says, "Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty,

and who shall abide the day of His entry, or who shall stand at His

appearing?" But what he says, "The Lord whom ye seek, and the Angel of

the testament whom ye desire," just means that even the Jews, according

to the Scriptures which they read, shall seek and desire Christ. But

many of them did not acknowledge that He whom they sought and desired

had come, being blinded in their hearts, which were preoccupied with

their own merits. Now what he here calls the testament, either above,

where he says, "My testament had been with Him," or here, where he has

called Him the Angel of the testament, we ought, beyond a doubt, to

take to be the new testament, in which the things promised are eternal,

and not the old, in which they are only temporal. Yet many who are weak

are troubled when they see the wicked abound in such temporal things,

because they value them greatly, and serve the true God to be rewarded

with them. On this account, to distinguish the eternal blessedness of

the new testament, which shall be given only to the good, from the

earthly felicity of the old, which for the most part is given to the

bad as well, the same prophet says, "Ye have made your words burdensome

to me: yet ye have said, In what have we spoken ill of Thee? Ye have

said, Foolish is every one who serves God; and what profit is it that

we have kept His observances, and that we have walked as suppliants

before the face of the Lord Almighty? And now we call the aliens

blessed; yea, all that do wicked things are built up again; yea, they

are opposed to God and are saved. They that feared the Lord uttered

these reproaches every one to his neighbour: and the Lord hearkened and

heard; and He wrote a book of remembrance before Him, for them that

fear the Lord and that revere His name."[570] By that book is meant the

New Testament. Finally, let us hear what follows: "And they shall be an

acquisition for me, saith the Lord Almighty, in the day which I make;

and I will choose them as a man chooseth his son that serveth him. And

ye shall return, and shall discern between the just and the unjust, and

between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. For, behold,

the day cometh burning as an oven, and it shall burn them up; and all

the aliens and all that do wickedly shall be stubble: and the day that

shall come will set them on fire, saith the Lord Almighty, and shall

leave neither root nor branch. And unto you that fear my name shall the

Sun of Righteousness arise, and health shall be in His wings; and ye

shall go forth, and exult as calves let loose from bonds. And ye shall

tread down the wicked, and they shall be ashes under your feet, in the

day in which I shall do [this], saith the Lord Almighty."[571] This

day is the day of judgment, of which, if God will, we shall speak more

fully in its own place.

36. \_About Esdras and the books of the Maccabees.\_

After these three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, during

the same period of the liberation of the people from the Babylonian

servitude Esdras also wrote, who is historical rather than prophetical,

as is also the book called Esther, which is found to relate, for the

praise of God, events not far from those times; unless, perhaps,

Esdras is to be understood as prophesying of Christ in that passage

where, on a question having arisen among certain young men as to what

is the strongest thing, when one had said kings, another wine, the

third women, who for the most part rule kings, yet that same third

youth demonstrated that the truth is victorious over all.[572] For by

consulting the Gospel we learn that Christ is the Truth. From this

time, when the temple was rebuilt, down to the time of Aristobulus, the

Jews had not kings but princes; and the reckoning of their dates is

found, not in the Holy Scriptures which are called canonical, but in

others, among which are also the books of the Maccabees. These are held

as canonical, not by the Jews, but by the Church, on account of the

extreme and wonderful sufferings of certain martyrs, who, before Christ

had come in the flesh, contended for the law of God even unto death,

and endured most grievous and horrible evils.

37. \_That prophetic records are found which are more ancient

than any fountain of the Gentile philosophy.\_

In the time of our prophets, then, whose writings had already come to

the knowledge of almost all nations, the philosophers of the nations

had not yet arisen,--at least, not those who were called by that

name, which originated with Pythagoras the Samian, who was becoming

famous at the time when the Jewish captivity ended. Much more, then,

are the other philosophers found to be later than the prophets. For

even Socrates the Athenian, the master of all who were then most

famous, holding the pre-eminence in that department that is called

the moral or active, is found after Esdras in the chronicles. Plato

also was born not much later, who far outwent the other disciples

of Socrates. If, besides these, we take their predecessors, who had

not yet been styled philosophers, to wit, the seven sages, and then

the physicists, who succeeded Thales, and imitated his studious

search into the nature of things, namely, Anaximander, Anaximenes,

and Anaxagoras, and some others, before Pythagoras first professed

himself a philosopher, even these did not precede the whole of

our prophets in antiquity of time, since Thales, whom the others

succeeded, is said to have flourished in the reign of Romulus, when

the stream of prophecy burst forth from the fountains of Israel in

those writings which spread over the whole world. So that only those

theological poets, Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, and, it may be, some

others among the Greeks, are found earlier in date than the Hebrew

prophets whose writings we hold as authoritative. But not even

these preceded in time our true divine, Moses, who authentically

preached the one true God, and whose writings are first in the

authoritative canon; and therefore the Greeks, in whose tongue the

literature of this age chiefly appears, have no ground for boasting

of their wisdom, in which our religion, wherein is true wisdom, is

not evidently more ancient at least, if not superior. Yet it must be

confessed that before Moses there had already been, not indeed among

the Greeks, but among barbarous nations, as in Egypt, some doctrine

which might be called their wisdom, else it would not have been

written in the holy books that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of

the Egyptians,[573] as he was, when, being born there, and adopted

and nursed by Pharaoh's daughter, he was also liberally educated.

Yet not even the wisdom of the Egyptians could be antecedent in time

to the wisdom of our prophets, because even Abraham was a prophet.

And what wisdom could there be in Egypt before Isis had given them

letters, whom they thought fit to worship as a goddess after her

death? Now Isis is declared to have been the daughter of Inachus, who

first began to reign in Argos when the grandsons of Abraham are known

to have been already born.

38. \_That the ecclesiastical canon has not admitted certain

writings on account of their too great antiquity, lest through

them false things should be inserted instead of true.\_

If I may recall far more ancient times, our patriarch Noah was

certainly even before that great deluge, and I might not undeservedly

call him a prophet, forasmuch as the ark he made, in which he escaped

with his family, was itself a prophecy of our times.[574] What of

Enoch, the seventh from Adam? Does not the canonical epistle of the

Apostle Jude declare that he prophesied?[575] But the writings of

these men could not be held as authoritative either among the Jews

or us, on account of their too great antiquity, which made it seem

needful to regard them with suspicion, lest false things should be

set forth instead of true. For some writings which are said to be

theirs are quoted by those who, according to their own humour,

loosely believe what they please. But the purity of the canon has

not admitted these writings, not because the authority of these men

who pleased God is rejected, but because they are not believed to

be theirs. Nor ought it to appear strange if writings for which so

great antiquity is claimed are held in suspicion, seeing that in the

very history of the kings of Judah and Israel containing their acts,

which we believe to belong to the canonical Scripture, very many

things are mentioned which are not explained there, but are said to

be found in other books which the prophets wrote, the very names of

these prophets being sometimes given, and yet they are not found in

the canon which the people of God received. Now I confess the reason

of this is hidden from me; only I think that even those men, to whom

certainly the Holy Spirit revealed those things which ought to be

held as of religious authority, might write some things as men by

historical diligence, and others as prophets by divine inspiration;

and these things were so distinct, that it was judged that the former

should be ascribed to themselves, but the latter to God speaking

through them: and so the one pertained to the abundance of knowledge,

the other to the authority of religion. In that authority the canon

is guarded. So that, if any writings outside of it are now brought

forward under the name of the ancient prophets, they cannot serve

even as an aid to knowledge, because it is uncertain whether they are

genuine; and on this account they are not trusted, especially those

of them in which some things are found that are even contrary to the

truth of the canonical books, so that it is quite apparent they do

not belong to them.

39. \_About the Hebrew written characters which that language

always possessed.\_

Now we must not believe that Heber, from whose name the word Hebrew

is derived, preserved and transmitted the Hebrew language to Abraham

only as a spoken language, and that the Hebrew letters began with

the giving of the law through Moses; but rather that this language,

along with its letters, was preserved by that succession of fathers.

Moses, indeed, appointed some among the people of God to teach

letters, before they could know any letters of the divine law. The

Scripture calls these men γραμματεισαγωγεῖς, who may be called in

Latin \_inductores\_ or \_introductores\_ of letters, because they, as

it were, introduce them into the hearts of the learners, or rather

lead those whom they teach into them. Therefore no nation could vaunt

itself over our patriarchs and prophets by any wicked vanity for the

antiquity of its wisdom; since not even Egypt, which is wont falsely

and vainly to glory in the antiquity of her doctrines, is found to

have preceded in time the wisdom of our patriarchs in her own wisdom,

such as it is. Neither will any one dare to say that they were most

skilful in wonderful sciences before they knew letters, that is,

before Isis came and taught them there. Besides, what, for the most

part, was that memorable doctrine of theirs which was called wisdom

but astronomy, and it may be some other sciences of that kind, which

usually have more power to exercise men's wit than to enlighten their

minds with true wisdom? As regards philosophy, which professes to

teach men something which shall make them happy, studies of that kind

flourished in those lands about the times of Mercury whom they called

Trismegistus, long before the sages and philosophers of Greece, but

yet after Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and even after Moses

himself. At that time, indeed, when Moses was born, Atlas is found

to have lived, that great astronomer, the brother of Prometheus,

and maternal grandson of the elder Mercury, of whom that Mercury

Trismegistus was the grandson.

40. \_About the most mendacious vanity of the Egyptians, in which

they ascribe to their science an antiquity of a hundred

thousand years.\_

In vain, then, do some babble with most empty presumption, saying

that Egypt has understood the reckoning of the stars for more than a

hundred thousand years. For in what books have they collected that

number who learned letters from Isis their mistress, not much more

than two thousand years ago? Varro, who has declared this, is no

small authority in history, and it does not disagree with the truth

of the divine books. For as it is not yet six thousand years since

the first man, who is called Adam, are not those to be ridiculed

rather than refuted who try to persuade us of anything regarding a

space of time so different from, and contrary to, the ascertained

truth? For what historian of the past should we credit more than him

who has also predicted things to come which we now see fulfilled? And

the very disagreement of the historians among themselves furnishes

a good reason why we ought rather to believe him who does not

contradict the divine history which we hold. But, on the other hand,

the citizens of the impious city, scattered everywhere through the

earth, when they read the most learned writers, none of whom seems

to be of contemptible authority, and find them disagreeing among

themselves about affairs most remote from the memory of our age,

cannot find out whom they ought to trust. But we, being sustained

by divine authority in the history of our religion, have no doubt

that whatever is opposed to it is most false, whatever may be the

case regarding other things in secular books, which, whether true or

false, yield nothing of moment to our living rightly and happily.

41. \_About the discord of philosophic opinion, and the concord of

the Scriptures that are held as canonical by the Church.\_

But let us omit further examination of history, and return to the

philosophers from whom we digressed to these things. They seem to

have laboured in their studies for no other end than to find out

how to live in a way proper for laying hold of blessedness. Why,

then, have the disciples dissented from their masters, and the

fellow-disciples from one another, except because as men they have

sought after these things by human sense and human reasonings? Now,

although there might be among them a desire of glory, so that each

wished to be thought wiser and more acute than another, and in no

way addicted to the judgment of others, but the inventor of his own

dogma and opinion, yet I may grant that there were some, or even very

many of them, whose love of truth severed them from their teachers or

fellow-disciples, that they might strive for what they thought was

the truth, whether it was so or not. But what can human misery do,

or how or where can it reach forth, so as to attain blessedness, if

divine authority does not lead it? Finally, let our authors, among

whom the canon of the sacred books is fixed and bounded, be far from

disagreeing in any respect. It is not without good reason, then,

that not merely a few people prating in the schools and gymnasia in

captious disputations, but so many and great people, both learned

and unlearned, in countries and cities, have believed that God spoke

to them or by them, \_i.e.\_ the canonical writers, when they wrote

these books. There ought, indeed, to be but few of them, lest on

account of their multitude what ought to be religiously esteemed

should grow cheap; and yet not so few that their agreement should not

be wonderful. For among the multitude of philosophers, who in their

works have left behind them the monuments of their dogmas, no one

will easily find any who agree in all their opinions. But to show

this is too long a task for this work.

But what author of any sect is so approved in this demon-worshipping

city, that the rest who have differed from or opposed him in opinion

have been disapproved? The Epicureans asserted that human affairs

were not under the providence of the gods; and the Stoics, holding

the opposite opinion, agreed that they were ruled and defended by

favourable and tutelary gods. Yet were not both sects famous among

the Athenians? I wonder, then, why Anaxagoras was accused of a crime

for saying that the sun was a burning stone, and denying that it was

a god at all; while in the same city Epicurus flourished gloriously

and lived securely, although he not only did not believe that the

sun or any star was a god, but contended that neither Jupiter nor

any of the gods dwelt in the world at all, so that the prayers and

supplications of men might reach them! Were not both Aristippus

and Antisthenes there, two noble philosophers and both Socratic?

yet they placed the chief end of life within bounds so diverse and

contradictory, that the first made the delight of the body the chief

good, while the other asserted that man was made happy mainly by

the virtue of the mind. The one also said that the wise man should

flee from the republic; the other, that he should administer its

affairs. Yet did not each gather disciples to follow his own sect?

Indeed, in the conspicuous and well-known porch, in gymnasia, in

gardens, in places public and private, they openly strove in bands

each for his own opinion, some asserting there was one world, others

innumerable worlds; some that this world had a beginning, others

that it had not; some that it would perish, others that it would

exist always; some that it was governed by the divine mind, others by

chance and accident; some that souls are immortal, others that they

are mortal,--and of those who asserted their immortality, some said

they transmigrated through beasts, others that it was by no means so,

while of those who asserted their mortality, some said they perished

immediately after the body, others that they survived either a little

while or a longer time, but not always; some fixing supreme good in

the body, some in the mind, some in both; others adding to the mind

and body external good things; some thinking that the bodily senses

ought to be trusted always, some not always, others never. Now what

people, senate, power, or public dignity of the impious city has ever

taken care to judge between all these and other well-nigh innumerable

dissensions of the philosophers, approving and accepting some, and

disapproving and rejecting others? Has it not held in its bosom at

random, without any judgment, and confusedly, so many controversies

of men at variance, not about fields, houses, or anything of a

pecuniary nature, but about those things which make life either

miserable or happy? Even if some true things were said in it, yet

falsehoods were uttered with the same licence; so that such a city

has not amiss received the title of the mystic Babylon. For Babylon

means confusion, as we remember we have already explained. Nor does

it matter to the devil, its king, how they wrangle among themselves

in contradictory errors, since all alike deservedly belong to him on

account of their great and varied impiety.

But that nation, that people, that city, that republic, these

Israelites, to whom the oracles of God were entrusted, by no means

confounded with similar licence false prophets with the true prophets;

but, agreeing together, and differing in nothing, acknowledged and

upheld the authentic authors of their sacred books. These were their

philosophers, these were their sages, divines, prophets, and teachers

of probity and piety. Whoever was wise and lived according to them was

wise and lived not according to men, but according to God who hath

spoken by them. If sacrilege is forbidden there, God hath forbidden

it. If it is said, "Honour thy father and thy mother,"[576] God

hath commanded it. If it is said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery,

Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal,"[577] and other similar

commandments, not human lips but the divine oracles have enounced

them. Whatever truth certain philosophers, amid their false opinions,

were able to see, and strove by laborious discussions to persuade men

of,--such as that God has made this world, and Himself most providently

governs it, or of the nobility of the virtues, of the love of country,

of fidelity in friendship, of good works and everything pertaining to

virtuous manners, although they knew not to what end and what rule all

these things were to be referred,--all these, by words prophetic, that

is, divine, although spoken by men, were commended to the people in

that city, and not inculcated by contention in arguments, so that he

who should know them might be afraid of contemning, not the wit of men,

but the oracle of God.

42. \_By what dispensation of God's providence the sacred Scriptures

of the Old Testament were translated out of Hebrew into Greek,

that they might be made known to all the nations.\_

One of the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt, desired to know and have these

sacred books. For after Alexander of Macedon, who is also styled the

Great, had by his most wonderful, but by no means enduring power,

subdued the whole of Asia, yea, almost the whole world, partly by

force of arms, partly by terror, and, among other kingdoms of the

East, had entered and obtained Judea also, on his death his generals

did not peaceably divide that most ample kingdom among them for a

possession, but rather dissipated it, wasting all things by wars.

Then Egypt began to have the Ptolemies as her kings. The first of

them, the son of Lagus, carried many captive out of Judea into

Egypt. But another Ptolemy, called Philadelphus, who succeeded him,

permitted all whom he had brought under the yoke to return free; and,

more than that, sent kingly gifts to the temple of God, and begged

Eleazar, who was the high priest, to give him the Scriptures, which

he had heard by report were truly divine, and therefore greatly

desired to have in that most noble library he had made. When the

high priest had sent them to him in Hebrew, he afterwards demanded

interpreters of him, and there were given him seventy-two, out of

each of the twelve tribes six men, most learned in both languages,

to wit, the Hebrew and Greek; and their translation is now by custom

called the Septuagint. It is reported, indeed, that there was an

agreement in their words so wonderful, stupendous, and plainly

divine, that when they had sat at this work, each one apart (for so

it pleased Ptolemy to test their fidelity), they differed from each

other in no word which had the same meaning and force, or in the

order of the words; but, as if the translators had been one, so what

all had translated was one, because in very deed the one Spirit had

been in them all. And they received so wonderful a gift of God, in

order that the authority of these Scriptures might be commended not

as human but divine, as indeed it was, for the benefit of the nations

who should at some time believe, as we now see them doing.

43. \_Of the authority of the Septuagint translation, which, saving

the honour of the Hebrew original, is to be preferred to all

translations.\_

For while there were other interpreters who translated these sacred

oracles out of the Hebrew tongue into Greek, as Aquila, Symmachus, and

Theodotion, and also that translation which, as the name of the author

is unknown, is quoted as the fifth edition, yet the Church has received

this Septuagint translation just as if it were the only one; and it has

been used by the Greek Christian people, most of whom are not aware

that there is any other. From this translation there has also been made

a translation in the Latin tongue, which the Latin churches use. Our

times, however, have enjoyed the advantage of the presbyter Jerome, a

man most learned, and skilled in all three languages, who translated

these same Scriptures into the Latin speech, not from the Greek, but

from the Hebrew. But although the Jews acknowledge this very learned

labour of his to be faithful, while they contend that the Septuagint

translators have erred in many places, still the churches of Christ

judge that no one should be preferred to the authority of so many men,

chosen for this very great work by Eleazar, who was then high priest;

for even if there had not appeared in them one spirit, without doubt

divine, and the seventy learned men had, after the manner of men,

compared together the words of their translation, that what pleased

them all might stand, no single translator ought to be preferred to

them; but since so great a sign of divinity has appeared in them,

certainly, if any other translator of their Scriptures from the Hebrew

into any other tongue is faithful, in that case he agrees with these

seventy translators, and if he is not found to agree with them, then

we ought to believe that the prophetic gift is with them. For the same

Spirit who was in the prophets when they spoke these things was also in

the seventy men when they translated them, so that assuredly they could

also say something else, just as if the prophet himself had said both,

because it would be the same Spirit who said both; and could say the

same thing differently, so that, although the words were not the same,

yet the same meaning should shine forth to those of good understanding;

and could omit or add something, so that even by this it might be shown

that there was in that work not human bondage, which the translator

owed to the words, but rather divine power, which filled and ruled the

mind of the translator. Some, however, have thought that the Greek

copies of the Septuagint version should be emended from the Hebrew

copies; yet they did not dare to take away what the Hebrew lacked and

the Septuagint had, but only added what was found in the Hebrew copies

and was lacking in the Septuagint, and noted them by placing at the

beginning of the verses certain marks in the form of stars which they

call asterisks. And those things which the Hebrew copies have not, but

the Septuagint have, they have in like manner marked at the beginning

of the verses by horizontal spit-shaped marks like those by which

we denote ounces; and many copies having these marks are circulated

even in Latin.[578] But we cannot, without inspecting both kinds of

copies, find out those things which are neither omitted nor added, but

expressed differently, whether they yield another meaning not in itself

unsuitable, or can be shown to explain the same meaning in another way.

If, then, as it behoves us, we behold nothing else in these Scriptures

than what the Spirit of God has spoken through men, if anything is

in the Hebrew copies and is not in the version of the Seventy, the

Spirit of God did not choose to say it through them, but only through

the prophets. But whatever is in the Septuagint and not in the Hebrew

copies, the same Spirit chose rather to say through the latter, thus

showing that both were prophets. For in that manner He spoke as He

chose, some things through Isaiah, some through Jeremiah, some through

several prophets, or else the same thing through this prophet and

through that. Further, whatever is found in both editions, that one and

the same Spirit willed to say through both, but so as that the former

preceded in prophesying, and the latter followed in prophetically

interpreting them; because, as the one Spirit of peace was in the

former when they spoke true and concordant words, so the selfsame one

Spirit hath appeared in the latter, when, without mutual conference,

they yet interpreted all things as if with one mouth.

44. \_How the threat of the destruction of the Ninevites is to be

understood, which in the Hebrew extends to forty days, while in

the Septuagint it is contracted to three.\_

But some one may say, "How shall I know whether the prophet Jonah

said to the Ninevites, 'Yet \_three\_ days and Nineveh shall be

overthrown,' or \_forty\_ days?"[579] For who does not see that the

prophet could not say both, when he was sent to terrify the city

by the threat of imminent ruin? For if its destruction was to take

place on the third day, it certainly could not be on the fortieth;

but if on the fortieth, then certainly not on the third. If, then, I

am asked which of these Jonah may have said, I rather think what is

read in the Hebrew, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Yet the Seventy, interpreting long afterward, could say what was

different and yet pertinent to the matter, and agree in the selfsame

meaning, although under a different signification. And this may

admonish the reader not to despise the authority of either, but to

raise himself above the history, and search for those things which

the history itself was written to set forth. These things, indeed,

took place in the city of Nineveh, but they also signified something

else too great to apply to that city; just as, when it happened

that the prophet himself was three days in the whale's belly, it

signified besides, that He who is Lord of all the prophets should be

three days in the depths of hell. Wherefore, if that city is rightly

held as prophetically representing the Church of the Gentiles, to

wit, as brought down by penitence, so as no longer to be what it had

been, since this was done by Christ in the Church of the Gentiles,

which Nineveh represented, Christ Himself was signified both by the

forty and by the three days: by the forty, because He spent that

number of days with His disciples after the resurrection, and then

ascended into heaven, but by the three days, because He rose on the

third day. So that, if the reader desires nothing else than to adhere

to the history of events, he may be aroused from his sleep by the

Septuagint interpreters, as well as the prophets, to search into the

depth of the prophecy, as if they had said, In the forty days seek

Him in whom thou mayest also find the three days,--the one thou wilt

find in His ascension, the other in His resurrection. Because that

which could be most suitably signified by both numbers, of which

one is used by Jonah the prophet, the other by the prophecy of the

Septuagint version, the one and selfsame Spirit hath spoken. I dread

prolixity, so that I must not demonstrate this by many instances in

which the seventy interpreters may be thought to differ from the

Hebrew, and yet, when well understood, are found to agree. For which

reason I also, according to my capacity, following the footsteps of

the apostles, who themselves have quoted prophetic testimonies from

both, that is, from the Hebrew and the Septuagint, have thought that

both should be used as authoritative, since both are one, and divine.

But let us now follow out as we can what remains.

45. \_That the Jews ceased to have prophets after the rebuilding of

the temple, and from that time until the birth of Christ were

afflicted with continual adversity, to prove that the building

of another temple had been promised by prophetic voices.\_

The Jewish nation no doubt became worse after it ceased to have

prophets, just at the very time when, on the rebuilding of the temple

after the captivity in Babylon, it hoped to become better. For so,

indeed, did that carnal people understand what was foretold by

Haggai the prophet, saying, "The glory of this latter house shall be

greater than that of the former."[580] Now, that this is said of the

new testament, he showed a little above, where he says, evidently

promising Christ, "And I will move all nations, and the desired One

shall come to all nations."[581] In this passage the Septuagint

translators, giving another sense more suitable to the body than the

Head, that is, to the Church than to Christ, have said by prophetic

authority, "The things shall come that are chosen of the Lord from

all nations," that is, \_men\_, of whom Jesus saith in the Gospel,

"Many are called, but few are chosen."[582] For by such chosen ones

of the nations there is built, through the new testament, with living

stones, a house of God far more glorious than that temple was which

was constructed by king Solomon, and rebuilt after the captivity.

For this reason, then, that nation had no prophets from that time,

but was afflicted with many plagues by kings of alien race, and by

the Romans themselves, lest they should fancy that this prophecy of

Haggai was fulfilled by that rebuilding of the temple.

For not long after, on the arrival of Alexander, it was subdued,

when, although there was no pillaging, because they dared not resist

him, and thus, being very easily subdued, received him peaceably,

yet the glory of that house was not so great as it was when under

the free power of their own kings. Alexander, indeed, offered up

sacrifices in the temple of God, not as a convert to His worship

in true piety, but thinking, with impious folly, that He was to be

worshipped along with false gods. Then Ptolemy son of Lagus, whom I

have already mentioned, after Alexander's death carried them captive

into Egypt. His successor, Ptolemy Philadelphus, most benevolently

dismissed them; and by him it was brought about, as I have narrated

a little before, that we should have the Septuagint version of the

Scriptures. Then they were crushed by the wars which are explained

in the books of the Maccabees. Afterward they were taken captive by

Ptolemy king of Alexandria, who was called Epiphanes. Then Antiochus

king of Syria compelled them by many and most grievous evils to

worship idols, and filled the temple itself with the sacrilegious

superstitions of the Gentiles. Yet their most vigorous leader

Judas, who is also called Maccabæus, after beating the generals of

Antiochus, cleansed it from all that defilement of idolatry.

But not long after, one Alcimus, although an alien from the

sacerdotal tribe, was, through ambition, made pontiff, which was an

impious thing. After almost fifty years, during which they never

had peace, although they prospered in some affairs, Aristobulus

first assumed the diadem among them, and was made both king and

pontiff. Before that, indeed, from the time of their return from the

Babylonish captivity and the rebuilding of the temple, they had not

kings, but generals or \_principes\_. Although a king himself may be

called a prince, from his principality in governing, and a leader,

because he leads the army, but it does not follow that all who are

princes and leaders may also be called kings, as that Aristobulus

was. He was succeeded by Alexander, also both king and pontiff, who

is reported to have reigned over them cruelly. After him his wife

Alexandra was queen of the Jews, and from her time downwards more

grievous evils pursued them; for this Alexandra's sons, Aristobulus

and Hyrcanus, when contending with each other for the kingdom, called

in the Roman forces against the nation of Israel. For Hyrcanus asked

assistance from them against his brother. At that time Rome had

already subdued Africa and Greece, and ruled extensively in other

parts of the world also, and yet, as if unable to bear her own

weight, had, in a manner, broken herself by her own size. For indeed

she had come to grave domestic seditions, and from that to social

wars, and by and by to civil wars, and had enfeebled and worn herself

out so much, that the changed state of the republic, in which she

should be governed by kings, was now imminent. Pompey then, a most

illustrious prince of the Roman people, having entered Judea with an

army, took the city, threw open the temple, not with the devotion of

a suppliant, but with the authority of a conqueror, and went, not

reverently, but profanely, into the holy of holies, where it was

lawful for none but the pontiff to enter. Having established Hyrcanus

in the pontificate, and set Antipater over the subjugated nation as

guardian or procurator, as they were then called, he led Aristobulus

with him bound. From that time the Jews also began to be Roman

tributaries. Afterward Cassius plundered the very temple. Then after

a few years it was their desert to have Herod, a king of foreign

birth, in whose reign Christ was born. For the time had now come

signified by the prophetic Spirit through the mouth of the patriarch

Jacob, when he says, "There shall not be lacking a prince out of

Judah, nor a teacher from his loins, until He shall come for whom it

is reserved; and He is the expectation of the nations."[583] There

lacked not therefore a Jewish prince of the Jews until that Herod,

who was the first king of a foreign race received by them. Therefore

it was now the time when He should come for whom that was reserved

which is promised in the New Testament, that He should be the

expectation of the nations. But it was not possible that the nations

should expect He would come, as we see they did, to do judgment in

the splendour of power, unless they should first believe in Him when

He came to suffer judgment in the humility of patience.

46. \_Of the birth of our Saviour, whereby the Word was made flesh;

and of the dispersion of the Jews among all nations, as had

been prophesied.\_

While Herod, therefore, reigned in Judea, and Cæsar Augustus was

emperor at Rome, the state of the republic being already changed, and

the world being set at peace by him, Christ was born in Bethlehem

of Judah, man manifest out of a human virgin, God hidden out of God

the Father. For so had the prophet foretold: "Behold, a virgin shall

conceive in the womb, and bring forth a Son, and they shall call

His name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us."[584]

He did many miracles that He might commend God in Himself, some

of which, even as many as seemed sufficient to proclaim Him, are

contained in the evangelic Scripture. The first of these is, that

He was so wonderfully born, and the last, that with His body raised

up again from the dead He ascended into heaven. But the Jews who

slew Him, and would not believe in Him, because it behoved Him to

die and rise again, were yet more miserably wasted by the Romans,

and utterly rooted out from their kingdom, where aliens had already

ruled over them, and were dispersed through the lands (so that indeed

there is no place where they are not), and are thus by their own

Scriptures a testimony to us that we have not forged the prophecies

about Christ. And very many of them, considering this, even before

His passion, but chiefly after His resurrection, believed on Him, of

whom it was predicted, "Though the number of the children of Israel

be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved."[585] But

the rest are blinded, of whom it was predicted, "Let their table be

made before them a trap, and a retribution, and a stumbling-block.

Let their eyes be darkened lest they see, and bow down their back

alway."[586] Therefore, when they do not believe our Scriptures,

their own, which they blindly read, are fulfilled in them, lest

perchance any one should say that the Christians have forged these

prophecies about Christ which are quoted under the name of the sibyl,

or of others, if such there be, who do not belong to the Jewish

people. For us, indeed, those suffice which are quoted from the books

of our enemies, to whom we make our acknowledgment, on account of

this testimony which, in spite of themselves, they contribute by

their possession of these books, while they themselves are dispersed

among all nations, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad.

For a prophecy about this thing was sent before in the Psalms, which

they also read, where it is written, "My God, His mercy shall prevent

me. My God hath shown me concerning mine enemies, that Thou shalt not

slay them, lest they should at last forget Thy law: disperse them in

Thy might."[587] Therefore God has shown the Church in her enemies

the Jews the grace of His compassion, since, as saith the apostle,

"their offence is the salvation of the Gentiles."[588] And therefore

He has not slain them, that is, He has not let the knowledge that

they are Jews be lost in them, although they have been conquered

by the Romans, lest they should forget the law of God, and their

testimony should be of no avail in this matter of which we treat.

But it was not enough that he should say, "Slay them not, lest they

should at last forget Thy law," unless he had also added, "Disperse

them;" because if they had only been in their own land with that

testimony of the Scriptures, and not everywhere, certainly the Church

which is everywhere could not have had them as witnesses among all

nations to the prophecies which were sent before concerning Christ.

47. \_Whether before Christian times there were any outside of the

Israelite race who belonged to the fellowship of the heavenly

city.\_

Wherefore if we read of any foreigner--that is, one neither born

of Israel nor received by that people into the canon of the sacred

books--having prophesied something about Christ, if it has come or

shall come to our knowledge, we can refer to it over and above;

not that this is necessary, even if wanting, but because it is not

incongruous to believe that even in other nations there may have been

men to whom this mystery was revealed, and who were also impelled to

proclaim it, whether they were partakers of the same grace or had no

experience of it, but were taught by bad angels, who, as we know, even

confessed the present Christ, whom the Jews did not acknowledge. Nor

do I think the Jews themselves dare contend that no one has belonged

to God except the Israelites, since the increase of Israel began on

the rejection of his elder brother. For in very deed there was no

other people who were specially called the people of God; but they

cannot deny that there have been certain men even of other nations

who belonged, not by earthly but heavenly fellowship, to the true

Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above. Because, if they

deny this, they can be most easily confuted by the case of the holy and

wonderful man Job, who was neither a native nor a proselyte, that is, a

stranger joining the people of Israel, but, being bred of the Idumean

race, arose there and died there too, and who is so praised by the

divine oracle, that no man of his times is put on a level with him as

regards justice and piety. And although we do not find his date in the

chronicles, yet from his book, which for its merit the Israelites have

received as of canonical authority, we gather that he was in the third

generation after Israel. And I doubt not it was divinely provided, that

from this one case we might know that among other nations also there

might be men pertaining to the spiritual Jerusalem who have lived

according to God and have pleased Him. And it is not to be supposed

that this was granted to any one, unless the one Mediator between God

and men, the Man Christ Jesus,[589] was divinely revealed to him; who

was pre-announced to the saints of old as yet to come in the flesh,

even as He is announced to us as having come, that the selfsame faith

through Him may lead all to God who are predestinated to be the city of

God, the house of God, and the temple of God. But whatever prophecies

concerning the grace of God through Christ Jesus are quoted, they

may be thought to have been forged by the Christians. So that there

is nothing of more weight for confuting all sorts of aliens, if they

contend about this matter, and for supporting our friends, if they are

truly wise, than to quote those divine predictions about Christ which

are written in the books of the Jews, who have been torn from their

native abode and dispersed over the whole world in order to bear this

testimony, so that the Church of Christ has everywhere increased.

48. \_That Haggai's prophecy, in which he said that the glory of

the house of God would be greater than that of the first had

been,\_[590] \_was really fulfilled, not in the rebuilding of the

temple, but in the Church of Christ.\_

This house of God is more glorious than that first one which was

constructed of wood and stone, metals, and other precious things.

Therefore the prophecy of Haggai was not fulfilled in the rebuilding

of that temple. For it can never be shown to have had so much glory

after it was rebuilt as it had in the time of Solomon; yea, rather,

the glory of that house is shown to have been diminished, first by the

ceasing of prophecy, and then by the nation itself suffering so great

calamities, even to the final destruction made by the Romans, as the

things above-mentioned prove. But this house which pertains to the new

testament is just as much more glorious as the living stones, even

believing, renewed men, of which it is constructed are better. But it

was typified by the rebuilding of that temple for this reason, because

the very renovation of that edifice typifies in the prophetic oracle

another testament which is called the new. When, therefore, God said

by the prophet just named, "And I will give peace in this place,"[591]

He is to be understood who is typified by that typical place; for since

by that rebuilt place is typified the Church which was to be built by

Christ, nothing else can be accepted as the meaning of the saying, "I

will give peace in this place," except I will give peace in the place

which that place signifies. For all typical things seem in some way to

personate those whom they typify, as it is said by the apostle, "That

Rock was Christ."[592] Therefore the glory of this new testament house

is greater than the glory of the old testament house; and it will show

itself as greater when it shall be dedicated. For then "shall come the

desired of all nations,"[593] as we read in the Hebrew. For before His

advent He had not yet been desired by all nations. For they knew not

Him whom they ought to desire, in whom they had not believed. Then,

also, according to the Septuagint interpretation (for it also is a

prophetic meaning), "shall come those who are elected of the Lord out

of all nations." For then indeed there shall come only those who are

elected, whereof the apostle saith, "According as He hath chosen us in

Him before the foundation of the world."[594] For the Master Builder

who said, "Many are called, but few are chosen,"[595] did not say this

of those who, on being called, came in such a way as to be cast out

from the feast, but would point out the house built up of the elect,

which henceforth shall dread no ruin. Yet because the churches are

also full of those who shall be separated by the winnowing as in the

threshing-floor, the glory of this house is not so apparent now as it

shall be when every one who is there shall be there always.

49. \_Of the indiscriminate increase of the Church, wherein many

reprobate are in this world mixed with the elect.\_

In this wicked world, in these evil days, when the Church measures

her future loftiness by her present humility, and is exercised

by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, disquieting labours, and

dangerous temptations, when she soberly rejoices, rejoicing only in

hope, there are many reprobate mingled with the good, and both are

gathered together by the gospel as in a drag net;[596] and in this

world, as in a sea, both swim enclosed without distinction in the

net, until it is brought ashore, when the wicked must be separated

from the good, that in the good, as in His temple, God may be all

in all. We acknowledge, indeed, that His word is now fulfilled who

spake in the psalm, and said, "I have announced and spoken; they are

multiplied above number."[597] This takes place now, since He has

spoken, first by the mouth of his forerunner John, and afterward

by His own mouth, saying, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand."[598] He chose disciples, whom He also called apostles,[599]

of lowly birth, unhonoured, and illiterate, so that whatever great

thing they might be or do, He might be and do it in them. He had one

among them whose wickedness He could use well in order to accomplish

His appointed passion, and furnish His Church an example of bearing

with the wicked. Having sown the holy gospel as much as that behoved

to be done by His bodily presence, He suffered, died, and rose again,

showing by His passion what we ought to suffer for the truth, and

by His resurrection what we ought to hope for in adversity; saving

always the mystery of the sacrament, by which His blood was shed for

the remission of sins. He held converse on the earth forty days with

His disciples, and in their sight ascended into heaven, and after

ten days sent the promised Holy Spirit. It was given as the chief

and most necessary sign of His coming on those who had believed,

that every one of them spoke in the tongues of all nations; thus

signifying that the unity of the catholic Church would embrace all

nations, and would in like manner speak in all tongues.

50. \_Of the preaching of the gospel, which is made more famous

and powerful by the sufferings of its preachers.\_

Then was fulfilled that prophecy, "Out of Sion shall go forth the

law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem;"[600] and the

prediction of the Lord Christ Himself, when, after the resurrection,

"He opened the understanding" of His amazed disciples "that they

might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them that thus it

is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from

the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins

should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at

Jerusalem."[601] And again, when, in reply to their questioning about

the day of His last coming, He said, "It is not for you to know the

times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power; but

ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye

shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and

Samaria, and even unto the ends of the earth."[602] First of all, the

Church spread herself abroad from Jerusalem; and when very many in

Judea and Samaria had believed, she also went into other nations by

those who announced the gospel, whom, as lights, He Himself had both

prepared by His word and kindled by His Holy Spirit. For He had said

to them, "Fear ye not them which kill the body, but are not able to

kill the soul."[603] And that they might not be frozen with fear,

they burned with the fire of charity. Finally, the gospel of Christ

was preached in the whole world, not only by those who had seen

and heard Him both before His passion and after His resurrection,

but also after their death by their successors, amid the horrible

persecutions, diverse torments and deaths of the martyrs, God also

bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers

miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,[604] that the people of the

nations, believing in Him who was crucified for their redemption,

might venerate with Christian love the blood of the martyrs which

they had poured forth with devilish fury, and the very kings by

whose laws the Church had been laid waste might become profitably

subject to that name they had cruelly striven to take away from the

earth, and might begin to persecute the false gods for whose sake the

worshippers of the true God had formerly been persecuted.

51. \_That the catholic faith may be confirmed even by the

dissensions of the heretics.\_

But the devil, seeing the temples of the demons deserted, and the

human race running to the name of the liberating Mediator, has

moved the heretics under the Christian name to resist the Christian

doctrine, as if they could be kept in the city of God indifferently

without any correction, just as the city of confusion indifferently

held the philosophers who were of diverse and adverse opinions.

Those, therefore, in the Church of Christ who savour anything morbid

and depraved, and, on being corrected that they may savour what is

wholesome and right, contumaciously resist, and will not amend their

pestiferous and deadly dogmas, but persist in defending them, become

heretics, and, going without, are to be reckoned as enemies who serve

for her discipline. For even thus they profit by their wickedness

those true catholic members of Christ, since God makes a good use

even of the wicked, and all things work together for good to them

that love Him.[605] For all the enemies of the Church, whatever error

blinds or malice depraves them, exercise her patience if they receive

the power to afflict her corporally; and if they only oppose her by

wicked thought, they exercise her wisdom: but at the same time, if

these enemies are loved, they exercise her benevolence, or even her

beneficence, whether she deals with them by persuasive doctrine or by

terrible discipline. And thus the devil, the prince of the impious

city, when he stirs up his own vessels against the city of God that

sojourns in this world, is permitted to do her no harm. For without

doubt the divine providence procures for her both consolation through

prosperity, that she may not be broken by adversity, and trial

through adversity, that she may not be corrupted by prosperity; and

thus each is tempered by the other, as we recognise in the Psalms

that voice which arises from no other cause, "According to the

multitude of my griefs in my heart, Thy consolations have delighted

my soul."[606] Hence also is that saying of the apostle, "Rejoicing

in hope, patient in tribulation."[607]

For it is not to be thought that what the same teacher says can at

any time fail, "Whoever will live piously in Christ shall suffer

persecution."[608] Because even when those who are without do not

rage, and thus there seems to be, and really is, tranquillity, which

brings very much consolation, especially to the weak, yet there are

not wanting, yea, there are many within who by their abandoned

manners torment the hearts of those who live piously, since by them

the Christian and catholic name is blasphemed; and the dearer that

name is to those who will live piously in Christ, the more do they

grieve that through the wicked, who have a place within, it comes to

be less loved than pious minds desire. The heretics themselves also,

since they are thought to have the Christian name and sacraments,

Scriptures, and profession, cause great grief in the hearts of the

pious, both because many who wish to be Christians are compelled by

their dissensions to hesitate, and many evil-speakers also find in

them matter for blaspheming the Christian name, because they too

are at any rate \_called\_ Christians. By these and similar depraved

manners and errors of men, those who will live piously in Christ

suffer persecution, even when no one molests or vexes their body;

for they suffer this persecution, not in their bodies, but in their

hearts. Whence is that word, "According to the multitude of my griefs

in my heart;" for he does not say, in my body. Yet, on the other

hand, none of them can perish, because the immutable divine promises

are thought of. And because the apostle says, "The Lord knoweth them

that are His;[609] for whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated

[to be] conformed to the image of His Son,"[610] none of them can

perish; therefore it follows in that psalm, "Thy consolations have

delighted my soul."[611] But that grief which arises in the hearts

of the pious, who are persecuted by the manners of bad or false

Christians, is profitable to the sufferers, because it proceeds from

the charity in which they do not wish them either to perish or to

hinder the salvation of others. Finally, great consolations grow

out of their chastisement, which imbue the souls of the pious with

a fecundity as great as the pains with which they were troubled

concerning their own perdition. Thus in this world, in these evil

days, not only from the time of the bodily presence of Christ and His

apostles, but even from that of Abel, whom first his wicked brother

slew because he was righteous,[612] and thenceforth even to the end

of this world, the Church has gone forward on pilgrimage amid the

persecutions of the world and the consolations of God.

52. \_Whether we should believe what some think, that, as the ten

persecutions which are past have been fulfilled, there remains

no other beyond the eleventh, which must happen in the very

time of Antichrist.\_

I do not think, indeed, that what some have thought or may think

is rashly said or believed, that until the time of Antichrist the

Church of Christ is not to suffer any persecutions besides those

she has already suffered,--that is, \_ten\_,--and that the eleventh

and last shall be inflicted by Antichrist. They reckon as the first

that made by Nero, the second by Domitian, the third by Trajan, the

fourth by Antoninus, the fifth by Severus, the sixth by Maximin, the

seventh by Decius, the eighth by Valerian, the ninth by Aurelian,

the tenth by Diocletian and Maximian. For as there were ten plagues

in Egypt before the people of God could begin to go out, they think

this is to be referred to as showing that the last persecution by

Antichrist must be like the eleventh plague, in which the Egyptians,

while following the Hebrews with hostility, perished in the Red Sea

when the people of God passed through on dry land. Yet I do not

think persecutions were prophetically signified by what was done in

Egypt, however nicely and ingeniously those who think so may seem

to have compared the two in detail, not by the prophetic Spirit,

but by the conjecture of the human mind, which sometimes hits the

truth, and sometimes is deceived. But what can those who think this

say of the persecution in which the Lord Himself was crucified? In

which number will they put it? And if they think the reckoning is

to be made exclusive of this one, as if those must be counted which

pertain to the body, and not that in which the Head Himself was set

upon and slain, what can they make of that one which, after Christ

ascended into heaven, took place in Jerusalem, when the blessed

Stephen was stoned; when James the brother of John was slaughtered

with the sword; when the Apostle Peter was imprisoned to be killed,

and was set free by the angel; when the brethren were driven away and

scattered from Jerusalem; when Saul, who afterward became the Apostle

Paul, wasted the Church; and when he himself, publishing the glad

tidings of the faith he had persecuted, suffered such things as he

had inflicted, either from the Jews or from other nations, where he

most fervently preached Christ everywhere? Why, then, do they think

fit to start with Nero, when the Church in her growth had reached

the times of Nero amid the most cruel persecutions, about which it

would be too long to say anything? But if they think that only the

persecutions made by kings ought to be reckoned, it was king Herod

who also made a most grievous one after the ascension of the Lord.

And what account do they give of Julian, whom they do not number in

the ten? Did not he persecute the Church, who forbade the Christians

to teach or learn liberal letters? Under him, the elder Valentinian,

who was the third emperor after him, stood forth as a confessor of

the Christian faith, and was dismissed from his command in the army.

I shall say nothing of what he did at Antioch, except to mention

his being struck with wonder at the freedom and cheerfulness of one

most faithful and stedfast young man, who, when many were seized

to be tortured, was tortured during a whole day, and sang under

the instrument of torture, until the emperor feared lest he should

succumb under the continued cruelties and put him to shame at last,

which made him dread and fear that he would be yet more dishonourably

put to the blush by the rest. Lastly, within our own recollection,

did not Valens the Arian, brother of the foresaid Valentinian, waste

the catholic Church by great persecution throughout the East? But how

unreasonable it is not to consider that the Church, which bears fruit

and grows through the whole world, may suffer persecution from kings

in some nations even when she does not suffer it in others! Perhaps,

however, it was not to be reckoned a persecution when the king of the

Goths, in Gothia itself, persecuted the Christians with wonderful

cruelty, when there were none but catholics there, of whom very many

were crowned with martyrdom, as we have heard from certain brethren

who had been there at that time as boys, and unhesitatingly called to

mind that they had seen these things? And what took place in Persia

of late? Was not persecution so hot against the Christians (if even

yet it is allayed) that some of the fugitives from it came even to

Roman towns? When I think of these and the like things, it does not

seem to me that the number of persecutions with which the Church is

to be tried can be definitely stated. But, on the other hand, it

is no less rash to affirm that there will be some persecutions by

kings besides that last one, about which no Christian is in doubt.

Therefore we leave this undecided, supporting or refuting neither

side of this question, but only restraining men from the audacious

presumption of affirming either of them.

53. \_Of the hidden time of the final persecution.\_

Truly Jesus Himself shall extinguish by His presence that last

persecution which is to be made by Antichrist. For so it is written,

that "He shall slay him with the breath of His mouth, and empty him

with the brightness of His presence."[613] It is customary to ask,

When shall that be? But this is quite unreasonable. For had it been

profitable for us to know this, by whom could it better have been told

than by God Himself, the Master, when the disciples questioned Him? For

they were not silent when with Him, but inquired of Him, saying, "Lord,

wilt Thou at this time present the kingdom to Israel, or when?"[614]

But He said, "It is not for you to know the times, which the Father

hath put in His own power." When they got that answer, they had not at

all questioned Him about the hour, or day, or year, but about the time.

In vain, then, do we attempt to compute definitely the years that may

remain to this world, when we may hear from the mouth of the Truth that

it is not for us to know this. Yet some have said that four hundred,

some five hundred, others a thousand years, may be completed from the

ascension of the Lord up to His final coming. But to point out how

each of them supports his own opinion would take too long, and is not

necessary; for indeed they use human conjectures, and bring forward

nothing certain from the authority of the canonical Scriptures. But on

this subject He puts aside the figures of the calculators, and orders

silence, who says, "It is not for you to know the times, which the

Father hath put in His own power."

But because this sentence is in the Gospel, it is no wonder that

the worshippers of the many and false gods have been none the less

restrained from feigning that by the responses of the demons, whom

they worship as gods, it has been fixed how long the Christian

religion is to last. For when they saw that it could not be consumed

by so many and great persecutions, but rather drew from them

wonderful enlargements, they invented I know not what Greek verses,

as if poured forth by a divine oracle to some one consulting it,

in which, indeed, they make Christ innocent of this, as it were,

sacrilegious crime, but add that Peter by enchantments brought it

about that the name of Christ should be worshipped for three hundred

and sixty-five years, and, after the completion of that number of

years, should at once take end. Oh the hearts of learned men! Oh,

learned wits, meet to believe such things \_about\_ Christ as you are

not willing to believe \_in\_ Christ, that His disciple Peter did not

learn magic arts from Him, yet that, although He was innocent, His

disciple was an enchanter, and chose that His name rather than his

own should be worshipped through his magic arts, his great labours

and perils, and at last even the shedding of his blood! If Peter the

enchanter made the world so love Christ, what did Christ the innocent

do to make Peter so love Him? Let them answer themselves then, and,

if they can, let them understand that the world, for the sake of

eternal life, was made to love Christ by that same supernal grace

which made Peter also love Christ for the sake of the eternal life

to be received from Him, and that even to the extent of suffering

temporal death for Him. And then, what kind of gods are these who

are able to predict such things, yet are not able to avert them,

succumbing in such a way to a single enchanter and wicked magician

(who, as they say, having slain a yearling boy and torn him to

pieces, buried him with nefarious rites), that they permitted the

sect hostile to themselves to gain strength for so great a time, and

to surmount the horrid cruelties of so many great persecutions, not

by resisting but by suffering, and to procure the overthrow of their

own images, temples, rituals, and oracles? Finally, what god was

it--not ours, certainly, but one of their own--who was either enticed

or compelled by so great wickedness to perform these things? For

those verses say that Peter bound, not any demon, but a god to do

these things. Such a god have they who have not Christ.

54. \_Of the very foolish lie of the pagans, in feigning that the

Christian religion was not to last beyond three hundred and

sixty-five years.\_

I might collect these and many similar arguments, if that year had

not already passed by which lying divination has promised, and

deceived vanity has believed. But as a few years ago three hundred

and sixty-five years were completed since the time when the worship

of the name of Christ was established by His presence in the flesh,

and by the apostles, what other proof need we seek to refute that

falsehood? For, not to place the beginning of this period at the

nativity of Christ, because as an infant and boy He had no disciples,

yet, when He began to have them, beyond doubt the Christian doctrine

and religion then became known through His bodily presence, that is,

after He was baptized in the river Jordan by the ministry of John.

For on this account that prophecy went before concerning Him: "He

shall reign from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends

of the earth."[615] But since, before He suffered and rose from the

dead, the faith had not yet been defined to all, but was defined in

the resurrection of Christ (for so the Apostle Paul speaks to the

Athenians, saying, "But now He announces to men that all everywhere

should repent, because He hath appointed a day in which to judge the

world in equity, by the Man in whom He hath defined the faith to all

men, raising Him from the dead"[616]), it is better that, in settling

this question, we should start from that point, especially because

the Holy Spirit was then given, just as He behoved to be given after

the resurrection of Christ in that city from which the second law,

that is, the new testament, ought to begin. For the first, which is

called the old testament, was given from Mount Sinai through Moses.

But concerning this which was to be given by Christ it was predicted,

"Out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out

of Jerusalem;"[617] whence He Himself said, that repentance in His

name behoved to be preached among all nations, but yet beginning

at Jerusalem.[618] There, therefore, the worship of this name

took its rise, that Jesus should be believed in, who died and rose

again. There this faith blazed up with such noble beginnings, that

several thousand men, being converted to the name of Christ with

wonderful alacrity, sold their goods for distribution among the

needy, thus, by a holy resolution and most ardent charity, coming

to voluntary poverty, and prepared themselves, amid the Jews who

raged and thirsted for their blood, to contend for the truth even to

death, not with armed power, but with more powerful patience. If this

was accomplished by no magic arts, why do they hesitate to believe

that the other could be done throughout the whole world by the same

divine power by which this was done? But supposing Peter wrought that

enchantment so that so great a multitude of men at Jerusalem was

thus kindled to worship the name of Christ, who had either seized

and fastened Him to the cross, or reviled Him when fastened there,

we must still inquire when the three hundred and sixty-five years

must be completed, counting from that year. Now Christ died when the

Gemini were consuls, on the eighth day before the kalends of April.

He rose the third day, as the apostles have proved by the evidence of

their own senses. Then forty days after, He ascended into heaven. Ten

days after, that is, on the fiftieth after His resurrection, He sent

the Holy Spirit; then three thousand men believed when the apostles

preached Him. Then, therefore, arose the worship of that name, as

we believe, and according to the real truth, by the efficacy of the

Holy Spirit, but, as impious vanity has feigned or thought, by the

magic arts of Peter. A little afterward, too, on a wonderful sign

being wrought, when at Peter's own word a certain beggar, so lame

from his mother's womb that he was carried by others and laid down at

the gate of the temple, where he begged alms, was made whole in the

name of Jesus Christ, and leaped up, five thousand men believed, and

thenceforth the Church grew by sundry accessions of believers. Thus

we gather the very day with which that year began, namely, that on

which the Holy Spirit was sent, that is, during the ides of May. And,

on counting the consuls, the three hundred and sixty-five years are

found completed on the same ides in the consulate of Honorius and

Eutychianus. Now, in the following year, in the consulate of Mallius

Theodorus, when, according to that oracle of the demons or figment

of men, there ought already to have been no Christian religion,

it was not necessary to inquire what perchance was done in other

parts of the earth. But, as we know, in the most noted and eminent

city Carthage, in Africa, Gaudentius and Jovius, officers of the

Emperor Honorius, on the fourteenth day before the kalends of April,

overthrew the temples and broke the images of the false gods. And

from that time to the present, during almost thirty years, who does

not see how much the worship of the name of Christ has increased,

especially after many of those became Christians who had been kept

back from the faith by thinking that divination true, but saw when

that same number of years was completed that it was empty and

ridiculous? We, therefore, who are called and \_are\_ Christians, do

not believe in Peter, but in Him whom Peter believed,--being edified

by Peter's sermons about Christ, not poisoned by his incantations;

and not deceived by his enchantments, but aided by his good deeds.

Christ Himself, who was Peter's Master in the doctrine which leads to

eternal life, is our Master too.

But let us now at last finish this book, after thus far treating of,

and showing as far as seemed sufficient, what is the mortal course

of the two cities, the heavenly and the earthly, which are mingled

together from the beginning down to the end. Of these, the earthly one

has made to herself of whom she would, either from any other quarter,

or even from among men, false gods whom she might serve by sacrifice;

but she which is heavenly, and is a pilgrim on the earth, does not make

false gods, but is herself made by the true God, of whom she herself

must be the true sacrifice. Yet both alike either enjoy temporal good

things, or are afflicted with temporal evils, but with diverse faith,

diverse hope, and diverse love, until they must be separated by the

last judgment, and each must receive her own end, of which there is no

end. About these ends of both we must next treat.

FOOTNOTES:

[497] Sallust, \_Bell. Cat.\_ c. 8.

[498] In the Hebrew text, Gen. xxv. 7, a hundred and seventy-five

years.

[499] Gen. xlix. 10.

[500] Ἄρης and παγος.

[501] 1 Cor. xv. 46, 47.

[502] The priests who officiated at the Lupercalia.

[503] \_Æneid\_, viii. 321.

[504] Isa. xlviii. 20.

[505] Virgil, \_Eclogue\_, viii. 70.

[506] Virgil, \_Eclogue\_, v. 11.

[507] Varro, \_De Lingua Latina\_, v. 43.

[508] \_Æneid\_, vi. 767.

[509] Hos. i. 1.

[510] Amos i. 1.

[511] Isa. i. 1. Isaiah's father was Amoz, a different name.

[512] Mic. i. 1.

[513] The chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome.

[514] Hos. i. 10.

[515] Hos. i. 11.

[516] Gal. ii. 14-20.

[517] Hos. iii. 4.

[518] Hos. iii. 5.

[519] Rom. i. 3.

[520] Hos. vi. 2.

[521] Col. iii. 1.

[522] Amos iv. 12, 13.

[523] Amos ix. 11, 12; Acts xv. 15-17.

[524] Isa. lii. 13-liii. 13. Augustine quotes these passages in full.

[525] Isa. liv. 1-5.

[526] Mic. iv. 1-3.

[527] Mic. v. 2-4.

[528] Joel ii. 28, 29.

[529] Obad. 17.

[530] Obad. 21.

[531] Col. i. 13.

[532] Nah. i. 14-ii. 1.

[533] Hab. ii. 2, 3.

[534] Hab. iii. 2.

[535] Luke xxiii. 34.

[536] Hab. iii. 3.

[537] Ps. lvii. 5, 11.

[538] Hab. iii. 4.

[539] John iii. 17.

[540] Joel ii. 13.

[541] Matt. v. 4.

[542] Matt. x. 27.

[543] Ps. cxvi. 16.

[544] Rom. xii. 12.

[545] Heb. xi. 13, 16.

[546] Rom. x. 3.

[547] Ps. xl. 2, 3.

[548] Jer. ix. 23, 24, as in 1 Cor. i. 31.

[549] Lam. iv. 20.

[550] Bar. iii. 35-37.

[551] Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

[552] Jer. xvi. 19.

[553] Jer. xvii. 9.

[554] Jer. xxxi. 31; see Bk. xvii. 3.

[555] Zeph. iii. 8.

[556] Zeph. ii. 11.

[557] Zeph. iii. 9-12.

[558] Isa. x. 22; Rom. ix. 27.

[559] Dan. vii. 13, 14.

[560] Ezek. xxxiv. 23.

[561] Ezek. xxxvii. 22-24.

[562] Hag. ii. 6.

[563] Zech. ix. 9, 10.

[564] Zech. ix. 11.

[565] Ps. xl. 2.

[566] Mal. i. 10, 11.

[567] Mal. ii. 5-7.

[568] Mal. iii. 1, 2.

[569] John ii. 19.

[570] Mal. iii. 13-16.

[571] Mal. iii. 17-iv. 3.

[572] Esdras iii. and iv.

[573] Acts vii. 22.

[574] Heb. xi. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

[575] Jude 14.

[576] Ex. xx. 12.

[577] Ex. xx. 13-15, the order as in Mark x. 19.

[578] Var. reading, "both in Greek and Latin."

[579] Jon. iii. 4.

[580] Hag. ii. 9.

[581] Hag. ii. 7.

[582] Matt. xxii. 14.

[583] Gen. xlix. 10.

[584] Isa. vii. 14, as in Matt. i. 23.

[585] Isa. x. 22, as in Rom. ix. 27, 28.

[586] Ps. lxix. 22, 23; Rom. xi. 9, 10.

[587] Ps. lxix. 10, 11.

[588] Rom. xi. 11.

[589] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[590] Hag. ii. 9.

[591] Hag. ii. 9.

[592] 1 Cor. x. 4; Ex. xvii. 6.

[593] Hag. ii. 7.

[594] Eph. i. 4.

[595] Matt. xxii. 11-14.

[596] Matt. xiii. 47-50.

[597] Ps. xl. 5.

[598] Matt. iii 2, iv. 17.

[599] Luke vi. 13.

[600] Isa. ii. 3.

[601] Luke xxiv. 45-47.

[602] Acts i. 7, 8.

[603] Matt. x. 28.

[604] Heb. ii. 4.

[605] Rom. viii. 28.

[606] Ps. xciv. 19.

[607] Rom. xii. 12.

[608] 2 Tim. iii. 12.

[609] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[610] Rom. viii. 29.

[611] Ps. xciv. 19.

[612] 1 John iii. 12.

[613] Isa. xi. 4; 2 Thess. i. 9.

[614] Acts i. 6, 7.

[615] Ps. lxxii. 8.

[616] Acts xvii. 30, 31.

[617] Isa. ii. 3.

[618] Luke xxiv. 47.

BOOK NINETEENTH.

ARGUMENT.

IN THIS BOOK THE END OF THE TWO CITIES, THE EARTHLY AND THE

HEAVENLY, IS DISCUSSED. AUGUSTINE REVIEWS THE OPINIONS OF THE

PHILOSOPHERS REGARDING THE SUPREME GOOD, AND THEIR VAIN EFFORTS

TO MAKE FOR THEMSELVES A HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE; AND, WHILE HE

REFUTES THESE, HE TAKES OCCASION TO SHOW WHAT THE PEACE AND

HAPPINESS BELONGING TO THE HEAVENLY CITY, OR THE PEOPLE OF

CHRIST, ARE BOTH NOW AND HEREAFTER.

1. \_That Varro has made out that two hundred and eighty-eight

different sects of philosophy might be formed by the various

opinions regarding the supreme good.\_

As I see that I have still to discuss the fit destinies of the two

cities, the earthly and the heavenly, I must first explain, so far as

the limits of this work allow me, the reasonings by which men have

attempted to make for themselves a happiness in this unhappy life,

in order that it may be evident, not only from divine authority, but

also from such reasons as can be adduced to unbelievers, how the

empty dreams of the philosophers differ from the hope which God gives

to us, and from the substantial fulfilment of it which He will give

us as our blessedness. Philosophers have expressed a great variety of

diverse opinions regarding the ends of goods and of evils, and this

question they have eagerly canvassed, that they might, if possible,

discover what makes a man happy. For the end of our good is that for

the sake of which other things are to be desired, while it is to be

desired for its own sake; and the end of evil is that on account of

which other things are to be shunned, while it is avoided on its own

account. Thus, by the \_end of good\_, we at present mean, not that by

which good is destroyed, so that it no longer exists, but that by

which it is finished, so that it becomes complete; and by the \_end of

evil\_ we mean, not that which abolishes it, but that which completes

its development. These two ends, therefore, are the supreme good

and the supreme evil; and, as I have said, those who have in this

vain life professed the study of wisdom have been at great pains to

discover these ends, and to obtain the supreme good and avoid the

supreme evil in this life. And although they erred in a variety of

ways, yet natural insight has prevented them from wandering from the

truth so far that they have not placed the supreme good and evil,

some in the soul, some in the body, and some in both. From this

tripartite distribution of the sects of philosophy, Marcus Varro,

in his book \_De Philosophia\_,[619] has drawn so large a variety of

opinions, that, by a subtle and minute analysis of distinctions, he

numbers without difficulty as many as 288 sects,--not that these have

actually existed, but sects which are possible.

To illustrate briefly what he means, I must begin with his own

introductory statement in the above-mentioned book, that there

are four things which men desire, as it were by nature without a

master, without the help of any instruction, without industry or

the art of living which is called virtue, and which is certainly

learned:[620] either pleasure, which is an agreeable stirring of the

bodily sense; or repose, which excludes every bodily inconvenience;

or both these, which Epicurus calls by the one name, pleasure; or

the primary objects of nature,[621] which comprehend the things

already named and other things, either bodily, such as health, and

safety, and integrity of the members, or spiritual, such as the

greater and less mental gifts that are found in men. Now these four

things--pleasure, repose, the two combined, and the primary objects

of nature--exist in us in such sort that we must either desire virtue

on their account, or them for the sake of virtue, or both for their

own sake; and consequently there arise from this distinction twelve

sects, for each is by this consideration tripled. I will illustrate

this in one instance, and, having done so, it will not be difficult

to understand the others. According, then, as bodily pleasure is

subjected, preferred, or united to virtue, there are three sects. It

is subjected to virtue when it is chosen as subservient to virtue.

Thus it is a duty of virtue to live for one's country, and for its

sake to beget children, neither of which can be done without bodily

pleasure. For there is pleasure in eating and drinking, pleasure also

in sexual intercourse. But when it is preferred to virtue, it is

desired for its own sake, and virtue is chosen only for its sake, and

to effect nothing else than the attainment or preservation of bodily

pleasure. And this, indeed, is to make life hideous; for where virtue

is the slave of pleasure it no longer deserves the name of virtue.

Yet even this disgraceful distortion has found some philosophers

to patronize and defend it. Then virtue is united to pleasure when

neither is desired for the other's sake, but both for their own. And

therefore, as pleasure, according as it is subjected, preferred, or

united to virtue, makes three sects, so also do repose, pleasure and

repose combined, and the prime natural blessings, make their three

sects each. For as men's opinions vary, and these four things are

sometimes subjected, sometimes preferred, and sometimes united to

virtue, there are produced twelve sects. But this number again is

doubled by the addition of one difference, viz. the social life;

for whoever attaches himself to any of these sects does so either

for his own sake alone, or for the sake of a companion, for whom he

ought to wish what he desires for himself. And thus there will be

twelve of those who think some one of these opinions should be held

for their own sakes, and other twelve who decide that they ought to

follow this or that philosophy not for their own sakes only, but also

for the sake of others whose good they desire as their own. These

twenty-four sects again are doubled, and become forty-eight by adding

a difference taken from the New Academy. For each of these four and

twenty sects can hold and defend their opinion as certain, as the

Stoics defended the position that the supreme good of man consisted

solely in virtue; or they can be held as probable, but not certain,

as the New Academics did. There are, therefore, twenty-four who hold

their philosophy as certainly true, other twenty-four who hold their

opinions as probable, but not certain. Again, as each person who

attaches himself to any of these sects may adopt the mode of life

either of the Cynics or of the other philosophers, this distinction

will double the number, and so make ninety-six sects. Then, lastly,

as each of these sects may be adhered to either by men who love a

life of ease, as those who have through choice or necessity addicted

themselves to study, or by men who love a busy life, as those who,

while philosophizing, have been much occupied with state affairs and

public business, or by men who choose a mixed life, in imitation of

those who have apportioned their time partly to erudite leisure,

partly to necessary business: by these differences the number of the

sects is tripled, and becomes 288.

I have thus, as briefly and lucidly as I could, given in my own words

the opinions which Varro expresses in his book. But how he refutes all

the rest of these sects, and chooses one, the Old Academy, instituted

by Plato, and continuing to Polemo, the fourth teacher of that school

of philosophy which held that their system was certain; and how on this

ground he distinguishes it from the New Academy,[622] which began with

Polemo's successor Arcesilaus, and held that all things are uncertain;

and how he seeks to establish that the Old Academy was as free from

error as from doubt,--all this, I say, were too long to enter upon in

detail, and yet I must not altogether pass it by in silence. Varro then

rejects, as a first step, all those differences which have multiplied

the number of sects; and the ground on which he does so is that they

are not differences about the supreme good. He maintains that in

philosophy a sect is created only by its having an opinion of its own

different from other schools on the point of the ends-in-chief. For

man has no other reason for philosophizing than that he may be happy;

but that which makes him happy is itself the supreme good. In other

words, the supreme good is the reason of philosophizing; and therefore

that cannot be called a sect of philosophy which pursues no way of its

own towards the supreme good. Thus, when it is asked whether a wise

man will adopt the social life, and desire and be interested in the

supreme good of his friend as in his own, or will, on the contrary, do

all that he does merely for his own sake, there is no question here

about the supreme good, but only about the propriety of associating or

not associating a friend in its participation: whether the wise man

will do this not for his own sake, but for the sake of his friend in

whose good he delights as in his own. So, too, when it is asked whether

all things about which philosophy is concerned are to be considered

uncertain, as by the New Academy, or certain, as the other philosophers

maintain, the question here is not what end should be pursued, but

whether or not we are to believe in the substantial existence of that

end; or, to put it more plainly, whether he who pursues the supreme

good must maintain that it is a true good, or only that it appears to

him to be true, though possibly it may be delusive,--both pursuing

one and the same good. The distinction, too, which is founded on the

dress and manners of the Cynics, does not touch the question of the

chief good, but only the question whether he who pursues that good

which seems to himself true should live as do the Cynics. There were,

in fact, men who, though they pursued different things as the supreme

good, some choosing pleasure, others virtue, yet adopted that mode

of life which gave the Cynics their name. Thus, whatever it is which

distinguishes the Cynics from other philosophers, this has no bearing

on the choice and pursuit of that good which constitutes happiness.

For if it had any such bearing, then the same habits of life would

necessitate the pursuit of the same chief good, and diverse habits

would necessitate the pursuit of different ends.

2. \_How Varro, by removing all the differences which do not form

sects, but are merely secondary questions, reaches three

definitions of the chief good, of which we must choose one.\_

The same may be said of those three kinds of life, the life of studious

leisure and search after truth, the life of easy engagement in affairs,

and the life in which both these are mingled. When it is asked, which

of these should be adopted, this involves no controversy about the

end of good, but inquires which of these three puts a man in the best

position for finding and retaining the supreme good. For this good,

as soon as a man finds it, makes him happy; but lettered leisure,

or public business, or the alternation of these, do not necessarily

constitute happiness. Many, in fact, find it possible to adopt one or

other of these modes of life, and yet to miss what makes a man happy.

The question, therefore, regarding the supreme good and the supreme

evil, and which distinguishes sects of philosophy, is one; and these

questions concerning the social life, the doubt of the Academy, the

dress and food of the Cynics, the three modes of life--the active,

the contemplative, and the mixed--these are different questions, into

none of which the question of the chief good enters. And therefore, as

Marcus Varro multiplied the sects to the number of 288 (or whatever

larger number he chose) by introducing these four differences derived

from the social life, the New Academy, the Cynics, and the threefold

form of life, so, by removing these differences as having no bearing on

the supreme good, and as therefore not constituting what can properly

be called sects, he returns to those twelve schools which concern

themselves with inquiring what that good is which makes man happy, and

he shows that one of these is true, the rest false. In other words,

he dismisses the distinction founded on the threefold mode of life,

and so decreases the whole number by two-thirds, reducing the sects to

ninety-six. Then, putting aside the Cynic peculiarities, the number

decreases by a half, to forty-eight. Taking away next the distinction

occasioned by the hesitancy of the New Academy, the number is again

halved, and reduced to twenty-four. Treating in a similar way the

diversity introduced by the consideration of the social life, there

are left but twelve, which this difference had doubled to twenty-four.

Regarding these twelve, no reason can be assigned why they should

not be called sects. For in them the sole inquiry is regarding the

supreme good and the ultimate evil,--that is to say, regarding the

supreme good, for this being found, the opposite evil is thereby

found. Now, to make these twelve sects, he multiplies by three these

four things--pleasure, repose, pleasure and repose combined, and the

primary objects of nature which Varro calls \_primigenia\_. For as these

four things are sometimes subordinated to virtue, so that they seem to

be desired not for their own sake, but for virtue's sake; sometimes

preferred to it, so that virtue seems to be necessary not on its own

account, but in order to attain these things; sometimes joined with

it, so that both they and virtue are desired for their own sakes,--we

must multiply the four by three, and thus we get twelve sects. But

from those four things Varro eliminates three--pleasure, repose,

pleasure and repose combined--not because he thinks these are not

worthy of the place assigned them, but because they are included in

the primary objects of nature. And what need is there, at any rate, to

make a threefold division out of these two ends, pleasure and repose,

taking them first severally and then conjunctly, since both they, and

many other things besides, are comprehended in the primary objects of

nature? Which of the three remaining sects must be chosen? This is the

question that Varro dwells upon. For whether one of these three or

some other be chosen, reason forbids that more than one be true. This

we shall afterwards see; but meanwhile let us explain as briefly and

distinctly as we can how Varro makes his selection from these three,

that is, from the sects which severally hold that the primary objects

of nature are to be desired for virtue's sake, that virtue is to be

desired for their sake, and that virtue and these objects are to be

desired each for their own sake.

3. \_Which of the three leading opinions regarding the chief good

should be preferred, according to Varro, who follows Antiochus

and the Old Academy.\_

Which of these three is true and to be adopted he attempts to show in

the following manner. As it is the supreme good, not of a tree, or

of a beast, or of a god, but of man, that philosophy is in quest of,

he thinks that, first of all, we must define man. He is of opinion

that there are two parts in human nature, body and soul, and makes

no doubt that of these two the soul is the better and by far the

more worthy part. But whether the soul alone is the man, so that

the body holds the same relation to it as a horse to the horseman,

this he thinks has to be ascertained. The horseman is not a horse

and a man, but only a man, yet he is called a horseman, because he

is in some relation to the horse. Again, is the body alone the man,

having a relation to the soul such as the cup has to the drink? For

it is not the cup and the drink it contains which are called the

cup, but the cup alone; yet it is so called because it is made to

hold the drink. Or, lastly, is it neither the soul alone nor the

body alone, but both together, which are man, the body and the soul

being each a part, but the whole man being both together, as we

call two horses yoked together a pair, of which pair the near and

the off horse is each a part, but we do not call either of them, no

matter how connected with the other, a pair, but only both together?

Of these three alternatives, then, Varro chooses the third, that man

is neither the body alone, nor the soul alone, but both together.

And therefore the highest good, in which lies the happiness of man,

is composed of goods of both kinds, both bodily and spiritual. And

consequently he thinks that the primary objects of nature are to

be sought for their own sake, and that virtue, which is the art of

living, and can be communicated by instruction, is the most excellent

of spiritual goods. This virtue, then, or art of regulating life,

when it has received these primary objects of nature which existed

independently of it, and prior to any instruction, seeks them all,

and itself also, for its own sake; and it uses them, as it also

uses itself, that from them all it may derive profit and enjoyment,

greater or less, according as they are themselves greater or less;

and while it takes pleasure in all of them, it despises the less

that it may obtain or retain the greater when occasion demands. Now,

of all goods, spiritual or bodily, there is none at all to compare

with virtue. For virtue makes a good use both of itself and of all

other goods in which lies man's happiness; and where it is absent,

no matter how many good things a man has, they are not for his good,

and consequently should not be called good things while they belong

to one who makes them useless by using them badly. The life of man,

then, is called happy when it enjoys virtue and these other spiritual

and bodily good things without which virtue is impossible. It is

called happier if it enjoys some or many other good things which

are not essential to virtue; and happiest of all, if it lacks not

one of the good things which pertain to the body and the soul. For

life is not the same thing as virtue, since not every life, but a

wisely regulated life, is virtue; and yet, while there can be life

of some kind without virtue, there cannot be virtue without life.

This I might apply to memory and reason, and such mental faculties;

for these exist prior to instruction, and without them there cannot

be any instruction, and consequently no virtue, since virtue is

learned. But bodily advantages, such as swiftness of foot, beauty,

or strength, are not essential to virtue, neither is virtue essential

to them, and yet they are good things; and, according to our

philosophers, even these advantages are desired by virtue for its own

sake, and are used and enjoyed by it in a becoming manner.

They say that this happy life is also social, and loves the advantages

of its friends as its own, and for their sake wishes for them what it

desires for itself, whether these friends live in the same family,

as a wife, children, domestics; or in the locality where one's home

is, as the citizens of the same town; or in the world at large, as

the nations bound in common human brotherhood; or in the universe

itself, comprehended in the heavens and the earth, as those whom they

call gods, and provide as friends for the wise man, and whom we more

familiarly call angels. Moreover, they say that, regarding the supreme

good and evil, there is no room for doubt, and that they therefore

differ from the New Academy in this respect, and they are not concerned

whether a philosopher pursues those ends which they think true in

the Cynic dress and manner of life or in some other. And, lastly, in

regard to the three modes of life, the contemplative, the active, and

the composite, they declare in favour of the third. That these were

the opinions and doctrines of the Old Academy, Varro asserts on the

authority of Antiochus, Cicero's master and his own, though Cicero

makes him out to have been more frequently in accordance with the

Stoics than with the Old Academy. But of what importance is this to

us, who ought to judge the matter on its own merits, rather than to

understand accurately what different men have thought about it?

4. \_What the Christians believe regarding the supreme good and

evil, in opposition to the philosophers, who have maintained

that the supreme good is in themselves.\_

If, then, we be asked what the city of God has to say upon these

points, and, in the first place, what its opinion regarding the

supreme good and evil is, it will reply that life eternal is the

supreme good, death eternal the supreme evil, and that to obtain

the one and escape the other we must live rightly. And thus it is

written, "The just lives by faith,"[623] for we do not as yet see

our good, and must therefore live by faith; neither have we in

ourselves power to live rightly, but can do so only if He who has

given us faith to believe in His help do help us when we believe and

pray. As for those who have supposed that the sovereign good and

evil are to be found in this life, and have placed it either in the

soul or the body, or in both, or, to speak more explicitly, either

in pleasure or in virtue, or in both; in repose or in virtue, or in

both; in pleasure and repose, or in virtue, or in all combined; in

the primary objects of nature, or in virtue, or in both,--all these

have, with a marvellous shallowness, sought to find their blessedness

in this life and in themselves. Contempt has been poured upon such

ideas by the Truth, saying by the prophet, "The Lord knoweth the

thoughts of men" (or, as the Apostle Paul cites the passage, "The

Lord knoweth the thoughts of the \_wise\_") "that they are vain."[624]

For what flood of eloquence can suffice to detail the miseries of

this life? Cicero, in the \_Consolation\_ on the death of his daughter,

has spent all his ability in lamentation; but how inadequate was

even his ability here? For when, where, how, in this life can these

primary objects of nature be possessed so that they may not be

assailed by unforeseen accidents? Is the body of the wise man exempt

from any pain which may dispel pleasure, from any disquietude which

may banish repose? The amputation or decay of the members of the body

puts an end to its integrity, deformity blights its beauty, weakness

its health, lassitude its vigour, sleepiness or sluggishness its

activity,--and which of these is it that may not assail the flesh

of the wise man? Comely and fitting attitudes and movements of the

body are numbered among the prime natural blessings; but what if

some sickness makes the members tremble? what if a man suffers from

curvature of the spine to such an extent that his hands reach the

ground, and he goes upon all-fours like a quadruped? Does not this

destroy all beauty and grace in the body, whether at rest or in

motion? What shall I say of the fundamental blessings of the soul,

sense and intellect, of which the one is given for the perception,

and the other for the comprehension of truth? But what kind of

sense is it that remains when a man becomes deaf and blind? where

are reason and intellect when disease makes a man delirious? We

can scarcely, or not at all, refrain from tears, when we think of

or see the actions and words of such frantic persons, and consider

how different from and even opposed to their own sober judgment and

ordinary conduct their present demeanour is. And what shall I say

of those who suffer from demoniacal possession? Where is their own

intelligence hidden and buried while the malignant spirit is using

their body and soul according to his own will? And who is quite sure

that no such thing can happen to the wise man in this life? Then,

as to the perception of truth, what can we hope for even in this

way while in the body, as we read in the true book of Wisdom, "The

corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle

presseth down the mind that museth upon many things?"[625] And

eagerness, or desire of action, if this is the right meaning to put

upon the Greek ὁρμή, is also reckoned among the primary advantages

of nature; and yet is it not this which produces those pitiable

movements of the insane, and those actions which we shudder to see,

when sense is deceived and reason deranged?

In fine, virtue itself, which is not among the primary objects of

nature, but succeeds to them as the result of learning, though

it holds the highest place among human good things, what is its

occupation save to wage perpetual war with vices,--not those that are

outside of us, but within; not other men's, but our own,--a war which

is waged especially by that virtue which the Greeks call σωφροσύνη,

and we temperance,[626] and which bridles carnal lusts, and prevents

them from winning the consent of the spirit to wicked deeds? For we

must not fancy that there is no vice in us, when, as the apostle

says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit;"[627] for to this vice

there is a contrary virtue, when, as the same writer says, "The

spirit lusteth against the flesh." "For these two," he says, "are

contrary one to the other, so that you cannot do the things which

you would." But what is it we wish to do when we seek to attain the

supreme good, unless that the flesh should cease to lust against the

spirit, and that there be no vice in us against which the spirit may

lust? And as we cannot attain to this in the present life, however

ardently we desire it, let us by God's help accomplish at least

this, to preserve the soul from succumbing and yielding to the flesh

that lusts against it, and to refuse our consent to the perpetration

of sin. Far be it from us, then, to fancy that while we are still

engaged in this intestine war, we have already found the happiness

which we seek to reach by victory. And who is there so wise that he

has no conflict at all to maintain against his vices?

What shall I say of that virtue which is called prudence? Is not all

its vigilance spent in the discernment of good from evil things,

so that no mistake may be admitted about what we should desire and

what avoid? And thus it is itself a proof that we are in the midst

of evils, or that evils are in us; for it teaches us that it is an

evil to consent to sin, and a good to refuse this consent. And yet

this evil, to which prudence teaches and temperance enables us not

to consent, is removed from this life neither by prudence nor by

temperance. And justice, whose office it is to render to every man

his due, whereby there is in man himself a certain just order of

nature, so that the soul is subjected to God, and the flesh to the

soul, and consequently both soul and flesh to God,--does not this

virtue demonstrate that it is as yet rather labouring towards its

end than resting in its finished work? For the soul is so much the

less subjected to God as it is less occupied with the thought of

God; and the flesh is so much the less subjected to the spirit as it

lusts more vehemently against the spirit. So long, therefore, as we

are beset by this weakness, this plague, this disease, how shall we

dare to say that we are safe? and if not safe, then how can we be

already enjoying our final beatitude? Then that virtue which goes

by the name of fortitude is the plainest proof of the ills of life,

for it is these ills which it is compelled to bear patiently. And

this holds good, no matter though the ripest wisdom co-exists with

it. And I am at a loss to understand how the Stoic philosophers can

presume to say that these are no ills, though at the same time they

allow the wise man to commit suicide and pass out of this life if

they become so grievous that he cannot or ought not to endure them.

But such is the stupid pride of these men who fancy that the supreme

good can be found in this life, and that they can become happy by

their own resources, that their wise man, or at least the man whom

they fancifully depict as such, is always happy, even though he

become blind, deaf, dumb, mutilated, racked with pains, or suffer

any conceivable calamity such as may compel him to make away with

himself; and they are not ashamed to call the life that is beset with

these evils happy. O happy life, which seeks the aid of death to end

it! If it is happy, let the wise man remain in it; but if these ills

drive him out of it, in what sense is it happy? Or how can they say

that these are not evils which conquer the virtue of fortitude, and

force it not only to yield, but so to rave that it in one breath

calls life happy and recommends it to be given up? For who is so

blind as not to see that if it were happy it would not be fled from?

And if they say we should flee from it on account of the infirmities

that beset it, why then do they not lower their pride and acknowledge

that it is miserable? Was it, I would ask, fortitude or weakness

which prompted Cato to kill himself? for he would not have done so

had he not been too weak to endure Cæsar's victory. Where, then,

is his fortitude? It has yielded, it has succumbed, it has been so

thoroughly overcome as to abandon, forsake, flee this happy life. Or

was it no longer happy? Then it was miserable. How, then, were these

not evils which made life miserable, and a thing to be escaped from?

And therefore those who admit that these are evils, as the

Peripatetics do, and the Old Academy, the sect which Varro advocates,

express a more intelligible doctrine; but theirs also is a surprising

mistake, for they contend that this is a happy life which is beset

by these evils, even though they be so great that he who endures

them should commit suicide to escape them. "Pains and anguish of

body," says Varro, "are evils, and so much the worse in proportion

to their severity; and to escape them you must quit this life."

What life, I pray? This life, he says, which is oppressed by such

evils. Then it is happy in the midst of these very evils on account

of which you say we must quit it? Or do you call it happy because

you are at liberty to escape these evils by death? What, then, if

by some secret judgment of God you were held fast and not permitted

to die, nor suffered to live without these evils? In that case, at

least, you would say that such a life was miserable. It is soon

relinquished, no doubt, but this does not make it not miserable;

for were it eternal, you yourself would pronounce it miserable. Its

brevity, therefore, does not clear it of misery; neither ought it to

be called happiness because it is a brief misery. Certainly there

is a mighty force in these evils which compel a man--according to

them, even a wise man--to cease to be a man that he may escape them,

though they say, and say truly, that it is as it were the first and

strongest demand of nature that a man cherish himself, and naturally

therefore avoid death, and should so stand his own friend as to wish

and vehemently aim at continuing to exist as a living creature, and

subsisting in this union of soul and body. There is a mighty force in

these evils to overcome this natural instinct by which death is by

every means and with all a man's efforts avoided, and to overcome it

so completely that what was avoided is desired, sought after, and if

it cannot in any other way be obtained, is inflicted by the man on

himself. There is a mighty force in these evils which make fortitude

a homicide,--if, indeed, that is to be called fortitude which is so

thoroughly overcome by these evils, that it not only cannot preserve

by patience the man whom it undertook to govern and defend, but is

itself obliged to kill him. The wise man, I admit, ought to bear

death with patience, but when it is inflicted by another. If, then,

as these men maintain, he is obliged to inflict it on himself,

certainly it must be owned that the ills which compel him to this

are not only evils, but intolerable evils. The life, then, which is

either subject to accidents, or environed with evils so considerable

and grievous, could never have been called happy, if the men who

give it this name had condescended to yield to the truth, and to be

conquered by valid arguments, when they inquired after the happy

life, as they yield to unhappiness, and are overcome by overwhelming

evils, when they put themselves to death, and if they had not fancied

that the supreme good was to be found in this mortal life; for the

very virtues of this life, which are certainly its best and most

useful possessions, are all the more telling proofs of its miseries

in proportion as they are helpful against the violence of its

dangers, toils, and woes. For if these are true virtues,--and such

cannot exist save in those who have true piety,--they do not profess

to be able to deliver the men who possess them from all miseries; for

true virtues tell no such lies, but they profess that by the hope

of the future world this life, which is miserably involved in the

many and great evils of this world, is happy as it is also safe. For

if not yet safe, how could it be happy? And therefore the Apostle

Paul, speaking not of men without prudence, temperance, fortitude,

and justice, but of those whose lives were regulated by true piety,

and whose virtues were therefore true, says, "For we are saved by

hope: now hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why

doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we

with patience wait for it."[628] As, therefore, we are saved, so we

are made happy by hope. And as we do not as yet possess a present,

but look for a future salvation, so is it with our happiness, and

this "with patience;" for we are encompassed with evils, which we

ought patiently to endure, until we come to the ineffable enjoyment

of unmixed good; for there shall be no longer anything to endure.

Salvation, such as it shall be in the world to come, shall itself be

our final happiness. And this happiness these philosophers refuse to

believe in, because they do not see it, and attempt to fabricate for

themselves a happiness in this life, based upon a virtue which is as

deceitful as it is proud.

5. \_Of the social life, which, though most desirable, is

frequently disturbed by many distresses.\_

We give a much more unlimited approval to their idea that the life of

the wise man must be social. For how could the city of God (concerning

which we are already writing no less than the nineteenth book of this

work) either take a beginning or be developed, or attain its proper

destiny, if the life of the saints were not a social life? But who can

enumerate all the great grievances with which human society abounds

in the misery of this mortal state? Who can weigh them? Hear how one

of their comic writers makes one of his characters express the common

feelings of all men in this matter: "I am married; this is one misery.

Children are born to me; they are additional cares."[629] What shall

I say of the miseries of love which Terence also recounts--"slights,

suspicions, quarrels, war to-day, peace to-morrow?"[630] Is not human

life full of such things? Do they not often occur even in honourable

friendships? On all hands we experience these slights, suspicions,

quarrels, war, all of which are undoubted evils; while, on the other

hand, peace is a doubtful good, because we do not know the heart of our

friend, and though we did know it to-day, we should be as ignorant of

what it might be to-morrow. Who ought to be, or who are more friendly

than those who live in the same family? And yet who can rely even upon

this friendship, seeing that secret treachery has often broken it up,

and produced enmity as bitter as the amity was sweet, or seemed sweet

by the most perfect dissimulation? It is on this account that the

words of Cicero so move the heart of every one, and provoke a sigh:

"There are no snares more dangerous than those which lurk under the

guise of duty or the name of relationship. For the man who is your

declared foe you can easily baffle by precaution; but this hidden,

intestine, and domestic danger not merely exists, but overwhelms you

before you can foresee and examine it."[631] It is also to this that

allusion is made by the divine saying, "A man's foes are those of his

own household,"[632]--words which one cannot hear without pain; for

though a man have sufficient fortitude to endure it with equanimity,

and sufficient sagacity to baffle the malice of a pretended friend,

yet if he himself is a good man, he cannot but be greatly pained at

the discovery of the perfidy of wicked men, whether they have always

been wicked and merely feigned goodness, or have fallen from a better

to a malicious disposition. If, then, home, the natural refuge from

the ills of life, is itself not safe, what shall we say of the city,

which, as it is larger, is so much the more filled with lawsuits civil

and criminal, and is never free from the fear, if sometimes from the

actual outbreak, of disturbing and bloody insurrections and civil wars?

6. \_Of the error of human judgments when the truth is hidden.\_

What shall I say of these judgments which men pronounce on men, and

which are necessary in communities, whatever outward peace they

enjoy? Melancholy and lamentable judgments they are, since the judges

are men who cannot discern the consciences of those at their bar,

and are therefore frequently compelled to put innocent witnesses to

the torture to ascertain the truth regarding the crimes of other

men. What shall I say of torture applied to the accused himself?

He is tortured to discover whether he is guilty, so that, though

innocent, he suffers most undoubted punishment for crime that is

still doubtful, not because it is proved that he committed it, but

because it is not ascertained that he did not commit it. Thus the

ignorance of the judge frequently involves an innocent person in

suffering. And what is still more unendurable--a thing, indeed, to

be bewailed, and, if that were possible, watered with fountains of

tears--is this, that when the judge puts the accused to the question,

that he may not unwittingly put an innocent man to death, the result

of this lamentable ignorance is that this very person, whom he

tortured that he might not condemn him if innocent, is condemned to

death both tortured and innocent. For if he has chosen, in obedience

to the philosophical instructions to the wise man, to quit this life

rather than endure any longer such tortures, he declares that he has

committed the crime which in fact he has not committed. And when he

has been condemned and put to death, the judge is still in ignorance

whether he has put to death an innocent or a guilty person, though he

put the accused to the torture for the very purpose of saving himself

from condemning the innocent; and consequently he has both tortured

an innocent man to discover his innocence, and has put him to death

without discovering it. If such darkness shrouds social life, will

a wise judge take his seat on the bench or no? Beyond question he

will. For human society, which he thinks it a wickedness to abandon,

constrains him and compels him to this duty. And he thinks it no

wickedness that innocent witnesses are tortured regarding the crimes

of which other men are accused; or that the accused are put to the

torture, so that they are often overcome with anguish, and, though

innocent, make false confessions regarding themselves, and are

punished; or that, though they be not condemned to die, they often

die during, or in consequence of, the torture; or that sometimes

the accusers, who perhaps have been prompted by a desire to benefit

society by bringing criminals to justice, are themselves condemned

through the ignorance of the judge, because they are unable to prove

the truth of their accusations though they are true, and because the

witnesses lie, and the accused endures the torture without being

moved to confession. These numerous and important evils he does not

consider sins; for the wise judge does these things, not with any

intention of doing harm, but because his ignorance compels him, and

because human society claims him as a judge. But though we therefore

acquit the judge of malice, we must none the less condemn human

life as miserable. And if he is compelled to torture and punish the

innocent because his office and his ignorance constrain him, is he

a happy as well as a guiltless man? Surely it were proof of more

profound considerateness and finer feeling were he to recognise the

misery of these necessities, and shrink from his own implication in

that misery; and had he any piety about him, he would cry to God,

"From my necessities deliver Thou me."[633]

7. \_Of the diversity of languages, by which the intercourse of men

is prevented; and of the misery of wars, even of those called

just.\_

After the state or city comes the world, the third circle of human

society,--the first being the house, and the second the city. And the

world, as it is larger, so it is fuller of dangers, as the greater

sea is the more dangerous. And here, in the first place, man is

separated from man by the difference of languages. For if two men,

each ignorant of the other's language, meet, and are not compelled

to pass, but, on the contrary, to remain in company, dumb animals,

though of different species, would more easily hold intercourse

than they, human beings though they be. For their common nature

is no help to friendliness when they are prevented by diversity of

language from conveying their sentiments to one another; so that a

man would more readily hold intercourse with his dog than with a

foreigner. But the imperial city has endeavoured to impose on subject

nations not only her yoke, but her language, as a bond of peace, so

that interpreters, far from being scarce, are numberless. This is

true; but how many great wars, how much slaughter and bloodshed,

have provided this unity! And though these are past, the end of

these miseries has not yet come. For though there have never been

wanting, nor are yet wanting, hostile nations beyond the empire,

against whom wars have been and are waged, yet, supposing there were

no such nations, the very extent of the empire itself has produced

wars of a more obnoxious description--social and civil wars--and

with these the whole race has been agitated, either by the actual

conflict or the fear of a renewed outbreak. If I attempted to give

an adequate description of these manifold disasters, these stern and

lasting necessities, though I am quite unequal to the task, what

limit could I set? But, say they, the wise man will wage just wars.

As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars,

if he remembers that he is a man; for if they were not just he would

not wage them, and would therefore be delivered from all wars. For

it is the wrong-doing of the opposing party which compels the wise

man to wage just wars; and this wrong-doing, even though it gave

rise to no war, would still be matter of grief to man because it is

man's wrong-doing. Let every one, then, who thinks with pain on all

these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless, acknowledge that this

is misery. And if any one either endures or thinks of them without

mental pain, this is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks

himself happy because he has lost human feeling.

8. \_That the friendship of good men cannot be securely rested in,

so long as the dangers of this life force us to be anxious.\_

In our present wretched condition we frequently mistake a friend for

an enemy, and an enemy for a friend. And if we escape this pitiable

blindness, is not the unfeigned confidence and mutual love of true and

good friends our one solace in human society, filled as it is with

misunderstandings and calamities? And yet the more friends we have, and

the more widely they are scattered, the more numerous are our fears

that some portion of the vast masses of the disasters of life may light

upon them. For we are not only anxious lest they suffer from famine,

war, disease, captivity, or the inconceivable horrors of slavery,

but we are also affected with the much more painful dread that their

friendship may be changed into perfidy, malice, and injustice. And when

these contingencies actually occur,--as they do the more frequently

the more friends we have, and the more widely they are scattered,--and

when they come to our knowledge, who but the man who has experienced

it can tell with what pangs the heart is torn? We would, in fact,

prefer to hear that they were dead, although we could not without

anguish hear of even this. For if their life has solaced us with the

charms of friendship, can it be that their death should affect us with

no sadness? He who will have none of this sadness must, if possible,

have no friendly intercourse. Let him interdict or extinguish friendly

affection; let him burst with ruthless insensibility the bonds of

every human relationship; or let him contrive so to use them that

no sweetness shall distil into his spirit. But if this is utterly

impossible, how shall we contrive to feel no bitterness in the death

of those whose life has been sweet to us? Hence arises that grief

which affects the tender heart like a wound or a bruise, and which is

healed by the application of kindly consolation. For though the cure is

affected all the more easily and rapidly the better condition the soul

is in, we must not on this account suppose that there is nothing at

all to heal. Although, then, our present life is afflicted, sometimes

in a milder, sometimes in a more painful degree, by the death of those

very dear to us, and especially of useful public men, yet we would

prefer to hear that such men were dead rather than to hear or perceive

that they had fallen from the faith, or from virtue,--in other words,

that they were spiritually dead. Of this vast material for misery the

earth is full, and therefore it is written, "Is not human life upon

earth a trial?"[634] And with the same reference the Lord says, "Woe

to the world because of offences!"[635] and again, "Because iniquity

abounded, the love of many shall wax cold."[636] And hence we enjoy

some gratification when our good friends die; for though their death

leaves us in sorrow, we have the consolatory assurance that they are

beyond the ills by which in this life even the best of men are broken

down or corrupted, or are in danger of both results.

9. \_Of the friendship of the holy angels, which men cannot be sure

of in this life, owing to the deceit of the demons who hold in

bondage the worshippers of a plurality of gods.\_

The philosophers who wished us to have the gods for our friends rank

the friendship of the holy angels in the fourth circle of society,

advancing now from the three circles of society on earth to the

universe, and embracing heaven itself. And in this friendship we

have indeed no fear that the angels will grieve us by their death or

deterioration. But as we cannot mingle with them as familiarly as

with men (which itself is one of the grievances of this life), and as

Satan, as we read,[637] sometimes transforms himself into an angel

of light, to tempt those whom it is necessary to discipline, or just

to deceive, there is great need of God's mercy to preserve us from

making friends of demons in disguise, while we fancy we have good

angels for our friends; for the astuteness and deceitfulness of these

wicked spirits is equalled by their hurtfulness. And is this not a

great misery of human life, that we are involved in such ignorance

as, but for God's mercy, makes us a prey to these demons? And it is

very certain that the philosophers of the godless city, who have

maintained that the gods were their friends, had fallen a prey to the

malignant demons who rule that city, and whose eternal punishment is

to be shared by it. For the nature of these beings is sufficiently

evinced by the sacred or rather sacrilegious observances which form

their worship, and by the filthy games in which their crimes are

celebrated, and which they themselves originated and exacted from

their worshippers as a fit propitiation.

10. \_The reward prepared for the saints after they have endured the

trial of this life.\_

But not even the saints and faithful worshippers of the one true and

most high God are safe from the manifold temptations and deceits

of the demons. For in this abode of weakness, and in these wicked

days, this state of anxiety has also its use, stimulating us to

seek with keener longing for that security where peace is complete

and unassailable. There we shall enjoy the gifts of nature, that

is to say, all that God the Creator of all natures has bestowed

upon ours,--gifts not only good, but eternal,--not only of the

spirit, healed now by wisdom, but also of the body renewed by the

resurrection. There the virtues shall no longer be struggling

against any vice or evil, but shall enjoy the reward of victory, the

eternal peace which no adversary shall disturb. This is the final

blessedness, this the ultimate consummation, the unending end. Here,

indeed, we are said to be blessed when we have such peace as can be

enjoyed in a good life; but such blessedness is mere misery compared

to that final felicity. When we mortals possess such peace as this

mortal life can afford, virtue, if we are living rightly, makes a

right use of the advantages of this peaceful condition; and when we

have it not, virtue makes a good use even of the evils a man suffers.

But this is true virtue, when it refers all the advantages it makes a

good use of, and all that it does in making good use of good and evil

things, and itself also, to that end in which we shall enjoy the best

and greatest peace possible.

11. \_Of the happiness of the eternal peace, which constitutes the

end or true perfection of the saints.\_

And thus we may say of peace, as we have said of eternal life, that

it is the end of our good; and the rather because the Psalmist says

of the city of God, the subject of this laborious work, "Praise the

Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion: for He hath strengthened

the bars of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee;

who hath made thy borders peace."[638] For when the bars of her

gates shall be strengthened, none shall go in or come out from her;

consequently we ought to understand the peace of her borders as that

final peace we are wishing to declare. For even the mystical name of

the city itself, that is, \_Jerusalem\_, means, as I have already said,

"Vision of Peace." But as the word peace is employed in connection

with things in this world in which certainly life eternal has no

place, we have preferred to call the end or supreme good of this city

life eternal rather than peace. Of this end the apostle says, "But

now, being freed from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your

fruit unto holiness, and the end life eternal."[639] But, on the

other hand, as those who are not familiar with Scripture may suppose

that the life of the wicked is eternal life, either because of the

immortality of the soul, which some of the philosophers even have

recognised, or because of the endless punishment of the wicked, which

forms a part of our faith, and which seems impossible unless the

wicked live for ever, it may therefore be advisable, in order that

every one may readily understand what we mean, to say that the end or

supreme good of this city is either peace in eternal life, or eternal

life in peace. For peace is a good so great, that even in this

earthly and mortal life there is no word we hear with such pleasure,

nothing we desire with such zest, or find to be more thoroughly

gratifying. So that if we dwell for a little longer on this subject,

we shall not, in my opinion, be wearisome to our readers, who will

attend both for the sake of understanding what is the end of this

city of which we speak, and for the sake of the sweetness of peace

which is dear to all.

12. \_That even the fierceness of war and all the disquietude of men

make towards this one end of peace, which every nature desires.\_

Whoever gives even moderate attention to human affairs and to

our common nature, will recognise that if there is no man who

does not wish to be joyful, neither is there any one who does not

wish to have peace. For even they who make war desire nothing but

victory,--desire, that is to say, to attain to peace with glory. For

what else is victory than the conquest of those who resist us? and

when this is done there is peace. It is therefore with the desire

for peace that wars are waged, even by those who take pleasure in

exercising their warlike nature in command and battle. And hence it

is obvious that peace is the end sought for by war. For every man

seeks peace by waging war, but no man seeks war by making peace.

For even they who intentionally interrupt the peace in which they

are living have no hatred of peace, but only wish it changed into a

peace that suits them better. They do not, therefore, wish to have no

peace, but only one more to their mind. And in the case of sedition,

when men have separated themselves from the community, they yet do

not effect what they wish, unless they maintain some kind of peace

with their fellow-conspirators. And therefore even robbers take care

to maintain peace with their comrades, that they may with greater

effect and greater safety invade the peace of other men. And if an

individual happen to be of such unrivalled strength, and to be so

jealous of partnership, that he trusts himself with no comrades,

but makes his own plots, and commits depredations and murders on

his own account, yet he maintains some shadow of peace with such

persons as he is unable to kill, and from whom he wishes to conceal

his deeds. In his own home, too, he makes it his aim to be at peace

with his wife and children, and any other members of his household;

for unquestionably their prompt obedience to his every look is a

source of pleasure to him. And if this be not rendered, he is angry,

he chides and punishes; and even by this storm he secures the calm

peace of his own home, as occasion demands. For he sees that peace

cannot be maintained unless all the members of the same domestic

circle be subject to one head, such as he himself is in his own

house. And therefore if a city or nation offered to submit itself

to him, to serve him in the same style as he had made his household

serve him, he would no longer lurk in a brigand's hiding-places, but

lift his head in open day as a king, though the same covetousness

and wickedness should remain in him. And thus all men desire to

have peace with their own circle whom they wish to govern as suits

themselves. For even those whom they make war against they wish to

make their own, and impose on them the laws of their own peace.

But let us suppose a man such as poetry and mythology speak of,--a

man so insociable and savage as to be called rather a semi-man than

a man.[640] Although, then, his kingdom was the solitude of a dreary

cave, and he himself was so singularly bad-hearted that he was named

Κακός, which is the Greek word for \_bad\_; though he had no wife to

soothe him with endearing talk, no children to play with, no sons

to do his bidding, no friend to enliven him with intercourse, not

even his father Vulcan (though in one respect he was happier than

his father, not having begotten a monster like himself); although

he gave to no man, but took as he wished whatever he could, from

whomsoever he could, when he could; yet in that solitary den, the

floor of which, as Virgil[641] says, was always reeking with recent

slaughter, there was nothing else than peace sought, a peace in which

no one should molest him, or disquiet him with any assault or alarm.

With his own body he desired to be at peace; and he was satisfied

only in proportion as he had this peace. For he ruled his members,

and they obeyed him; and for the sake of pacifying his mortal nature,

which rebelled when it needed anything, and of allaying the sedition

of hunger which threatened to banish the soul from the body, he made

forays, slew, and devoured, but used the ferocity and savageness

he displayed in these actions only for the preservation of his own

life's peace. So that, had he been willing to make with other men

the same peace which he made with himself in his own cave, he would

neither have been called bad, nor a monster, nor a semi-man. Or if

the appearance of his body and his vomiting smoky fires frightened

men from having any dealings with him, perhaps his fierce ways arose

not from a desire to do mischief, but from the necessity of finding

a living. But he may have had no existence, or, at least, he was not

such as the poets fancifully describe him, for they had to exalt

Hercules, and did so at the expense of Cacus. It is better, then, to

believe that such a man or semi-man never existed, and that this, in

common with many other fancies of the poets, is mere fiction. For the

most savage animals (and he is said to have been almost a wild beast)

encompass their own species with a ring of protecting peace. They

cohabit, beget, produce, suckle, and bring up their young, though

very many of them are not gregarious, but solitary,--not like sheep,

deer, pigeons, starlings, bees, but such as lions, foxes, eagles,

bats. For what tigress does not gently purr over her cubs, and lay

aside her ferocity to fondle them? What kite, solitary as he is when

circling over his prey, does not seek a mate, build a nest, hatch

the eggs, bring up the young birds, and maintain with the mother of

his family as peaceful a domestic alliance as he can? How much more

powerfully do the laws of man's nature move him to hold fellowship

and maintain peace with all men so far as in him lies, since even

wicked men wage war to maintain the peace of their own circle, and

wish that, if possible, all men belonged to them, that all men and

things might serve but one head, and might, either through love or

fear, yield themselves to peace with him! It is thus that pride in

its perversity apes God. It abhors equality with other men under Him;

but, instead of His rule, it seeks to impose a rule of its own upon

its equals. It abhors, that is to say, the just peace of God, and

loves its own unjust peace; but it cannot help loving peace of one

kind or other. For there is no vice so clean contrary to nature that

it obliterates even the faintest traces of nature.

He, then, who prefers what is right to what is wrong, and what is

well-ordered to what is perverted, sees that the peace of unjust men

is not worthy to be called peace in comparison with the peace of the

just. And yet even what is perverted must of necessity be in harmony

with, and in dependence on, and in some part of the order of things,

for otherwise it would have no existence at all. Suppose a man hangs

with his head downwards, this is certainly a perverted attitude of

body and arrangement of its members; for that which nature requires

to be above is beneath, and \_vice versâ\_. This perversity disturbs

the peace of the body, and is therefore painful. Nevertheless the

spirit is at peace with its body, and labours for its preservation,

and hence the suffering; but if it is banished from the body by its

pains, then, so long as the bodily framework holds together, there is

in the remains a kind of peace among the members, and hence the body

remains suspended. And inasmuch as the earthy body tends towards the

earth, and rests on the bond by which it is suspended, it tends thus

to its natural peace, and the voice of its own weight demands a place

for it to rest; and though now lifeless and without feeling, it does

not fall from the peace that is natural to its place in creation,

whether it already has it, or is tending towards it. For if you apply

embalming preparations to prevent the bodily frame from mouldering

and dissolving, a kind of peace still unites part to part, and keeps

the whole body in a suitable place on the earth,--in other words,

in a place that is at peace with the body. If, on the other hand,

the body receive no such care, but be left to the natural course, it

is disturbed by exhalations that do not harmonize with one another,

and that offend our senses; for it is this which is perceived in

putrefaction until it is assimilated to the elements of the world,

and particle by particle enters into peace with them. Yet throughout

this process the laws of the most high Creator and Governor are

strictly observed, for it is by Him the peace of the universe is

administered. For although minute animals are produced from the

carcase of a larger animal, all these little atoms, by the law of the

same Creator, serve the animals they belong to in peace. And although

the flesh of dead animals be eaten by others, no matter where it be

carried, nor what it be brought into contact with, nor what it be

converted and changed into, it still is ruled by the same laws which

pervade all things for the conservation of every mortal race, and

which bring things that fit one another into harmony.

13. \_Of the universal peace which the law of nature preserves

through all disturbances, and by which every one reaches his

desert in a way regulated by the just Judge.\_

The peace of the body then consists in the duly proportioned

arrangement of its parts. The peace of the irrational soul is the

harmonious repose of the appetites, and that of the rational soul the

harmony of knowledge and action. The peace of body and soul is the

well-ordered and harmonious life and health of the living creature.

Peace between man and God is the well-ordered obedience of faith

to eternal law. Peace between man and man is well-ordered concord.

Domestic peace is the well-ordered concord between those of the

family who rule and those who obey. Civil peace is a similar concord

among the citizens. The peace of the celestial city is the perfectly

ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God, and of one another in God.

The peace of all things is the tranquillity of order. Order is the

distribution which allots things equal and unequal, each to its own

place. And hence, though the miserable, in so far as they are such,

do certainly not enjoy peace, but are severed from that tranquillity

of order in which there is no disturbance, nevertheless, inasmuch

as they are deservedly and justly miserable, they are by their very

misery connected with order. They are not, indeed, conjoined with the

blessed, but they are disjoined from them by the law of order. And

though they are disquieted, their circumstances are notwithstanding

adjusted to them, and consequently they have some tranquillity of

order, and therefore some peace. But they are wretched because,

although not wholly miserable, they are not in that place where

any mixture of misery is impossible. They would, however, be more

wretched if they had not that peace which arises from being in

harmony with the natural order of things. When they suffer, their

peace is in so far disturbed; but their peace continues in so far as

they do not suffer, and in so far as their nature continues to exist.

As, then, there may be life without pain, while there cannot be pain

without some kind of life, so there may be peace without war, but

there cannot be war without some kind of peace, because war supposes

the existence of some natures to wage it, and these natures cannot

exist without peace of one kind or other.

And therefore there is a nature in which evil does not or even cannot

exist; but there cannot be a nature in which there is no good. Hence

not even the nature of the devil himself is evil, in so far as it is

nature, but it was made evil by being perverted. Thus he did not abide

in the truth,[642] but could not escape the judgment of the Truth;

he did not abide in the tranquillity of order, but did not therefore

escape the power of the Ordainer. The good imparted by God to his

nature did not screen him from the justice of God by which order was

preserved in his punishment; neither did God punish the good which He

had created, but the evil which the devil had committed. God did not

take back all He had imparted to his nature, but something He took and

something He left, that there might remain enough to be sensible of the

loss of what was taken. And this very sensibility to pain is evidence

of the good which has been taken away and the good which has been

left. For, were nothing good left, there could be no pain on account

of the good which had been lost. For he who sins is still worse if he

rejoices in his loss of righteousness. But he who is in pain, if he

derives no benefit from it, mourns at least the loss of health. And as

righteousness and health are both good things, and as the loss of any

good thing is matter of grief, not of joy,--if, at least, there is no

compensation, as spiritual righteousness may compensate for the loss

of bodily health,--certainly it is more suitable for a wicked man to

grieve in punishment than to rejoice in his fault. As, then, the joy

of a sinner who has abandoned what is good is evidence of a bad will,

so his grief for the good he has lost when he is punished is evidence

of a good nature. For he who laments the peace his nature has lost is

stirred to do so by some relics of peace which make his nature friendly

to itself. And it is very just that in the final punishment the wicked

and godless should in anguish bewail the loss of the natural advantages

they enjoyed, and should perceive that they were most justly taken from

them by that God whose benign liberality they had despised. God, then,

the most wise Creator and most just Ordainer of all natures, who placed

the human race upon earth as its greatest ornament, imparted to men

some good things adapted to this life, to wit, temporal peace, such as

we can enjoy in this life from health and safety and human fellowship,

and all things needful for the preservation and recovery of this peace,

such as the objects which are accommodated to our outward senses,

light, night, the air, and waters suitable for us, and everything the

body requires to sustain, shelter, heal, or beautify it: and all under

this most equitable condition, that every man who made a good use of

these advantages suited to the peace of this mortal condition, should

receive ampler and better blessings, namely, the peace of immortality,

accompanied by glory and honour in an endless life made fit for the

enjoyment of God and of one another in God; but that he who used the

present blessings badly should both lose them and should not receive

the others.

14. \_Of the order and law which obtain in heaven and earth, whereby

it comes to pass that human society is served by those who rule

it.\_

The whole use, then, of things temporal has a reference to this

result of earthly peace in the earthly community, while in the city

of God it is connected with eternal peace. And therefore, if we

were irrational animals, we should desire nothing beyond the proper

arrangement of the parts of the body and the satisfaction of the

appetites,--nothing, therefore, but bodily comfort and abundance

of pleasures, that the peace of the body might contribute to the

peace of the soul. For if bodily peace be awanting, a bar is put

to the peace even of the irrational soul, since it cannot obtain

the gratification of its appetites. And these two together help out

the mutual peace of soul and body, the peace of harmonious life and

health. For as animals, by shunning pain, show that they love bodily

peace, and, by pursuing pleasure to gratify their appetites, show

that they love peace of soul, so their shrinking from death is a

sufficient indication of their intense love of that peace which binds

soul and body in close alliance. But, as man has a rational soul,

he subordinates all this which he has in common with the beasts to

the peace of his rational soul, that his intellect may have free

play and may regulate his actions, and that he may thus enjoy the

well-ordered harmony of knowledge and action which constitutes, as

we have said, the peace of the rational soul. And for this purpose

he must desire to be neither molested by pain, nor disturbed by

desire, nor extinguished by death, that he may arrive at some useful

knowledge by which he may regulate his life and manners. But, owing

to the liability of the human mind to fall into mistakes, this very

pursuit of knowledge may be a snare to him unless he has a divine

Master, whom he may obey without misgiving, and who may at the same

time give him such help as to preserve his own freedom. And because,

so long as he is in this mortal body, he is a stranger to God, he

walks by faith, not by sight; and he therefore refers all peace,

bodily or spiritual or both, to that peace which mortal man has with

the immortal God, so that he exhibits the well-ordered obedience

of faith to eternal law. But as this divine Master inculcates two

precepts,--the love of God and the love of our neighbour,--and as

in these precepts a man finds three things he has to love,--God,

himself, and his neighbour,--and that he who loves God loves himself

thereby, it follows that he must endeavour to get his neighbour to

love God, since he is ordered to love his neighbour as himself. He

ought to make this endeavour in behalf of his wife, his children,

his household, all within his reach, even as he would wish his

neighbour to do the same for him if he needed it; and consequently

he will be at peace, or in well-ordered concord, with all men, as

far as in him lies. And this is the order of this concord, that a

man, in the first place, injure no one, and, in the second, do good

to every one he can reach. Primarily, therefore, his own household

are his care, for the law of nature and of society gives him readier

access to them and greater opportunity of serving them. And hence the

apostle says, "Now, if any provide not for his own, and specially

for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse

than an infidel."[643] This is the origin of domestic peace, or the

well-ordered concord of those in the family who rule and those who

obey. For they who care for the rest rule,--the husband the wife,

the parents the children, the masters the servants; and they who

are cared for obey,--the women their husbands, the children their

parents, the servants their masters. But in the family of the just

man who lives by faith and is as yet a pilgrim journeying on to the

celestial city, even those who rule serve those whom they seem to

command; for they rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of

the duty they owe to others--not because they are proud of authority,

but because they love mercy.

15. \_Of the liberty proper to man's nature, and the servitude

introduced by sin,--a servitude in which the man whose will is

wicked is the slave of his own lust, though he is free so far

as regards other men.\_

This is prescribed by the order of nature: it is thus that God has

created man. For "let them," He says, "have dominion over the fish

of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping

thing which creepeth on the earth."[644] He did not intend that His

rational creature, who was made in His image, should have dominion

over anything but the irrational creation,--not man over man, but

man over the beasts. And hence the righteous men in primitive times

were made shepherds of cattle rather than kings of men, God intending

thus to teach us what the relative position of the creatures is, and

what the desert of sin; for it is with justice, we believe, that the

condition of slavery is the result of sin. And this is why we do not

find the word "slave" in any part of Scripture until righteous Noah

branded the sin of his son with this name. It is a name, therefore,

introduced by sin and not by nature. The origin of the Latin word for

slave is supposed to be found in the circumstance that those who by the

law of war were liable to be killed were sometimes preserved by their

victors, and were hence called servants.[645] And these circumstances

could never have arisen save through sin. For even when we wage a

just war, our adversaries must be sinning; and every victory, even

though gained by wicked men, is a result of the first judgment of

God, who humbles the vanquished either for the sake of removing or of

punishing their sins. Witness that man of God, Daniel, who, when he

was in captivity, confessed to God his own sins and the sins of his

people, and declares with pious grief that these were the cause of the

captivity.[646] The prime cause, then, of slavery is sin, which brings

man under the dominion of his fellow,--that which does not happen

save by the judgment of God, with whom is no unrighteousness, and who

knows how to award fit punishments to every variety of offence. But

our Master in heaven says, "Every one who doeth sin is the servant of

sin."[647] And thus there are many wicked masters who have religious

men as their slaves, and who are yet themselves in bondage; "for of

whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."[648] And

beyond question it is a happier thing to be the slave of a man than

of a lust; for even this very lust of ruling, to mention no others,

lays waste men's hearts with the most ruthless dominion. Moreover,

when men are subjected to one another in a peaceful order, the lowly

position does as much good to the servant as the proud position does

harm to the master. But by nature, as God first created us, no one

is the slave either of man or of sin. This servitude is, however,

penal, and is appointed by that law which enjoins the preservation

of the natural order and forbids its disturbance; for if nothing had

been done in violation of that law, there would have been nothing to

restrain by penal servitude. And therefore the apostle admonishes

slaves to be subject to their masters, and to serve them heartily and

with good-will, so that, if they cannot be freed by their masters, they

may themselves make their slavery in some sort free, by serving not in

crafty fear, but in faithful love, until all unrighteousness pass away,

and all principality and every human power be brought to nothing, and

God be all in all.

16. \_Of equitable rule.\_

And therefore, although our righteous fathers[649] had slaves, and

administered their domestic affairs so as to distinguish between

the condition of slaves and the heirship of sons in regard to the

blessings of this life, yet in regard to the worship of God, in

whom we hope for eternal blessings, they took an equally loving

oversight of all the members of their household. And this is so much

in accordance with the natural order, that the head of the household

was called \_paterfamilias\_; and this name has been so generally

accepted, that even those whose rule is unrighteous are glad to apply

it to themselves. But those who are true fathers of their households

desire and endeavour that all the members of their household, equally

with their own children, should worship and win God, and should come

to that heavenly home in which the duty of ruling men is no longer

necessary, because the duty of caring for their everlasting happiness

has also ceased; but, until they reach that home, masters ought to

feel their position of authority a greater burden than servants their

service. And if any member of the family interrupts the domestic

peace by disobedience, he is corrected either by word or blow, or

some kind of just and legitimate punishment, such as society permits,

that he may himself be the better for it, and be readjusted to the

family harmony from which he had dislocated himself. For as it is

not benevolent to give a man help at the expense of some greater

benefit he might receive, so it is not innocent to spare a man at

the risk of his falling into graver sin. To be innocent, we must not

only do harm to no man, but also restrain him from sin or punish his

sin, so that either the man himself who is punished may profit by

his experience, or others be warned by his example. Since, then, the

house ought to be the beginning or element of the city, and every

beginning bears reference to some end of its own kind, and every

element to the integrity of the whole of which it is an element, it

follows plainly enough that domestic peace has a relation to civic

peace,--in other words, that the well-ordered concord of domestic

obedience and domestic rule has a relation to the well-ordered

concord of civic obedience and civic rule. And therefore it follows,

further, that the father of the family ought to frame his domestic

rule in accordance with the law of the city, so that the household

may be in harmony with the civic order.

17. \_What produces peace, and what discord, between the heavenly

and earthly cities.\_

But the families which do not live by faith seek their peace in the

earthly advantages of this life; while the families which live by

faith look for those eternal blessings which are promised, and use

as pilgrims such advantages of time and of earth as do not fascinate

and divert them from God, but rather aid them to endure with greater

ease, and to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible

body which weigh upon the soul. Thus the things necessary for this

mortal life are used by both kinds of men and families alike, but

each has its own peculiar and widely different aim in using them.

The earthly city, which does not live by faith, seeks an earthly

peace, and the end it proposes, in the well-ordered concord of civic

obedience and rule, is the combination of men's wills to attain

the things which are helpful to this life. The heavenly city, or

rather the part of it which sojourns on earth and lives by faith,

makes use of this peace only because it must, until this mortal

condition which necessitates it shall pass away. Consequently, so

long as it lives like a captive and a stranger in the earthly city,

though it has already received the promise of redemption, and the

gift of the Spirit as the earnest of it, it makes no scruple to

obey the laws of the earthly city, whereby the things necessary for

the maintenance of this mortal life are administered; and thus, as

this life is common to both cities, so there is a harmony between

them in regard to what belongs to it. But, as the earthly city has

had some philosophers whose doctrine is condemned by the divine

teaching, and who, being deceived either by their own conjectures

or by demons, supposed that many gods must be invited to take an

interest in human affairs, and assigned to each a separate function

and a separate department,--to one the body, to another the soul;

and in the body itself, to one the head, to another the neck, and

each of the other members to one of the gods; and in like manner, in

the soul, to one god the natural capacity was assigned, to another

education, to another anger, to another lust; and so the various

affairs of life were assigned,--cattle to one, corn to another, wine

to another, oil to another, the woods to another, money to another,

navigation to another, wars and victories to another, marriages to

another, births and fecundity to another, and other things to other

gods: and as the celestial city, on the other hand, knew that one

God only was to be worshipped, and that to Him alone was due that

service which the Greeks call λατρεία, and which can be given only to

a god, it has come to pass that the two cities could not have common

laws of religion, and that the heavenly city has been compelled in

this matter to dissent, and to become obnoxious to those who think

differently, and to stand the brunt of their anger and hatred and

persecutions, except in so far as the minds of their enemies have

been alarmed by the multitude of the Christians and quelled by the

manifest protection of God accorded to them. This heavenly city,

then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations,

and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not

scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions

whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognising

that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same

end of earthly peace. It therefore is so far from rescinding and

abolishing these diversities, that it even preserves and adopts

them, so long only as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme

and true God is thus introduced. Even the heavenly city, therefore,

while in its state of pilgrimage, avails itself of the peace of

earth, and, so far as it can without injuring faith and godliness,

desires and maintains a common agreement among men regarding the

acquisition of the necessaries of life, and makes this earthly peace

bear upon the peace of heaven; for this alone can be truly called

and esteemed the peace of the reasonable creatures, consisting as it

does in the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and

of one another in God. When we shall have reached that peace, this

mortal life shall give place to one that is eternal, and our body

shall be no more this animal body which by its corruption weighs

down the soul, but a spiritual body feeling no want, and in all its

members subjected to the will. In its pilgrim state the heavenly city

possesses this peace by faith; and by this faith it lives righteously

when it refers to the attainment of that peace every good action

towards God and man; for the life of the city is a social life.

18. \_How different the uncertainty of the New Academy is from

the certainty of the Christian faith.\_

As regards the uncertainty about everything which Varro alleges to be

the differentiating characteristic of the New Academy, the city of

God thoroughly detests such doubt as madness. Regarding matters which

it apprehends by the mind and reason it has most absolute certainty,

although its knowledge is limited because of the corruptible body

pressing down the mind, for, as the apostle says, "We know in

part."[650] It believes also the evidence of the senses which the

mind uses by aid of the body; for [if one who trusts his senses is

sometimes deceived], he is more wretchedly deceived who fancies he

should never trust them. It believes also the Holy Scriptures, old

and new, which we call canonical, and which are the source of the

faith by which the just lives,[651] and by which we walk without

doubting whilst we are absent from the Lord.[652] So long as this

faith remains inviolate and firm, we may without blame entertain

doubts regarding some things which we have neither perceived by

sense nor by reason, and which have not been revealed to us by the

canonical Scriptures, nor come to our knowledge through witnesses

whom it is absurd to disbelieve.

19. \_Of the dress and habits of the Christian people.\_

It is a matter of no moment in the city of God whether he who adopts

the faith that brings men to God adopts it in one dress and manner

of life or another, so long only as he lives in conformity with the

commandments of God. And hence, when philosophers themselves become

Christians, they are compelled, indeed, to abandon their erroneous

doctrines, but not their dress and mode of living, which are no

obstacle to religion. So that we make no account of that distinction

of sects which Varro adduced in connection with the Cynic school,

provided always nothing indecent or self-indulgent is retained. As

to these three modes of life, the contemplative, the active, and the

composite, although, so long as a man's faith is preserved, he may

choose any of them without detriment to his eternal interests, yet

he must never overlook the claims of truth and duty. No man has a

right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his own

ease the service due to his neighbour; nor has any man a right to

be so immersed in active life as to neglect the contemplation of

God. The charm of leisure must not be indolent vacancy of mind, but

the investigation or discovery of truth, that thus every man may

make solid attainments without grudging that others do the same.

And, in active life, it is not the honours or power of this life

we should covet, since all things under the sun are vanity, but we

should aim at using our position and influence, if these have been

honourably attained, for the welfare of those who are under us, in

the way we have already explained.[653] It is to this the apostle

refers when he says, "He that desireth the episcopate desireth a

good work."[654] He wished to show that the episcopate is the title

of a work, not of an honour. It is a Greek word, and signifies that

he who governs, superintends or takes care of those whom he governs:

for ἐπί means \_over\_, and σκοπεῖν, \_to see\_; therefore ἐπισκοπεῖν

means "to oversee."[655] So that he who loves to govern rather than

to do good is no bishop. Accordingly no one is prohibited from the

search after truth, for in this leisure may most laudably be spent;

but it is unseemly to covet the high position requisite for governing

the people, even though that position be held and that government

be administered in a seemly manner. And therefore holy leisure is

longed for by the love of truth; but it is the necessity of love to

undertake requisite business. If no one imposes this burden upon us,

we are free to sift and contemplate truth; but if it be laid upon

us, we are necessitated for love's sake to undertake it. And yet not

even in this case are we obliged wholly to relinquish the sweets of

contemplation; for were these to be withdrawn, the burden might prove

more than we could bear.

20. \_That the saints are in this life blessed in hope.\_

Since, then, the supreme good of the city of God is perfect and

eternal peace, not such as mortals pass into and out of by birth and

death, but the peace of freedom from all evil, in which the immortals

ever abide, who can deny that that future life is most blessed, or

that, in comparison with it, this life which now we live is most

wretched, be it filled with all blessings of body and soul and

external things? And yet, if any man uses this life with a reference

to that other which he ardently loves and confidently hopes for,

he may well be called even now blessed, though not in reality so

much as in hope. But the actual possession of the happiness of this

life, without the hope of what is beyond, is but a false happiness

and profound misery. For the true blessings of the soul are not now

enjoyed; for that is no true wisdom which does not direct all its

prudent observations, manly actions, virtuous self-restraint, and

just arrangements, to that end in which God shall be all and all in a

secure eternity and perfect peace.

21. \_Whether there ever was a Roman republic answering to the

definitions of Scipio in Cicero's dialogue.\_

This, then, is the place where I should fulfil the promise I gave

in the second book of this work,[656] and explain, as briefly and

clearly as possible, that if we are to accept the definitions laid

down by Scipio in Cicero's \_De Republica\_, there never was a Roman

republic; for he briefly defines a republic as the weal of the

people. And if this definition be true, there never was a Roman

republic, for the people's weal was never attained among the Romans.

For the people, according to his definition, is an assemblage

associated by a common acknowledgment of right and by a community of

interests. And what he means by a common acknowledgment of right he

explains at large, showing that a republic cannot be administered

without justice. Where, therefore, there is no true justice there can

be no right. For that which is done by right is justly done, and what

is unjustly done cannot be done by right. For the unjust inventions

of men are neither to be considered nor spoken of as rights; for even

they themselves say that right is that which flows from the fountain

of justice, and deny the definition which is commonly given by those

who misconceive the matter, that right is that which is useful to the

stronger party. Thus, where there is not true justice there can be

no assemblage of men associated by a common acknowledgment of right,

and therefore there can be no people, as defined by Scipio or Cicero;

and if no people, then no weal of the people, but only of some

promiscuous multitude unworthy of the name of people. Consequently,

if the republic is the weal of the people, and there is no people

if it be not associated by a common acknowledgment of right, and if

there is no right where there is no justice, then most certainly it

follows that there is no republic where there is no justice. Further,

justice is that virtue which gives every one his due. Where, then, is

the justice of man, when he deserts the true God and yields himself

to impure demons? Is this to give every one his due? Or is he who

keeps back a piece of ground from the purchaser, and gives it to a

man who has no right to it, unjust, while he who keeps back himself

from the God who made him, and serves wicked spirits, is just?

This same book, \_De Republica\_, advocates the cause of justice

against injustice with great force and keenness. The pleading for

injustice against justice was first heard, and it was asserted that

without injustice a republic could neither increase nor even subsist,

for it was laid down as an absolutely unassailable position that

it is unjust for some men to rule and some to serve; and yet the

imperial city to which the republic belongs cannot rule her provinces

without having recourse to this injustice. It was replied in behalf

of justice, that this ruling of the provinces is just, because

servitude may be advantageous to the provincials, and is so when

rightly administered,--that is to say, when lawless men are prevented

from doing harm. And further, as they became worse and worse so long

as they were free, they will improve by subjection. To confirm this

reasoning, there is added an eminent example drawn from nature: for

"why," it is asked, "does God rule man, the soul the body, the reason

the passions and other vicious parts of the soul?" This example leaves

no doubt that, to some, servitude is useful; and, indeed, to serve God

is useful to all. And it is when the soul serves God that it exercises

a right control over the body; and in the soul itself the reason must

be subject to God if it is to govern as it ought the passions and

other vices. Hence, when a man does not serve God, what justice can

we ascribe to him, since in this case his soul cannot exercise a just

control over the body, nor his reason over his vices? And if there

is no justice in such an individual, certainly there can be none in

a community composed of such persons. Here, therefore, there is not

that common acknowledgment of right which makes an assemblage of men a

people whose affairs we call a republic. And why need I speak of the

advantageousness, the common participation in which, according to the

definition, makes a people? For although, if you choose to regard the

matter attentively, you will see that there is nothing advantageous to

those who live godlessly, as every one lives who does not serve God but

demons, whose wickedness you may measure by their desire to receive the

worship of men though they are most impure spirits, yet what I have

said of the common acknowledgment of right is enough to demonstrate

that, according to the above definition, there can be no people, and

therefore no republic, where there is no justice. For if they assert

that in their republic the Romans did not serve unclean spirits, but

good and holy gods, must we therefore again reply to this evasion,

though already we have said enough, and more than enough, to expose it?

He must be an uncommonly stupid, or a shamelessly contentious person,

who has read through the foregoing books to this point, and can yet

question whether the Romans served wicked and impure demons. But, not

to speak of their character, it is written in the law of the true God,

"He that sacrificeth unto any god save unto the Lord only, he shall

be utterly destroyed."[657] He, therefore, who uttered so menacing a

commandment decreed that no worship should be given either to good or

bad gods.

22. \_Whether the God whom the Christians serve is the true God to

whom alone sacrifice ought to be paid.\_

But it may be replied, Who is this God, or what proof is there that

He alone is worthy to receive sacrifice from the Romans? One must be

very blind to be still asking who this God is. He is the God whose

prophets predicted the things we see accomplished. He is the God from

whom Abraham received the assurance, "In thy seed shall all nations

be blessed."[658] That this was fulfilled in Christ, who according

to the flesh sprang from that seed, is recognised, whether they

will or no, even by those who have continued to be the enemies of

this name. He is the God whose divine Spirit spake by the men whose

predictions I cited in the preceding books, and which are fulfilled

in the Church which has extended over all the world. This is the God

whom Varro, the most learned of the Romans, supposed to be Jupiter,

though he knows not what he says; yet I think it right to note the

circumstance that a man of such learning was unable to suppose that

this God had no existence or was contemptible, but believed Him to be

the same as the supreme God. In fine, He is the God whom Porphyry,

the most learned of the philosophers, though the bitterest enemy of

the Christians, confesses to be a great God, even according to the

oracles of those whom he esteems gods.

23. \_Porphyry's account of the responses given by the oracles of

the gods concerning Christ.\_

For in his book called ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας, in which he collects and

comments upon the responses which he pretends were uttered by the

gods concerning divine things, he says--I give his own words as they

have been translated from the Greek: "To one who inquired what god

he should propitiate in order to recall his wife from Christianity,

Apollo replied in the following verses." Then the following words are

given as those of Apollo: "You will probably find it easier to write

lasting characters on the water, or lightly fly like a bird through

the air, than to restore right feeling in your impious wife once she

has polluted herself. Let her remain as she pleases in her foolish

deception, and sing false laments to her dead God, who was condemned

by right-minded judges, and perished ignominiously by a violent

death." Then after these verses of Apollo (which we have given in a

Latin version that does not preserve the metrical form), he goes on

to say: "In these verses Apollo exposed the incurable corruption of

the Christians, saying that the Jews, rather than the Christians,

recognised God." See how he misrepresents Christ, giving the Jews the

preference to the Christians in the recognition of God. This was his

explanation of Apollo's verses, in which he says that Christ was put

to death by right-minded or just judges,--in other words, that He

deserved to die. I leave the responsibility of this oracle regarding

Christ on the lying interpreter of Apollo, or on this philosopher who

believed it or possibly himself invented it; as to its agreement with

Porphyry's opinions or with other oracles, we shall in a little have

something to say. In this passage, however, he says that the Jews,

as the interpreters of God, judged justly in pronouncing Christ to

be worthy of the most shameful death. He should have listened, then,

to this God of the Jews to whom he bears this testimony, when that

God says, "He that sacrificeth to any other god save to the Lord

alone shall be utterly destroyed." But let us come to still plainer

expressions, and hear how great a God Porphyry thinks the God of the

Jews is. Apollo, he says, when asked whether word, \_i.e.\_ reason,

or law is the better thing, replied in the following verses. Then

he gives the verses of Apollo, from which I select the following as

sufficient: "God, the Generator, and the King prior to all things,

before whom heaven and earth, and the sea, and the hidden places of

hell tremble, and the deities themselves are afraid, for their law

is the Father whom the holy Hebrews honour." In this oracle of his

god Apollo, Porphyry avowed that the God of the Hebrews is so great

that the deities themselves are afraid before Him. I am surprised,

therefore, that when God said, He that sacrificeth to other gods

shall be utterly destroyed, Porphyry himself was not afraid lest he

should be destroyed for sacrificing to other gods.

This philosopher, however, has also some good to say of Christ,

oblivious, as it were, of that contumely of his of which we have just

been speaking; or as if his gods spoke evil of Christ only while

asleep, and recognised Him to be good, and gave Him His deserved

praise, when they awoke. For, as if he were about to proclaim some

marvellous thing passing belief, he says, "What we are going to say

will certainly take some by surprise. For the gods have declared that

Christ was very pious, and has become immortal, and that they cherish

his memory: that the Christians, however, are polluted, contaminated,

and involved in error. And many other such things," he says, "do the

gods say against the Christians." Then he gives specimens of the

accusations made, as he says, by the gods against them, and then goes

on: "But to some who asked Hecate whether Christ were a God, she

replied, You know the condition of the disembodied immortal soul, and

that if it has been severed from wisdom it always errs. The soul you

refer to is that of a man foremost in piety: they worship it because

they mistake the truth." To this so-called oracular response he adds

the following words of his own: "Of this very pious man, then, Hecate

said that the soul, like the souls of other good men, was after death

dowered with immortality, and that the Christians through ignorance

worship it. And to those who ask why he was condemned to die, the

oracle of the goddess replied, The body, indeed, is always exposed to

torments, but the souls of the pious abide in heaven. And the soul you

inquire about has been the fatal cause of error to other souls which

were not fated to receive the gifts of the gods, and to have the

knowledge of immortal Jove. Such souls are therefore hated by the gods;

for they who were fated not to receive the gifts of the gods, and not

to know God, were fated to be involved in error by means of him you

speak of. He himself, however, was good, and heaven has been opened to

him as to other good men. You are not, then, to speak evil of him, but

to pity the folly of men: and through him men's danger is imminent."

Who is so foolish as not to see that these oracles were either

composed by a clever man with a strong animus against the Christians,

or were uttered as responses by impure demons with a similar

design,--that is to say, in order that their praise of Christ may

win credence for their vituperation of Christians; and that thus

they may, if possible, close the way of eternal salvation, which is

identical with Christianity? For they believe that they are by no

means counterworking their own hurtful craft by promoting belief in

Christ, so long as their calumniation of Christians is also accepted;

for they thus secure that even the man who thinks well of Christ

declines to become a Christian, and is therefore not delivered from

their own rule by the Christ he praises. Besides, their praise

of Christ is so contrived that whosoever believes in Him as thus

represented will not be a true Christian but a Photinian heretic,

recognising only the humanity, and not also the divinity of Christ,

and will thus be precluded from salvation and from deliverance

out of the meshes of these devilish lies. For our part, we are no

better pleased with Hecate's praises of Christ than with Apollo's

calumniation of Him. Apollo says that Christ was put to death by

right-minded judges, implying that He was unrighteous. Hecate says

that He was a most pious man, but no more. The intention of both is

the same, to prevent men from becoming Christians, because if this

be secured, men shall never be rescued from their power. But it is

incumbent on our philosopher, or rather on those who believe in these

pretended oracles against the Christians, first of all, if they can,

to bring Apollo and Hecate to the same mind regarding Christ, so

that either both may condemn or both praise Him. And even if they

succeeded in this, we for our part would notwithstanding repudiate

the testimony of demons, whether favourable or adverse to Christ. But

when our adversaries find a god and goddess of their own at variance

about Christ, the one praising, the other vituperating Him, they can

certainly give no credence, if they have any judgment, to mere men

who blaspheme the Christians.

When Porphyry or Hecate praises Christ, and adds that He gave Himself

to the Christians as a fatal gift, that they might be involved in

error, he exposes, as he thinks, the causes of this error. But before

I cite his words to that purpose, I would ask, If Christ did thus

give Himself to the Christians to involve them in error, did He do so

willingly, or against His will? If willingly, how is He righteous? If

against His will, how is He blessed? However, let us hear the causes

of this error. "There are," he says, "in a certain place very small

earthly spirits, subject to the power of evil demons. The wise men

of the Hebrews, among whom was this Jesus, as you have heard from

the oracles of Apollo cited above, turned religious persons from

these very wicked demons and minor spirits, and taught them rather to

worship the celestial gods, and especially to adore God the Father.

This," he said, "the gods enjoin; and we have already shown how they

admonish the soul to turn to God, and command it to worship Him. But

the ignorant and the ungodly, who are not destined to receive favours

from the gods, nor to know the immortal Jupiter, not listening to the

gods and their messages, have turned away from all gods, and have

not only refused to hate, but have venerated the prohibited demons.

Professing to worship God, they refuse to do those things by which

alone God is worshipped. For God, indeed, being the Father of all, is

in need of nothing; but for us it is good to adore Him by means of

justice, chastity, and other virtues, and thus to make life itself

a prayer to Him, by inquiring into and imitating His nature. For

inquiry," says he, "purifies and imitation deifies us, by moving us

nearer to Him." He is right in so far as he proclaims God the Father,

and the conduct by which we should worship Him. Of such precepts the

prophetic books of the Hebrews are full, when they praise or blame

the life of the saints. But in speaking of the Christians he is in

error, and calumniates them as much as is desired by the demons whom

he takes for gods, as if it were difficult for any man to recollect

the disgraceful and shameful actions which used to be done in the

theatres and temples to please the gods, and to compare with these

things what is heard in our churches, and what is offered to the

true God, and from this comparison to conclude where character is

edified, and where it is ruined. But who but a diabolical spirit has

told or suggested to this man so manifest and vain a lie, as that the

Christians reverenced rather than hated the demons, whose worship the

Hebrews prohibited? But that God, whom the Hebrew sages worshipped,

forbids sacrifice to be offered even to the holy angels of heaven and

divine powers, whom we, in this our pilgrimage, venerate and love as

our most blessed fellow-citizens. For in the law which God gave to

His Hebrew people He utters this menace, as in a voice of thunder:

"He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall

be utterly destroyed."[659] And that no one might suppose that this

prohibition extends only to the very wicked demons and earthly

spirits, whom this philosopher calls very small and inferior,--for

even these are in the Scripture called gods, not of the Hebrews,

but of the nations, as the Septuagint translators have shown in

the psalm where it is said, "For all the gods of the nations are

demons,"[660]--that no one might suppose, I say, that sacrifice to

these demons was prohibited, but that sacrifice might be offered to

all or some of the celestials, it was immediately added, "save unto

the Lord alone."[661] The God of the Hebrews, then, to whom this

renowned philosopher bears this signal testimony, gave to His Hebrew

people a law, composed in the Hebrew language, and not obscure and

unknown, but published now in every nation, and in this law it is

written, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord alone,

he shall be utterly destroyed." What need is there to seek further

proofs in the law or the prophets of this same thing? \_Seek\_, we need

not say, for the passages are neither few nor difficult to find; but

what need to collect and apply to my argument the proofs which are

thickly sown and obvious, and by which it appears clear as day that

sacrifice may be paid to none but the supreme and true God? Here is

one brief but decided, even menacing, and certainly true utterance

of that God whom the wisest of our adversaries so highly extol.

Let this be listened to, feared, fulfilled, that there may be no

disobedient soul cut off. "He that sacrifices," He says, not because

He needs anything, but because it behoves us to be His possession.

Hence the Psalmist in the Hebrew Scriptures sings, "I have said to

the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou needest not my good."[662] For

we ourselves, who are His own city, are His most noble and worthy

sacrifice, and it is this mystery we celebrate in our sacrifices,

which are well known to the faithful, as we have explained in the

preceding books. For through the prophets the oracles of God declared

that the sacrifices which the Jews offered as a shadow of that which

was to be would cease, and that the nations, from the rising to the

setting of the sun, would offer one sacrifice. From these oracles,

which we now see accomplished, we have made such selections as seemed

suitable to our purpose in this work. And therefore, where there is

not this righteousness whereby the one supreme God rules the obedient

city according to His grace, so that it sacrifices to none but Him,

and whereby, in all the citizens of this obedient city, the soul

consequently rules the body and reason the vices in the rightful

order, so that, as the individual just man, so also the community and

people of the just, live by faith, which works by love, that love

whereby man loves God as He ought to be loved, and his neighbour as

himself,--there, I say, there is not an assemblage associated by a

common acknowledgment of right, and by a community of interests.

But if there is not this, there is not a people, if our definition

be true, and therefore there is no republic; for where there is no

people there can be no republic.

24. \_The definition which must be given of a people and a republic,

in order to vindicate the assumption of these titles by the

Romans and by other kingdoms.\_

But if we discard this definition of a people, and, assuming another,

say that a people is an assemblage of reasonable beings bound

together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love,

then, in order to discover the character of any people, we have only

to observe what they love. Yet whatever it loves, if only it is an

assemblage of reasonable beings and not of beasts, and is bound

together by an agreement as to the objects of love, it is reasonably

called a people; and it will be a superior people in proportion as

it is bound together by higher interests, inferior in proportion

as it is bound together by lower. According to this definition of

ours, the Roman people is a people, and its weal is without doubt

a commonwealth or republic. But what its tastes were in its early

and subsequent days, and how it declined into sanguinary seditions

and then to social and civil wars, and so burst asunder or rotted

off the bond of concord in which the health of a people consists,

history shows, and in the preceding books I have related at large.

And yet I would not on this account say either that it was not a

people, or that its administration was not a republic, so long as

there remains an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a

common agreement as to the objects of love. But what I say of this

people and of this republic I must be understood to think and say

of the Athenians or any Greek state, of the Egyptians, of the early

Assyrian Babylon, and of every other nation, great or small, which

had a public government. For, in general, the city of the ungodly,

which did not obey the command of God that it should offer no

sacrifice save to Him alone, and which, therefore, could not give to

the soul its proper command over the body, nor to the reason its just

authority over the vices, is void of true justice.

25. \_That where there is no true religion there are no true

virtues.\_

For though the soul may seem to rule the body admirably, and the

reason the vices, if the soul and reason do not themselves obey God,

as God has commanded them to serve Him, they have no proper authority

over the body and the vices. For what kind of mistress of the body

and the vices can that mind be which is ignorant of the true God, and

which, instead of being subject to His authority, is prostituted to

the corrupting influences of the most vicious demons? It is for this

reason that the virtues which it seems to itself to possess, and

by which it restrains the body and the vices that it may obtain and

keep what it desires, are rather vices than virtues so long as there

is no reference to God in the matter. For although some suppose that

virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired

only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact

is that even then they are inflated with pride, and are therefore

to be reckoned vices rather than virtues. For as that which gives

life to the flesh is not derived from flesh, but is above it, so

that which gives blessed life to man is not derived from man, but is

something above him; and what I say of man is true of every celestial

power and virtue whatsoever.

26. \_Of the peace which is enjoyed by the people that are alienated

from God, and the use made of it by the people of God in the

time of its pilgrimage.\_

Wherefore, as the life of the flesh is the soul, so the blessed life of

man is God, of whom the sacred writings of the Hebrews say, "Blessed is

the people whose God is the Lord."[663] Miserable, therefore, is the

people which is alienated from God. Yet even this people has a peace of

its own which is not to be lightly esteemed, though, indeed, it shall

not in the end enjoy it, because it makes no good use of it before

the end. But it is our interest that it enjoy this peace meanwhile in

this life; for as long as the two cities are commingled, we also enjoy

the peace of Babylon. For from Babylon the people of God is so freed

that it meanwhile sojourns in its company. And therefore the apostle

also admonished the Church to pray for kings and those in authority,

assigning as the reason, "that we may live a quiet and tranquil life in

all godliness and love."[664] And the prophet Jeremiah, when predicting

the captivity that was to befall the ancient people of God, and giving

them the divine command to go obediently to Babylonia, and thus serve

their God, counselled them also to pray for Babylonia, saying, "In the

peace thereof shall ye have peace,"[665]--the temporal peace which the

good and the wicked together enjoy.

27. \_That the peace of those who serve God cannot in this mortal

life be apprehended in its perfection.\_

But the peace which is peculiar to ourselves we enjoy now with God by

faith, and shall hereafter enjoy eternally with Him by sight. But the

peace which we enjoy in this life, whether common to all or peculiar

to ourselves, is rather the solace of our misery than the positive

enjoyment of felicity. Our very righteousness, too, though true in so

far as it has respect to the true good, is yet in this life of such

a kind that it consists rather in the remission of sins than in the

perfecting of virtues. Witness the prayer of the whole city of God

in its pilgrim state, for it cries to God by the mouth of all its

members, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."[666] And

this prayer is efficacious not for those whose faith is "without works

and dead,"[667] but for those whose faith "worketh by love."[668]

For as reason, though subjected to God, is yet "pressed down by the

corruptible body,"[669] so long as it is in this mortal condition,

it has not perfect authority over vice, and therefore this prayer is

needed by the righteous. For though it exercises authority, the vices

do not submit without a struggle. For however well one maintains the

conflict, and however thoroughly he has subdued these enemies, there

steals in some evil thing, which, if it do not find ready expression

in act, slips out by the lips, or insinuates itself into the thought;

and therefore his peace is not full so long as he is at war with his

vices. For it is a doubtful conflict he wages with those that resist,

and his victory over those that are defeated is not secure, but full

of anxiety and effort. Amidst these temptations, therefore, of all

which it has been summarily said in the divine oracles, "Is not human

life upon earth a temptation?"[670] who but a proud man can presume

that he so lives that he has no need to say to God, "Forgive us our

debts?" And such a man is not great, but swollen and puffed up with

vanity, and is justly resisted by Him who abundantly gives grace to

the humble. Whence it is said, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth

grace to the humble."[671] In this, then, consists the righteousness

of a man, that he submit himself to God, his body to his soul, and

his vices, even when they rebel, to his reason, which either defeats

or at least resists them; and also that he beg from God grace to do

his duty,[672] and the pardon of his sins, and that he render to God

thanks for all the blessings he receives. But, in that final peace to

which all our righteousness has reference, and for the sake of which

it is maintained, as our nature shall enjoy a sound immortality and

incorruption, and shall have no more vices, and as we shall experience

no resistance either from ourselves or from others, it will not be

necessary that reason should rule vices which no longer exist, but God

shall rule the man, and the soul shall rule the body, with a sweetness

and facility suitable to the felicity of a life which is done with

bondage. And this condition shall there be eternal, and we shall be

assured of its eternity; and thus the peace of this blessedness and the

blessedness of this peace shall be the supreme good.

28. \_The end of the wicked.\_

But, on the other hand, they who do not belong to this city of God

shall inherit eternal misery, which is also called the second death,

because the soul shall then be separated from God its life, and

therefore cannot be said to live, and the body shall be subjected to

eternal pains. And consequently this second death shall be the more

severe, because no death shall terminate it. But war being contrary

to peace, as misery to happiness, and life to death, it is not

without reason asked what kind of war can be found in the end of the

wicked answering to the peace which is declared to be the end of the

righteous? The person who puts this question has only to observe what

it is in war that is hurtful and destructive, and he shall see that

it is nothing else than the mutual opposition and conflict of things.

And can he conceive a more grievous and bitter war than that in which

the will is so opposed to passion, and passion to the will, that their

hostility can never be terminated by the victory of either, and in

which the violence of pain so conflicts with the nature of the body,

that neither yields to the other? For in this life, when this conflict

has arisen, either pain conquers and death expels the feeling of it, or

nature conquers and health expels the pain. But in the world to come

the pain continues that it may torment, and the nature endures that

it may be sensible of it; and neither ceases to exist, lest punishment

also should cease. Now, as it is through the last judgment that men

pass to these ends, the good to the supreme good, the evil to the

supreme evil, I will treat of this judgment in the following book.

FOOTNOTES:

[619] Not extant.

[620] Alluding to the vexed question whether virtue could be taught.

[621] The \_prima naturæ\_, or πρῶτα κατὰ φύσιν of the Stoics.

[622] Frequently called the Middle Academy; the New beginning with

Carneades.

[623] Hab. ii. 4.

[624] Ps. xciv. 11, and 1 Cor. iii. 20.

[625] Wisdom ix. 15.

[626] Cicero, \_Tusc. Quæst.\_ iii. 8.

[627] Gal. v. 17.

[628] Rom. viii. 24.

[629] Terent. \_Adelph.\_ v. 4.

[630] \_Eunuch.\_ i. 1.

[631] \_In Verrem\_, ii. 1. 15.

[632] Matt. x. 36.

[633] Ps. xxv. 17.

[634] Job vii. 1.

[635] Matt. xvii. 7.

[636] Matt. xxiv. 12.

[637] 2 Cor. xi. 14.

[638] Ps. cxlvii. 12-14.

[639] Rom. vi. 22.

[640] He refers to the giant Cacus.

[641] \_Æneid\_, viii. 195.

[642] John viii. 44.

[643] 1 Tim. v. 8.

[644] Gen. i. 26.

[645] \_Servus\_, "a slave," from \_servare\_, "to preserve."

[646] Dan. ix.

[647] John viii. 34.

[648] 2 Pet. ii. 19.

[649] The patriarchs.

[650] 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

[651] Hab. ii. 4.

[652] 2 Cor. v. 6.

[653] Ch. 6.

[654] 1 Tim. iii. 1.

[655] Augustine's words are: "ἐπι, quippe 'super;' σκοπός, vero,

'intentio' est: επισκοπεῖν, si velimus, latine 'superintendere'

possumus dicere."

[656] Ch. 21.

[657] Ex. xxii. 20.

[658] Gen. xxii. 18.

[659] Ex. xxii. 20.

[660] Ps. xcvi. 5.

[661] Augustine here warns his readers against a possible

misunderstanding of the Latin word for "alone" (\_soli\_), which might

be rendered "the sun."

[662] Ps. xvi. 2.

[663] Ps. cxliv. 15.

[664] 1 Tim. ii. 2; var. reading, "purity."

[665] Jer. xxix. 7.

[666] Matt. vi. 12.

[667] Jas. ii. 17.

[668] Gal. v. 6.

[669] Wisdom ix. 15.

[670] Job vii. 1.

[671] Jas. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.

[672] Gratia meritorum.

BOOK TWENTIETH.

ARGUMENT.

CONCERNING THE LAST JUDGMENT, AND THE DECLARATIONS REGARDING IT IN

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

1. \_That although God is always judging, it is nevertheless

reasonable to confine our attention in this book to His last

judgment.\_

Intending to speak, in dependence on God's grace, of the day of His

final judgment, and to affirm it against the ungodly and incredulous,

we must first of all lay, as it were, in the foundation of the

edifice the divine declarations. Those persons who do not believe

such declarations do their best to oppose to them false and illusive

sophisms of their own, either contending that what is adduced from

Scripture has another meaning, or altogether denying that it is

an utterance of God's. For I suppose no man who understands what

is written, and believes it to be communicated by the supreme and

true God through holy men, refuses to yield and consent to these

declarations, whether he orally confesses his consent, or is from

some evil influence ashamed or afraid to do so; or even, with an

opinionativeness closely resembling madness, makes strenuous efforts

to defend what he knows and believes to be false against what he

knows and believes to be true.

That, therefore, which the whole Church of the true God holds and

professes as its creed, that Christ shall come from heaven to judge

quick and dead, this we call the last day, or last time, of the

divine judgment. For we do not know how many days this judgment may

occupy; but no one who reads the Scriptures, however negligently,

need be told that in them "day" is customarily used for "time." And

when we speak of the day of God's judgment, we add the word last or

final for this reason, because even now God judges, and has judged

from the beginning of human history, banishing from paradise, and

excluding from the tree of life, those first men who perpetrated so

great a sin. Yea, He was certainly exercising judgment also when

He did not spare the angels who sinned, whose prince, overcome by

envy, seduced men after being himself seduced. Neither is it without

God's profound and just judgment that the life of demons and men,

the one in the air, the other on earth, is filled with misery,

calamities, and mistakes. And even though no one had sinned, it could

only have been by the good and right judgment of God that the whole

rational creation could have been maintained in eternal blessedness

by a persevering adherence to its Lord. He judges, too, not only

in the mass, condemning the race of devils and the race of men to

be miserable on account of the original sin of these races, but He

also judges the voluntary and personal acts of individuals. For even

the devils pray that they may not be tormented,[673] which proves

that without injustice they might either be spared or tormented

according to their deserts. And men are punished by God for their

sins often visibly, always secretly, either in this life or after

death, although no man acts rightly save by the assistance of divine

aid; and no man or devil acts unrighteously save by the permission

of the divine and most just judgment. For, as the apostle says,

"There is no unrighteousness with God;"[674] and as he elsewhere

says, "His judgments are inscrutable, and His ways past finding

out."[675] In this book, then, I shall speak, as God permits, not of

those first judgments, nor of these intervening judgments of God, but

of the last judgment, when Christ is to come from heaven to judge

the quick and the dead. For that day is properly called the day of

judgment, because in it there shall be no room left for the ignorant

questioning why this wicked person is happy and that righteous man

unhappy. In that day true and full happiness shall be the lot of none

but the good, while deserved and supreme misery shall be the portion

of the wicked, and of them only.

2. \_That in the mingled web of human affairs God's judgment is

present, though it cannot be discerned.\_

In this present time we learn to bear with equanimity the ills to

which even good men are subject, and to hold cheap the blessings

which even the wicked enjoy. And consequently, even in those

conditions of life in which the justice of God is not apparent, His

teaching is salutary. For we do not know by what judgment of God this

good man is poor and that bad man rich; why he who, in our opinion,

ought to suffer acutely for his abandoned life enjoys himself, while

sorrow pursues him whose praiseworthy life leads us to suppose he

should be happy; why the innocent man is dismissed from the bar not

only unavenged, but even condemned, being either wronged by the

iniquity of the judge, or overwhelmed by false evidence, while his

guilty adversary, on the other hand, is not only discharged with

impunity, but even has his claims admitted; why the ungodly enjoys

good health, while the godly pines in sickness; why ruffians are of

the soundest constitution, while they who could not hurt any one even

with a word are from infancy afflicted with complicated disorders;

why he who is useful to society is cut off by premature death, while

those who, as it might seem, ought never to have been so much as born

have lives of unusual length; why he who is full of crimes is crowned

with honours, while the blameless man is buried in the darkness of

neglect. But who can collect or enumerate all the contrasts of this

kind? But if this anomalous state of things were uniform in this

life, in which, as the sacred Psalmist says, "Man is like to vanity,

his days as a shadow that passeth away,"[676]--so uniform that none

but wicked men won the transitory prosperity of earth, while only

the good suffered its ills,--this could be referred to the just and

even benign judgment of God. We might suppose that they who were not

destined to obtain those everlasting benefits which constitute human

blessedness were either deluded by transitory blessings as the just

reward of their wickedness, or were, in God's mercy, consoled by

them, and that they who were not destined to suffer eternal torments

were afflicted with temporal chastisement for their sins, or were

stimulated to greater attainment in virtue. But now, as it is, since

we not only see good men involved in the ills of life, and bad men

enjoying the good of it, which seems unjust, but also that evil

often overtakes evil men, and good surprises the good, the rather on

this account are God's judgments unsearchable, and His ways past

finding out. Although, therefore, we do not know by what judgment

these things are done or permitted to be done by God, with whom is

the highest virtue, the highest wisdom, the highest justice, no

infirmity, no rashness, no unrighteousness, yet it is salutary for us

to learn to hold cheap such things, be they good or evil, as attach

indifferently to good men and bad, and to covet those good things

which belong only to good men, and flee those evils which belong only

to evil men. But when we shall have come to that judgment, the date

of which is called peculiarly the day of judgment, and sometimes the

day of the Lord, we shall then recognise the justice of all God's

judgments, not only of such as shall then be pronounced, but of all

which take effect from the beginning, or may take effect before that

time. And in that day we shall also recognise with what justice so

many, or almost all, the just judgments of God in the present life

defy the scrutiny of human sense or insight, though in this matter it

is not concealed from pious minds that what is concealed is just.

3. \_What Solomon, in the book of Ecclesiastes, says regarding

the things which happen alike to good and wicked men.\_

Solomon, the wisest king of Israel, who reigned in Jerusalem, thus

commences the book called Ecclesiastes, which the Jews number among

their canonical Scriptures: "Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes,

vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his

labour which he hath taken under the sun?"[677] And after going on

to enumerate, with this as his text, the calamities and delusions

of this life, and the shifting nature of the present time, in which

there is nothing substantial, nothing lasting, he bewails, among

the other vanities that are under the sun, this also, that though

wisdom excelleth folly as light excelleth darkness, and though the

eyes of the wise man are in his head, while the fool walketh in

darkness,[678] yet one event happeneth to them all, that is to say,

in this life under the sun, unquestionably alluding to those evils

which we see befall good and bad men alike. He says, further, that

the good suffer the ills of life as if they were evil-doers, and

the bad enjoy the good of life as if they were good. "There is a

vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men unto

whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there

be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the

righteous. I said, that this also is vanity."[679] This wisest man

devoted this whole book to a full exposure of this vanity, evidently

with no other object than that we might long for that life in which

there is no vanity under the sun, but verity under Him who made the

sun. In this vanity, then, was it not by the just and righteous

judgment of God that man, made like to vanity, was destined to pass

away? But in these days of vanity it makes an important difference

whether he resists or yields to the truth, and whether he is

destitute of true piety or a partaker of it,--important not so far

as regards the acquirement of the blessings or the evasion of the

calamities of this transitory and vain life, but in connection with

the future judgment which shall make over to good men good things,

and to bad men bad things, in permanent, inalienable possession.

In fine, this wise man concludes this book of his by saying, "Fear

God, and keep His commandments: for this is every man. For God shall

bring every work into judgment, with every despised person, whether

it be good, or whether it be evil."[680] What truer, terser, more

salutary enouncement could be made? "Fear God," he says, "and keep

His commandments: for this is every man." For whosoever has real

existence, is this, is a keeper of God's commandments; and he who is

not this, is nothing. For so long as he remains in the likeness of

vanity, he is not renewed in the image of the truth. "For God shall

bring into judgment every work,"--that is, whatever man does in this

life,--"whether it be good or whether it be evil, with every despised

person,"--that is, with every man who here seems despicable, and is

therefore not considered; for God sees even him, and does not despise

him nor pass him over in His judgment.

4. \_That proofs of the last judgment will be adduced, first from

the New Testament, and then from the Old.\_

The proofs, then, of this last judgment of God which I propose to

adduce shall be drawn first from the New Testament, and then from

the Old. For although the Old Testament is prior in point of time,

the New has the precedence in intrinsic value; for the Old acts the

part of herald to the New. We shall therefore first cite passages

from the New Testament, and confirm them by quotations from the Old

Testament. The Old contains the law and the prophets, the New the

gospel and the apostolic epistles. Now the apostle says, "By the law

is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without

the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

now the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ upon all

them that believe."[681] This righteousness of God belongs to the

New Testament, and evidence for it exists in the old books, that is

to say, in the law and the prophets. I shall first, then, state the

case, and then call the witnesses. This order Jesus Christ Himself

directs us to observe, saying, "The scribe instructed in the kingdom

of God is like a good householder, bringing out of his treasure

things new and old."[682] He did not say "old and new," which He

certainly would have said had He not wished to follow the order of

merit rather than that of time.

5. \_The passages in which the Saviour declares that there shall

be a divine judgment in the end of the world.\_

The Saviour Himself, while reproving the cities in which He had done

great works, but which had not believed, and while setting them in

unfavourable comparison with foreign cities, says, "But I say unto

you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of

judgment than for you."[683] And a little after He says, "Verily, I

say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the

day of judgment than for thee."[684] Here He most plainly predicts

that a day of judgment is to come. And in another place He says,

"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation,

and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of

Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the

south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall

condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to

hear the words of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is

here."[685] Two things we learn from this passage, that a judgment

is to take place, and that it is to take place at the resurrection

of the dead. For when He spoke of the Ninevites and the queen of the

south, He certainly spoke of dead persons, and yet He said that they

should rise up in the day of judgment. He did not say, "They shall

condemn," as if they themselves were to be the judges, but because,

in comparison with them, the others shall be justly condemned.

Again, in another passage, in which He was speaking of the present

intermingling and future separation of the good and bad,--the

separation which shall be made in the day of judgment,--He adduced a

comparison drawn from the sown wheat and the tares sown among them,

and gave this explanation of it to His disciples: "He that soweth

the good seed is the Son of man,"[686] etc. Here, indeed, He did not

name the judgment or the day of judgment, but indicated it much more

clearly by describing the circumstances, and foretold that it should

take place in the end of the world.

In like manner He says to His disciples, "Verily I say unto you, That

ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man

shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve

thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[687] Here we learn

that Jesus shall judge with His disciples. And therefore He said

elsewhere to the Jews, "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do

your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges."[688]

Neither ought we to suppose that only twelve men shall judge along

with Him, though He says that they shall sit upon twelve thrones,

for by the number twelve is signified the completeness of the

multitude of those who shall judge. For the two parts of the number

seven (which commonly symbolizes totality), that is to say, four

and three, multiplied into one another, give twelve. For four times

three, or three times four, are twelve. There are other meanings,

too, in this number twelve. Were not this the right interpretation of

the twelve thrones, then since we read that Matthias was ordained

an apostle in the room of Judas the traitor, the Apostle Paul,

though he laboured more than them all,[689] should have no throne of

judgment; but he unmistakeably considers himself to be included in

the number of the judges when he says, "Know ye not that we shall

judge angels?"[690] The same rule is to be observed in applying the

number twelve to those who are to be judged. For though it was said,

"judging the twelve tribes of Israel," the tribe of Levi, which is

the thirteenth, shall not on this account be exempt from judgment,

neither shall judgment be passed only on Israel and not on the other

nations. And by the words "in the regeneration" He certainly meant

the resurrection of the dead to be understood; for our flesh shall be

regenerated by incorruption, as our soul is regenerated by faith.

Many passages I omit, because, though they seem to refer to the

last judgment, yet on a closer examination they are found to be

ambiguous, or to allude rather to some other event,--whether to that

coming of the Saviour which continually occurs in His Church, that

is, in His members, in which He comes little by little, and piece

by piece, since the whole Church is His body, or to the destruction

of the earthly Jerusalem. For when He speaks even of this, He often

uses language which is applicable to the end of the world and that

last and great day of judgment, so that these two events cannot

be distinguished unless all the corresponding passages bearing on

the subject in the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are

compared with one another,--for some things are put more obscurely

by one evangelist and more plainly by another,--so that it becomes

apparent what things are meant to be referred to one event. It is

this which I have been at pains to do in a letter which I wrote to

Hesychius of blessed memory, bishop of Salon, and entitled, "Of the

End of the World."[691]

I shall now cite from the Gospel according to Matthew the passage

which speaks of the separation of the good from the wicked by the

most efficacious and final judgment of Christ: "When the Son of man,"

he says, "shall come in His glory, ... then shall He say also unto

them on His left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting

fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."[692] Then He in like

manner recounts to the wicked the things they had not done, but which

He had said those on the right hand had done. And when they ask when

they had seen Him in need of these things, He replies that, inasmuch

as they had not done it to the least of His brethren, they had not

done it unto Him, and concludes His address in the words, "And these

shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into

life eternal." Moreover, the evangelist John most distinctly states

that He had predicted that the judgment should be at the resurrection

of the dead. For after saying, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath

committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour

the Son, even as they honour the Father: he that honoureth not the

Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him;" He immediately

adds, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and

believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not

come into judgment; but is passed from death to life."[693] Here

He said that believers on Him should not come into judgment. How,

then, shall they be separated from the wicked by judgment, and be

set at His right hand, unless judgment be in this passage used for

condemnation? For into judgment, in this sense, they shall not come

who hear His word, and believe on Him that sent Him.

6. \_What is the first resurrection, and what the second.\_

After that He adds the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The

hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of

the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father

hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in

Himself."[694] As yet He does not speak of the second resurrection,

that is, the resurrection of the body, which shall be in the end,

but of the first, which now is. It is for the sake of making this

distinction that He says, "The hour is coming, and now is." Now this

resurrection regards not the body, but the soul. For souls, too,

have a death of their own in wickedness and sins, whereby they are

the dead of whom the same lips say, "Suffer the dead to bury their

dead,"[695]--that is, let those who are dead in soul bury them that

are dead in body. It is of these dead, then--the dead in ungodliness

and wickedness--that He says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear

shall live." "They that hear," that is, they who obey, believe, and

persevere to the end. Here no difference is made between the good

and the bad. For it is good for all men to hear His voice and live,

by passing to the life of godliness from the death of ungodliness.

Of this death the Apostle Paul says, "Therefore all are dead, and He

died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto

themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again."[696]

Thus all, without one exception, were dead in sins, whether original

or voluntary sins, sins of ignorance, or sins committed against

knowledge; and for all the dead there died the one only person who

lived, that is, who had no sin whatever, in order that they who

live by the remission of their sins should live, not to themselves,

but to Him who died for all, for our sins, and rose again for our

justification, that we, believing in Him who justifies the ungodly,

and being justified from ungodliness or quickened from death, may be

able to attain to the first resurrection which now is. For in this

first resurrection none have a part save those who shall be eternally

blessed; but in the second, of which He goes on to speak, all, as we

shall learn, have a part, both the blessed and the wretched. The one

is the resurrection of mercy, the other of judgment. And therefore it

is written in the psalm, "I will sing of mercy and of judgment: unto

Thee, O Lord, will I sing."[697]

And of this judgment He went on to say, "And hath given Him authority

to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." Here He

shows that He will come to judge in that flesh in which He had come

to be judged. For it is to show this He says, "because He is the

Son of man." And then follow the words for our purpose: "Marvel not

at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the

graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have

done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done

evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."[698] This judgment He uses

here in the same sense as a little before, when He says, "He that

heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting

life, and shall not come into \_judgment\_, but is passed from death

to life;" \_i.e.\_, by having a part in the first resurrection, by

which a transition from death to life is made in this present time,

he shall not come into damnation, which He mentions by the name of

judgment, as also in the place where He says, "but they that have

done evil unto the resurrection of judgment," \_i.e.\_ of damnation.

He, therefore, who would not be damned in the second resurrection,

let him rise in the first. For "the hour is coming, and now is, when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear

shall live," \_i.e.\_ shall not come into damnation, which is called

the second death; into which death, after the second or bodily

resurrection, they shall be hurled who do not rise in the first or

spiritual resurrection. For "the hour is coming" (but here He does

not say, "and now is," because it shall come in the end of the world

in the last and greatest judgment of God) "when all that are in

the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." He does not

say, as in the first resurrection, "And they that hear shall live."

For all shall not live, at least with such life as ought alone to

be called life because it alone is blessed. For some kind of life

they must have in order to hear, and come forth from the graves in

their rising bodies. And why all shall not live He teaches in the

words that follow: "They that have done good, to the resurrection of

life,"--these are they who shall live; "but they that have done evil,

to the resurrection of judgment,"--these are they who shall not live,

for they shall die in the second death. They have done evil because

their life has been evil; and their life has been evil because it has

not been renewed in the first or spiritual resurrection which now is,

or because they have not persevered to the end in their renewed life.

As, then, there are two regenerations, of which I have already made

mention,--the one according to faith, and which takes place in the

present life by means of baptism; the other according to the flesh,

and which shall be accomplished in its incorruption and immortality

by means of the great and final judgment,--so are there also two

resurrections,--the one the first and spiritual resurrection, which

has place in this life, and preserves us from coming into the second

death; the other the second, which does not occur now, but in the end

of the world, and which is of the body, not of the soul, and which by

the last judgment shall dismiss some into the second death, others

into that life which has no death.

7. \_What is written in the Revelation of John regarding the two

resurrections, and the thousand years, and what may reasonably

be held on these points.\_

The evangelist John has spoken of these two resurrections in the

book which is called the Apocalypse, but in such a way that some

Christians do not understand the first of the two, and so construe

the passage into ridiculous fancies. For the Apostle John says in

the foresaid book, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven....

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on

such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of

God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."[699]

Those who, on the strength of this passage, have suspected that the

first resurrection is future and bodily, have been moved, among other

things, specially by the number of a thousand years, as if it were a

fit thing that the saints should thus enjoy a kind of Sabbath-rest

during that period, a holy leisure after the labours of the six

thousand years since man was created, and was on account of his great

sin dismissed from the blessedness of paradise into the woes of this

mortal life, so that thus, as it is written, "One day is with the

Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,"[700]

there should follow on the completion of six thousand years, as of

six days, a kind of seventh-day Sabbath in the succeeding thousand

years; and that it is for this purpose the saints rise, viz. to

celebrate this Sabbath. And this opinion would not be objectionable,

if it were believed that the joys of the saints in that Sabbath

shall be spiritual, and consequent on the presence of God; for I

myself, too, once held this opinion.[701] But, as they assert that

those who then rise again shall enjoy the leisure of immoderate

carnal banquets, furnished with an amount of meat and drink such as

not only to shock the feeling of the temperate, but even to surpass

the measure of credulity itself, such assertions can be believed

only by the carnal. They who do believe them are called by the

spiritual Chiliasts, which we may literally reproduce by the name

Millenarians.[702] It were a tedious process to refute these opinions

point by point: we prefer proceeding to show how that passage of

Scripture should be understood.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself says, "No man can enter into a strong

man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong

man,"[703]--meaning by the strong man the devil, because he had power

to take captive the human race; and meaning by his goods which he

was to take, those who had been held by the devil in divers sins

and iniquities, but were to become believers in Himself. It was

then for the binding of this strong one that the apostle saw in the

Apocalypse "an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the

abyss, and a chain in his hand. And he laid hold," he says, "on the

dragon, that old serpent, which is called the devil and Satan, and

bound him a thousand years,"--that is, bridled and restrained his

power so that he could not seduce and gain possession of those who

were to be freed. Now the thousand years may be understood in two

ways, so far as occurs to me: either because these things happen in

the sixth thousand of years or sixth millennium (the latter part of

which is now passing), as if during the sixth day, which is to be

followed by a Sabbath which has no evening, the endless rest of the

saints, so that, speaking of a part under the name of the whole, he

calls the last part of the millennium--the part, that is, which had

yet to expire before the end of the world--a thousand years; or he

used the thousand years as an equivalent for the whole duration of

this world, employing the number of perfection to mark the fulness

of time. For a thousand is the cube of ten. For ten times ten makes

a hundred, that is, the square on a plane superficies. But to give

this superficies height, and make it a cube, the hundred is again

multiplied by ten, which gives a thousand. Besides, if a hundred is

sometimes used for totality, as when the Lord said by way of promise

to him that left all and followed Him, "He shall receive in this

world an hundredfold;"[704] of which the apostle gives, as it were,

an explanation when he says, "As having nothing, yet possessing all

things,"[705]--for even of old it had been said, The whole world is

the wealth of a believer,--with how much greater reason is a thousand

put for totality since it is the cube, while the other is only the

square? And for the same reason we cannot better interpret the words

of the psalm, "He hath been mindful of His covenant for ever, the

word which He commanded to a thousand generations,"[706] than by

understanding it to mean "to all generations."

"And he cast him into the abyss,"--\_i.e.\_ cast the devil into the

abyss. By the \_abyss\_ is meant the countless multitude of the wicked

whose hearts are unfathomably deep in malignity against the Church of

God; not that the devil was not there before, but he is said to be

cast in thither, because, when prevented from harming believers, he

takes more complete possession of the ungodly. For that man is more

abundantly possessed by the devil who is not only alienated from God,

but also gratuitously hates those who serve God. "And shut him up,

and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more

till the thousand years should be fulfilled." "Shut him up,"--\_i.e.\_

prohibited him from going out, from doing what was forbidden. And the

addition of "set a seal upon him" seems to me to mean that it was

designed to keep it a secret who belonged to the devil's party and

who did not. For in this world this is a secret, for we cannot tell

whether even the man who seems to stand shall fall, or whether he who

seems to lie shall rise again. But by the chain and prisonhouse of

this interdict the devil is prohibited and restrained from seducing

those nations which belong to Christ, but which he formerly seduced

or held in subjection. For before the foundation of the world God

chose to rescue these from the power of darkness, and to translate

them into the kingdom of the Son of His love, as the apostle

says.[707] For what Christian is not aware that he seduces nations

even now, and draws them with himself to eternal punishment, but not

those predestined to eternal life? And let no one be dismayed by the

circumstance that the devil often seduces even those who have been

regenerated in Christ, and begun to walk in God's way. For "the Lord

knoweth them that are His,"[708] and of these the devil seduces none

to eternal damnation. For it is as God, from whom nothing is hid even

of things future, that the Lord knows them; not as a man, who sees a

man at the present time (if he can be said to see one whose heart he

does not see), but does not see even himself so far as to be able to

know what kind of person he is to be. The devil, then, is bound and

shut up in the abyss that he may not seduce the nations from which

the Church is gathered, and which he formerly seduced before the

Church existed. For it is not said "that he should not seduce any

man," but "that he should not seduce the nations"--meaning, no doubt,

those among which the Church exists--"till the thousand years should

be fulfilled,"--\_i.e.\_ either what remains of the sixth day which

consists of a thousand years, or all the years which are to elapse

till the end of the world.

The words, "that he should not seduce the nations till the thousand

years should be fulfilled," are not to be understood as indicating

that afterwards he is to seduce only those nations from which

the predestined Church is composed, and from seducing whom he is

restrained by that chain and imprisonment; but they are used in

conformity with that usage frequently employed in Scripture and

exemplified in the psalm, "So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God,

until He have mercy upon us,"[709]--not as if the eyes of His

servants would no longer wait upon the Lord their God when He had

mercy upon them. Or the order of the words is unquestionably this,

"And he shut him up and set a seal upon him, till the thousand

years should be fulfilled;" and the interposed clause, "that he

should seduce the nations no more," is not to be understood in the

connection in which it stands, but separately, and as if added

afterwards, so that the whole sentence might be read, "And He shut

him up and set a seal upon him till the thousand years should be

fulfilled, that he should seduce the nations no more,"--\_i.e.\_ he is

shut up till the thousand years be fulfilled, on this account, that

he may no more deceive the nations.

8. \_Of the binding and loosing of the devil.\_

"After that," says John, "he must be loosed a little season." If the

binding and shutting up of the devil means his being made unable to

seduce the Church, must his loosing be the recovery of this ability? By

no means. For the Church predestined and elected before the foundation

of the world, the Church of which it is said, "The Lord knoweth them

that are His," shall never be seduced by him. And yet there shall be

a Church in this world even when the devil shall be loosed, as there

has been since the beginning, and shall be always, the places of the

dying being filled by new believers. For a little after John says that

the devil, being loosed, shall draw the nations whom he has seduced in

the whole world to make war against the Church, and that the number of

these enemies shall be as the sand of the sea. "And they went up on

the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about,

and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and

devoured them. And the devil who seduced them was cast into the lake

of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and

shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."[710] This relates

to the last judgment, but I have thought fit to mention it now, lest

any one might suppose that in that short time during which the devil

shall be loose there shall be no Church upon earth, whether because

the devil finds no Church, or destroys it by manifold persecutions.

The devil, then, is not bound during the whole time which this book

embraces,--that is, from the first coming of Christ to the end of the

world, when He shall come the second time,--not bound in this sense,

that during this interval, which goes by the name of a thousand years,

he shall not seduce the Church, for not even when loosed shall he

seduce it. For certainly if his being bound means that he is not able

or not permitted to seduce the Church, what can the loosing of him

mean but his being able or permitted to do so? But God forbid that

such should be the case! But the binding of the devil is his being

prevented from the exercise of his whole power to seduce men, either

by violently forcing or fraudulently deceiving them into taking part

with him. If he were during so long a period permitted to assail the

weakness of men, very many persons, such as God would not wish to

expose to such temptation, would have their faith overthrown, or would

be prevented from believing; and that this might not happen, he is

bound.

But when the short time comes he shall be loosed. For he shall rage

with the whole force of himself and his angels for three years and

six months; and those with whom he makes war shall have power to

withstand all his violence and stratagems. And if he were never

loosed, his malicious power would be less patent, and less proof

would be given of the stedfast fortitude of the holy city: it would,

in short, be less manifest what good use the Almighty makes of his

great evil. For the Almighty does not absolutely seclude the saints

from his temptation, but shelters only their inner man, where faith

resides, that by outward temptation they may grow in grace. And He

binds him that he may not, in the free and eager exercise of his

malice, hinder or destroy the faith of those countless weak persons,

already believing or yet to believe, from whom the Church must be

increased and completed; and he will in the end loose him, that the

city of God may see how mighty an adversary it has conquered, to

the great glory of its Redeemer, Helper, Deliverer. And what are we

in comparison with those believers and saints who shall then exist,

seeing that they shall be tested by the loosing of an enemy with whom

we make war at the greatest peril even when he is bound? Although it

is also certain that even in this intervening period there have been

and are some soldiers of Christ so wise and strong, that if they were

to be alive in this mortal condition at the time of his loosing, they

would both most wisely guard against, and most patiently endure, all

his snares and assaults.

Now the devil was thus bound not only when the Church began to be

more and more widely extended among the nations beyond Judea, but is

now and shall be bound till the end of the world, when he is to be

loosed. Because even now men are, and doubtless to the end of the

world shall be, converted to the faith from the unbelief in which he

held them. And this strong one is bound in each instance in which he

is spoiled of one of his goods; and the abyss in which he is shut up

is not at an end when those die who were alive when first he was shut

up in it, but these have been succeeded, and shall to the end of the

world be succeeded, by others born after them with a like hate of the

Christians, and in the depth of whose blind hearts he is continually

shut up as in an abyss. But it is a question whether, during these

three years and six months when he shall be loose, and raging with

all his force, any one who has not previously believed shall attach

himself to the faith. For how in that case would the words hold good,

"Who entereth into the house of a strong one to spoil his goods,

unless first he shall have bound the strong one?" Consequently this

verse seems to compel us to believe that during that time, short as

it is, no one will be added to the Christian community, but that the

devil will make war with those who have previously become Christians,

and that, though some of these may be conquered and desert to the

devil, these do not belong to the predestinated number of the sons

of God: For it is not without reason that John, the same apostle as

wrote this Apocalypse, says in his epistle regarding certain persons,

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been

of us, they would no doubt have remained with us."[711] But what

shall become of the little ones? For it is beyond all belief that in

these days there shall not be found some Christian children born, but

not yet baptized, and that there shall not also be some born during

that very period; and if there be such, we cannot believe that their

parents shall not find some way of bringing them to the laver of

regeneration. But if this shall be the case, how shall these goods

be snatched from the devil when he is loose, since into his house no

man enters to spoil his goods unless he has first bound him? On the

contrary, we are rather to believe that in these days there shall be

no lack either of those who fall away from, or of those who attach

themselves to the Church; but there shall be such resoluteness, both

in parents to seek baptism for their little ones, and in those who

shall then first believe, that they shall conquer that strong one,

even though unbound,--that is, shall both vigilantly comprehend,

and patiently bear up against him, though employing such wiles and

putting forth such force as he never before used; and thus they

shall be snatched from him even though unbound. And yet the verse of

the Gospel will not be untrue, "Who entereth into the house of the

strong one to spoil his goods, unless he shall first have bound the

strong one?" For in accordance with this true saying that order is

observed--the strong one first bound, and then his goods spoiled; for

the Church is so increased by the weak and strong from all nations

far and near, that by its most robust faith in things divinely

predicted and accomplished, it shall be able to spoil the goods of

even the unbound devil. For as we must own that, "when iniquity

abounds, the love of many waxes cold,"[712] and that those who have

not been written in the book of life shall in large numbers yield

to the severe and unprecedented persecutions and stratagems of the

devil now loosed, so we cannot but think that not only those whom

that time shall find sound in the faith, but also some who till then

shall be without, shall become firm in the faith they have hitherto

rejected, and mighty to conquer the devil even though unbound, God's

grace aiding them to understand the Scriptures, in which, among other

things, there is foretold that very end which they themselves see to

be arriving. And if this shall be so, his binding is to be spoken of

as preceding, that there might follow a spoiling of him both bound

and loosed; for it is of this it is said, "Who shall enter into the

house of the strong one to spoil his goods, unless he shall first

have bound the strong one?"

9. \_What the reign of the saints with Christ for a thousand years

is, and how it differs from the eternal kingdom.\_

But while the devil is bound, the saints reign with Christ during the

same thousand years, understood in the same way, that is, of the time

of His first coming.[713] For, leaving out of account that kingdom

concerning which He shall say in the end, "Come, ye blessed of my

Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you,"[714] the

Church could not now be called His kingdom or the kingdom of heaven

unless His saints were even now reigning with Him, though in another

and far different way; for to His saints He says, "Lo, I am with you

always, even to the end of the world."[715] Certainly it is in this

present time that the scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God, and

of whom we have already spoken, brings forth from his treasure things

new and old. And from the Church those reapers shall gather out the

tares which He suffered to grow with the wheat till the harvest, as He

explains in the words, "The harvest is the end of the world; and the

reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered together

and burned with fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son

of man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom

all offences."[716] Can He mean out of that kingdom in which are no

offences? Then it must be out of His present kingdom, the Church, that

they are gathered. So He says, "He that breaketh one of the least of

these commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in

the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth and teacheth thus shall be

called great in the kingdom of heaven."[717] He speaks of both as

being in the kingdom of heaven, both the man who does not perform the

commandments which He teaches,--for "to break" means not to keep, not

to perform,--and the man who does and teaches as He did; but the one

He calls least, the other great. And He immediately adds, "For I say

unto you, that except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and

Pharisees,"--that is, the righteousness of those who break what they

teach; for of the scribes and Pharisees He elsewhere says, "For they

say and do not;"[718]--unless, therefore, your righteousness exceed

theirs, that is, so that you do not break but rather do what you teach,

"ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."[719] We must understand in

one sense the kingdom of heaven in which exist together both he who

breaks what he teaches and he who does it, the one being least, the

other great, and in another sense the kingdom of heaven into which only

he who does what he teaches shall enter. Consequently, where both

classes exist, it is the Church as it now is, but where only the one

shall exist, it is the Church as it is destined to be when no wicked

person shall be in her. Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom

of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints

reign with Him, though otherwise than as they shall reign hereafter;

and yet, though the tares grow in the Church along with the wheat, they

do not reign with Him. For they reign with Him who do what the apostle

says, "If ye be risen with Christ, mind the things which are above,

where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Seek those things which

are above, not the things which are on the earth."[720] Of such persons

he also says that their conversation is in heaven.[721] In fine, they

reign with Him who are so in His kingdom that they themselves are His

kingdom. But in what sense are those the kingdom of Christ who, to say

no more, though they are in it until all offences are gathered out of

it at the end of the world, yet seek their own things in it, and not

the things that are Christ's?[722]

It is then of this kingdom militant, in which conflict with the

enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts,

or government laid upon them as they yield, until we come to that

most peaceful kingdom in which we shall reign without an enemy,

and it is of this first resurrection in the present life, that the

Apocalypse speaks in the words just quoted. For, after saying that

the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterwards loosed for a

short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does

or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, "And

I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given."

It is not to be supposed that this refers to the last judgment, but

to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the

Church is now governed. And no better interpretation of judgment

being given can be produced than that which we have in the words,

"What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye loose

on earth shall be loosed in heaven."[723] Whence the apostle says,

"What have I to do with judging them that are without? do not ye

judge them that are within?"[724] "And the souls," says John, "of

those who were slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of

God,"--understanding what he afterwards says, "reigned with Christ

a thousand years,"[725]--that is, the souls of the martyrs not yet

restored to their bodies. For the souls of the pious dead are not

separated from the Church, which even now is the kingdom of Christ;

otherwise there would be no remembrance made of them at the altar

of God in the partaking of the body of Christ, nor would it do any

good in danger to run to His baptism, that we might not pass from

this life without it; nor to reconciliation, if by penitence or a bad

conscience any one may be severed from His body. For why are these

things practised, if not because the faithful, even though dead, are

His members? Therefore, while these thousand years run on, their

souls reign with Him, though not as yet in conjunction with their

bodies. And therefore in another part of this same book we read,

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: and now,

saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their

works do follow them."[726] The Church, then, begins its reign with

Christ now in the living and in the dead. For, as the apostle says,

"Christ died that He might be Lord both of the living and of the

dead."[727] But he mentioned the souls of the martyrs only, because

they who have contended even to death for the truth, themselves

principally reign after death; but, taking the part for the whole, we

understand the words of all others who belong to the Church, which is

the kingdom of Christ.

As to the words following, "And if any have not worshipped the beast

nor his image, nor have received his inscription on their forehead,

or on their hand," we must take them of both the living and the

dead. And what this beast is, though it requires a more careful

investigation, yet it is not inconsistent with the true faith to

understand it of the ungodly city itself, and the community of

unbelievers set in opposition to the faithful people and the city

of God. "His image" seems to me to mean his simulation, to wit, in

those men who profess to believe, but live as unbelievers. For they

pretend to be what they are not, and are called Christians, not

from a true likeness, but from a deceitful image. For to this beast

belong not only the avowed enemies of the name of Christ and His most

glorious city, but also the tares which are to be gathered out of

His kingdom, the Church, in the end of the world. And who are they

who do not worship the beast and his image, if not those who do what

the apostle says, "Be not yoked with unbelievers?"[728] For such do

not worship, \_i.e.\_ do not consent, are not subjected; neither do

they receive the inscription, the brand of crime, on their forehead

by their profession, on their hand by their practice. They, then,

who are free from these pollutions, whether they still live in this

mortal flesh, or are dead, reign with Christ even now, through this

whole interval which is indicated by the thousand years, in a fashion

suited to this time.

"The rest of them," he says, "did not live." For now is the hour when

the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear

shall live; and the rest of them shall not live. The words added,

"until the thousand years are finished," mean that they did not live

in the time in which they ought to have lived by passing from death

to life. And therefore, when the day of the bodily resurrection

arrives, they shall come out of their graves, not to life, but to

judgment, namely, to damnation, which is called the second death.

For whosoever has not lived until the thousand years be finished,

\_i.e.\_ during this whole time in which the first resurrection is

going on,--whosoever has not heard the voice of the Son of God, and

passed from death to life,--that man shall certainly in the second

resurrection, the resurrection of the flesh, pass with his flesh

into the second death. For he goes on to say, "This is the first

resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first

resurrection," or who experiences it. Now he experiences it who not

only revives from the death of sin, but continues in this renewed

life. "In these the second death hath no power." Therefore it has

power in the rest, of whom he said above, "The rest of them did not

live until the thousand years were finished;" for in this whole

intervening time, called a thousand years, however lustily they

lived in the body, they were not quickened to life out of that death

in which their wickedness held them, so that by this revived life

they should become partakers of the first resurrection, and so the

second death should have no power over them.

10. \_What is to be replied to those who think that resurrection

pertains only to bodies and not to souls.\_

There are some who suppose that resurrection can be predicated only

of the body, and therefore they contend that this first resurrection

(of the Apocalypse) is a bodily resurrection. For, say they, "to

rise again" can only be said of things that fall. Now, bodies fall

in death.[729] There cannot, therefore, be a resurrection of souls,

but of bodies. But what do they say to the apostle who speaks of a

resurrection of souls? For certainly it was in the inner and not the

outer man that those had risen again to whom he says, "If ye have

risen with Christ, mind the things that are above."[730] The same

sense he elsewhere conveyed in other words, saying, "That as Christ

has risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may

walk in newness of life."[731] So, too, "Awake thou that sleepest,

and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."[732] As

to what they say about nothing being able to rise again but what

falls, whence they conclude that resurrection pertains to bodies

only, and not to souls, because bodies fall, why do they make nothing

of the words, "Ye that fear the Lord, wait for His mercy; and go

not aside lest ye fall;"[733] and "To his own Master he stands or

falls;"[734] and "He that thinketh he standeth, let him take heed

lest he fall?"[735] For I fancy this fall that we are to take heed

against is a fall of the soul, not of the body. If, then, rising

again belongs to things that fall, and souls fall, it must be owned

that souls also rise again. To the words, "In them the second death

hath no power," are added the words, "but they shall be priests of

God and Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years;" and

this refers not to the bishops alone, and presbyters, who are now

specially called priests in the Church; but as we call all believers

Christians on account of the mystical chrism, so we call all priests

because they are members of the one Priest. Of them the Apostle Peter

says, "A holy people, a royal priesthood."[736] Certainly he implied,

though in a passing and incidental way, that Christ is God, saying

priests of God and Christ, that is, of the Father and the Son, though

it was in His servant-form and as Son of man that Christ was made

a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. But this we have

already explained more than once.

11. \_Of Gog and Magog, who are to be roused by the devil to persecute

the Church, when he is loosed in the end of the world.\_

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed

from his prison, and shall go out to seduce the nations which are in

the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and shall draw them

to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea." This, then, is

his purpose in seducing them, to draw them to this battle. For even

before this he was wont to use as many and various seductions as

he could continue. And the words "he shall go out" mean, he shall

burst forth from lurking hatred into open persecution. For this

persecution, occurring while the final judgment is imminent, shall

be the last which shall be endured by the holy Church throughout

the world, the whole city of Christ being assailed by the whole

city of the devil, as each exists on earth. For these nations which

he names Gog and Magog are not to be understood of some barbarous

nations in some part of the world, whether the Getæ and Massagetæ,

as some conclude from the initial letters, or some other foreign

nations not under the Roman government. For John marks that they are

spread over the whole earth, when he says, "The nations which are

in the four corners of the earth," and he added that these are Gog

and Magog. The meaning of these names we find to be, Gog, "a roof,"

Magog, "from a roof,"--a house, as it were, and he who comes out of

the house. They are therefore the nations in which we found that the

devil was shut up as in an abyss, and the devil himself coming out

from them and going forth, so that they are the roof, he from the

roof. Or if we refer both words to the nations, not one to them and

one to the devil, then they are both the roof, because in them the

old enemy is at present shut up, and as it were roofed in; and they

shall be from the roof when they break forth from concealed to open

hatred. The words, "And they went up on the breadth of the earth,

and encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city," do not

mean that they have come, or shall come, to one place, as if the camp

of the saints and the beloved city should be in some one place; for

this camp is nothing else than the Church of Christ extending over

the whole world. And consequently wherever the Church shall be,--and

it shall be in all nations, as is signified by "the breadth of the

earth,"--there also shall be the camp of the saints and the beloved

city, and there it shall be encompassed by the savage persecution

of all its enemies; for they too shall exist along with it in all

nations,--that is, it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut

up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military

duty, which is signified by the word "camp."

12. \_Whether the fire that came down out of heaven and devoured

them refers to the last punishment of the wicked.\_

The words, "And fire came down out of heaven and devoured them," are

not to be understood of the final punishment which shall be inflicted

when it is said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting

fire;"[737] for then they shall be cast into the fire, not fire come

down out of heaven upon them. In this place "fire out of heaven" is

well understood of the firmness of the saints, wherewith they refuse

to yield obedience to those who rage against them. For the firmament

is "heaven," by whose firmness these assailants shall be pained with

blazing zeal, for they shall be impotent to draw away the saints to

the party of Antichrist. This is the fire which shall devour them,

and this is "from God;" for it is by God's grace the saints become

unconquerable, and so torment their enemies. For as in a good sense

it is said, "The zeal of Thine house hath consumed me,"[738] so

in a bad sense it is said, "Zeal hath possessed the uninstructed

people, and now fire shall consume the enemies."[739] "And now,"

that is to say, not the fire of the last judgment. Or if by this fire

coming down out of heaven and consuming them, John meant that blow

wherewith Christ in His coming is to strike those persecutors of the

Church whom He shall then find alive upon earth, when He shall kill

Antichrist with the breath of His mouth,[740] then even this is not

the last judgment of the wicked; but the last judgment is that which

they shall suffer when the bodily resurrection has taken place.

13. \_Whether the time of the persecution of Antichrist should

be reckoned in the thousand years.\_

This last persecution by Antichrist shall last for three years and

six months, as we have already said, and as is affirmed both in

the book of Revelation and by Daniel the prophet. Though this time

is brief, yet not without reason is it questioned whether it is

comprehended in the thousand years in which the devil is bound and

the saints reign with Christ, or whether this little season should

be added over and above to these years. For if we say that they are

included in the thousand years, then the saints reign with Christ

during a more protracted period than the devil is bound. For they

shall reign with their King and Conqueror mightily even in that

crowning persecution when the devil shall now be unbound and shall

rage against them with all his might. How then does Scripture define

both the binding of the devil and the reign of the saints by the same

thousand years, if the binding of the devil ceases three years and

six months before this reign of the saints with Christ? On the other

hand, if we say that the brief space of this persecution is not to be

reckoned as a part of the thousand years, but rather as an additional

period, we shall indeed be able to interpret the words, "The priests

of God and of Christ shall reign with Him a thousand years; and when

the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed out of

his prison;" for thus they signify that the reign of the saints and

the bondage of the devil shall cease simultaneously, so that the time

of the persecution we speak of should be contemporaneous neither with

the reign of the saints nor with the imprisonment of Satan, but

should be reckoned over and above as a superadded portion of time.

But then in this case we are forced to admit that the saints shall

not reign with Christ during that persecution. But who can dare to

say that His members shall not reign with Him at that very juncture

when they shall most of all, and with the greatest fortitude, cleave

to Him, and when the glory of resistance and the crown of martyrdom

shall be more conspicuous in proportion to the hotness of the battle?

Or if it is suggested that they may be said not to reign, because of

the tribulations which they shall suffer, it will follow that all

the saints who have formerly, during the thousand years, suffered

tribulation, shall not be said to have reigned with Christ during the

period of their tribulation, and consequently even those whose souls

the author of this book says that he saw, and who were slain for the

testimony of Jesus and the word of God, did not reign with Christ

when they were suffering persecution, and they were not themselves

the kingdom of Christ, though Christ was then pre-eminently

possessing them. This is indeed perfectly absurd, and to be scouted.

But assuredly the victorious souls of the glorious martyrs, having

overcome and finished all griefs and toils, and having laid down

their mortal members, have reigned, and do reign, with Christ till

the thousand years are finished, that they may afterwards reign with

Him when they have received their immortal bodies. And therefore

during these three years and a half the souls of those who were slain

for His testimony, both those which formerly passed from the body and

those which shall pass in that last persecution, shall reign with

Him till the mortal world come to an end, and pass into that kingdom

in which there shall be no death. And thus the reign of the saints

with Christ shall last longer than the bonds and imprisonment of the

devil, because they shall reign with their King the Son of God for

these three years and a half during which the devil is no longer

bound. It remains, therefore, that when we read that "the priests of

God and of Christ shall reign with Him a thousand years; and when

the thousand years are finished, the devil shall be loosed from his

imprisonment," that we understand either that the thousand years of

the reign of the saints does not terminate, though the imprisonment

of the devil does,--so that both parties have their thousand years,

that is, their complete time, yet each with a different actual

duration appropriate to itself, the kingdom of the saints being

longer, the imprisonment of the devil shorter,--or at least that, as

three years and six months is a very short time, it is not reckoned

as either deducted from the whole time of Satan's imprisonment, or as

added to the whole duration of the reign of the saints, as we have

shown above in the sixteenth book[741] regarding the round number

of four hundred years, which were specified as four hundred, though

actually somewhat more; and similar expressions are often found in

the sacred writings, if one will mark them.

14. \_Of the damnation of the devil and his adherents; and a sketch

of the bodily resurrection of all the dead, and of the final

retributive judgment.\_

After this mention of the closing persecution, he summarily indicates

all that the devil, and the city of which he is the prince, shall

suffer in the last judgment. For he says, "And the devil who seduced

them is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, in which are the

beast and the false prophet, and they shall be tormented day and

night for ever and ever." We have already said that by the beast

is well understood the wicked city. His false prophet is either

Antichrist or that image or figment of which we have spoken in

the same place. After this he gives a brief narrative of the last

judgment itself, which shall take place at the second or bodily

resurrection of the dead, as it had been revealed to him: "I saw a

throne great and white, and One sitting on it from whose face the

heaven and the earth fled away, and their place was not found." He

does not say, "I saw a throne great and white, and One sitting on

it, and from His face the heaven and the earth fled away," for it

had not happened then, \_i.e.\_ before the living and the dead were

judged; but he says that he saw Him sitting on the throne from

whose face heaven and earth fled away, but afterwards. For when the

judgment is finished, this heaven and earth shall cease to be, and

there will be a new heaven and a new earth. For this world shall pass

away by transmutation, not by absolute destruction. And therefore

the apostle says, "For the figure of this world passeth away. I

would have you be without anxiety."[742] The figure, therefore,

passes away, not the nature. After John had said that he had seen

One sitting on the throne from whose face heaven and earth fled,

though not till afterwards, he said, "And I saw the dead, great and

small: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which

is the book of the life of each man: and the dead were judged out

of those things which were written in the books, according to their

deeds." He said that the books were opened, and a book; but he left

us at a loss as to the nature of this book, "which is," he says, "the

book of the life of each man." By those books, then, which he first

mentioned, we are to understand the sacred books old and new, that

out of them it might be shown what commandments God had enjoined; and

that book of the life of each man is to show what commandments each

man has done or omitted to do. If this book be materially considered,

who can reckon its size or length, or the time it would take to

read a book in which the whole life of every man is recorded? Shall

there be present as many angels as men, and shall each man hear his

life recited by the angel assigned to him? In that case there will

be not one book containing all the lives, but a separate book for

every life. But our passage requires us to think of one only. "And

another book was opened," it says. We must therefore understand it

of a certain divine power, by which it shall be brought about that

every one shall recall to memory all his own works, whether good or

evil, and shall mentally survey them with a marvellous rapidity, so

that this knowledge will either accuse or excuse conscience, and

thus all and each shall be simultaneously judged. And this divine

power is called a book, because in it we shall as it were read all

that it causes us to remember. That he may show who the dead, small

and great, are who are to be judged, he recurs to this which he had

omitted or rather deferred, and says, "And the sea presented the dead

which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in

them." This of course took place before the dead were judged, yet it

is mentioned after. And so, I say, he returns again to what he had

omitted. But now he preserves the order of events, and for the sake

of exhibiting it repeats in its own proper place what he had already

said regarding the dead who were judged. For after he had said, "And

the sea presented the dead which were in it, and death and hell gave

up the dead which were in them," he immediately subjoined what he

had already said, "and they were judged every man according to their

works." For this is just what he had said before, "And the dead were

judged according to their works."

15. \_Who the dead are who are given up to judgment by the sea,

and by death and hell.\_

But who are the dead which were in the sea, and which the sea

presented? For we cannot suppose that those who die in the sea are

not in hell, nor that their bodies are preserved in the sea; nor

yet, which is still more absurd, that the sea retained the good,

while hell received the bad. Who could believe this? But some very

sensibly suppose that in this place the sea is put for this world.

When John then wished to signify that those whom Christ should find

still alive in the body were to be judged along with those who should

rise again, he called them dead, both the good to whom it is said,

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God,"[743] and

the wicked of whom it is said, "Let the dead bury their dead."[744]

They may also be called dead, because they wear mortal bodies, as

the apostle says, "The body indeed is dead because of sin; but the

spirit is life because of righteousness;"[745] proving that in a

living man in the body there is both a body which is dead, and a

spirit which is life. Yet he did not say that the body was mortal,

but dead, although immediately after he speaks in the more usual

way of mortal bodies. These, then, are the dead which were in the

sea, and which the sea presented, to wit, the men who were in this

world, because they had not yet died, and whom the world presented

for judgment. "And death and hell," he says, "gave up the dead which

were in them." The sea \_presented\_ them because they had merely to

be found in the place where they were; but death and hell \_gave them

up\_ or \_restored\_ them, because they called them back to life, which

they had already quitted. And perhaps it was not without reason that

neither \_death\_ nor \_hell\_ were judged sufficient alone, and both

were mentioned,--death to indicate the good, who have suffered only

death and not hell; hell to indicate the wicked, who suffer also the

punishment of hell. For if it does not seem absurd to believe that

the ancient saints who believed in Christ and His then future coming,

were kept in places far removed indeed from the torments of the

wicked, but yet in hell,[746] until Christ's blood and His descent

into these places delivered them, certainly good Christians, redeemed

by that precious price already paid, are quite unacquainted with hell

while they wait for their restoration to the body, and the reception

of their reward. After saying, "They were judged every man according

to their works," he briefly added what the judgment was: "Death and

hell were cast into the lake of fire;" by these names designating

the devil and the whole company of his angels, for he is the author

of death and the pains of hell. For this is what he had already, by

anticipation, said in clearer language: "The devil who seduced them

was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone." The obscure addition he

had made in the words, "in which were also the beast and the false

prophet," he here explains, "They who were not found written in the

book of life were cast into the lake of fire." This book is not for

reminding God, as if things might escape Him by forgetfulness, but it

symbolizes His predestination of those to whom eternal life shall be

given. For it is not that God is ignorant, and reads in the book to

inform Himself, but rather His infallible prescience is the book of

life in which they are written, that is to say, known beforehand.

16. \_Of the new heaven and the new earth.\_

Having finished the prophecy of judgment, so far as the wicked are

concerned, it remains that he speak also of the good. Having briefly

explained the Lord's words, "These will go away into everlasting

punishment," it remains that he explain the connected words, "but

the righteous into life eternal."[747] "And I saw," he says, "a new

heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have

passed away; and there is no more sea."[748] This will take place in

the order which he has by anticipation declared in the words, "I saw

One sitting on the throne, from whose face heaven and earth fled."

For as soon as those who are not written in the book of life have

been judged and cast into eternal fire,--the nature of which fire,

or its position in the world or universe, I suppose is known to no

man, unless perhaps the divine Spirit reveal it to some one,--then

shall the figure of this world pass away in a conflagration of

universal fire, as once before the world was flooded with a deluge of

universal water. And by this universal conflagration the qualities of

the corruptible elements which suited our corruptible bodies shall

utterly perish, and our substance shall receive such qualities as

shall, by a wonderful transmutation, harmonize with our immortal

bodies, so that, as the world itself is renewed to some better thing,

it is fitly accommodated to men, themselves renewed in their flesh

to some better thing. As for the statement, "And there shall be no

more sea," I would not lightly say whether it is dried up with that

excessive heat, or is itself also turned into some better thing.

For we read that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, but I

do not remember to have anywhere read anything of a new sea, unless

what I find in this same book, "As it were a sea of glass like

crystal."[749] But he was not then speaking of this end of the world,

neither does he seem to speak of a literal sea, but "as it were a

sea." It is possible that, as prophetic diction delights in mingling

figurative and real language, and thus in some sort veiling the

sense, so the words "And there is no more sea" may be taken in the

same sense as the previous phrase, "And the sea presented the dead

which were in it." For then there shall be no more of this world, no

more of the surgings and restlessness of human life, and it is this

which is symbolized by the \_sea\_.

17. \_Of the endless glory of the Church.\_

"And I saw," he says, "a great city, new Jerusalem, coming down from

God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And

I heard a great voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle

of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be

His people, and God Himself shall be with them. And God shall wipe

away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death,

neither sorrow, nor crying, but neither shall there be any more

pain: because the former things have passed away. And He that sat

upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."[750] This city

is said to come down out of heaven, because the grace with which

God formed it is of heaven. Wherefore He says to it by Isaiah, "I

am the Lord that formed thee."[751] It is indeed descended from

heaven from its commencement, since its citizens during the course

of this world grow by the grace of God, which cometh down from above

through the laver of regeneration in the Holy Ghost sent down from

heaven. But by God's final judgment, which shall be administered by

His Son Jesus Christ, there shall by God's grace be manifested a

glory so pervading and so new, that no vestige of what is old shall

remain; for even our bodies shall pass from their old corruption and

mortality to new incorruption and immortality. For to refer this

promise to the present time, in which the saints are reigning with

their King a thousand years, seems to me excessively barefaced, when

it is most distinctly said, "God shall wipe away all tears from

their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor

crying, but there shall be no more pain." And who is so absurd, and

blinded by contentious opinionativeness, as to be audacious enough

to affirm that in the midst of the calamities of this mortal state,

God's people, or even one single saint, does live, or has ever

lived, or shall ever live, without tears or pain,--the fact being

that the holier a man is, and the fuller of holy desire, so much

the more abundant is the tearfulness of his supplication? Are not

these the utterances of a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem: "My

tears have been my meat day and night;"[752] and "Every night shall

I make my bed to swim; with my tears shall I water my couch;"[753]

and "My groaning is not hid from Thee;"[754] and "My sorrow was

renewed?"[755] Or are not those God's children who groan, being

burdened, not that they wish to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that

mortality may be swallowed up of life?[756] Do not they even who have

the first-fruits of the Spirit groan within themselves, waiting for

the adoption, the redemption of their body?[757] Was not the Apostle

Paul himself a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, and was he not so

all the more when he had heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for

his Israelitish brethren?[758] But when shall there be no more death

in that city, except when it shall be said, "O death, where is thy

contention?[759] O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death

is sin."[760] Obviously there shall be no sin when it can be said,

"Where is"--But as for the present it is not some poor weak citizen

of this city, but this same Apostle John himself who says, "If we

say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not

in us."[761] No doubt, though this book is called the Apocalypse,

there are in it many obscure passages to exercise the mind of the

reader, and there are few passages so plain as to assist us in the

interpretation of the others, even though we take pains; and this

difficulty is increased by the repetition of the same things, in

forms so different, that the things referred to seem to be different,

although in fact they are only differently stated. But in the words,

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no

more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, but there shall be no more

pain," there is so manifest a reference to the future world and the

immortality and eternity of the saints,--for only then and only there

shall such a condition be realized,--that if we think this obscure,

we need not expect to find anything plain in any part of Scripture.

18. \_What the Apostle Peter predicted regarding the last judgment.\_

Let us now see what the Apostle Peter predicted concerning this

judgment. "There shall come," he says, "in the last days scoffers....

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a

new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."[762] There is nothing said

here about the resurrection of the dead, but enough certainly regarding

the destruction of this world. And by his reference to the deluge he

seems as it were to suggest to us how far we should believe the ruin

of the world will extend in the end of the world. For he says that

the world which then was perished, and not only the earth itself, but

also the heavens, by which we understand the air, the place and room

of which was occupied by the water. Therefore the whole, or almost the

whole, of the gusty atmosphere (which he calls heaven, or rather the

heavens, meaning the earth's atmosphere, and not the upper air in which

sun, moon, and stars are set) was turned into moisture, and in this

way perished together with the earth, whose former appearance had been

destroyed by the deluge. "But the heavens and the earth which are now,

by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day

of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Therefore the heavens and

the earth, or the world which was preserved from the water to stand in

place of that world which perished in the flood, is itself reserved to

fire at last in the day of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

He does not hesitate to affirm that in this great change men also shall

perish: their nature, however, shall notwithstanding continue, though

in eternal punishments. Some one will perhaps put the question, If

after judgment is pronounced the world itself is to burn, where shall

the saints be during the conflagration, and before it is replaced by

a new heavens and a new earth, since somewhere they must be, because

they have material bodies? We may reply that they shall be in the upper

regions into which the flame of that conflagration shall not ascend,

as neither did the water of the flood; for they shall have such bodies

that they shall be wherever they wish. Moreover, when they have become

immortal and incorruptible, they shall not greatly dread the blaze of

that conflagration, as the corruptible and mortal bodies of the three

men were able to live unhurt in the blazing furnace.

19. \_What the Apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about the

manifestation of Antichrist which shall precede the day of the

Lord.\_

I see that I must omit many of the statements of the gospels and

epistles about this last judgment, that this volume may not become

unduly long; but I can on no account omit what the Apostle Paul says,

in writing to the Thessalonians, "We beseech you, brethren, by the

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,"[763] etc.

No one can doubt that he wrote this of Antichrist and of the day

of judgment, which he here calls the day of the Lord, nor that he

declared that this day should not come unless he first came who is

called the apostate--apostate, to wit, from the Lord God. And if this

may justly be said of all the ungodly, how much more of him? But it

is uncertain in what temple he shall sit, whether in that ruin of the

temple which was built by Solomon, or in the Church; for the apostle

would not call the temple of any idol or demon the temple of God.

And on this account some think that in this passage Antichrist means

not the prince himself alone, but his whole body, that is, the mass

of men who adhere to him, along with him their prince; and they also

think that we should render the Greek more exactly were we to read,

not "in the temple of God," but "for" or "as the temple of God," as

if he himself were the temple of God, the Church.[764] Then as for

the words, "And now ye know what withholdeth," \_i.e.\_ ye know what

hindrance or cause of delay there is, "that he might be revealed in

his own time;" they show that he was unwilling to make an explicit

statement, because he said that they knew. And thus we who have not

their knowledge wish and are not able even with pains to understand

what the apostle referred to, especially as his meaning is made still

more obscure by what he adds. For what does he mean by "For the

mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now holdeth, let

him hold until he be taken out of the way: and then shall the wicked

be revealed?" I frankly confess I do not know what he means. I will

nevertheless mention such conjectures as I have heard or read.

Some think that the Apostle Paul referred to the Roman empire, and that

he was unwilling to use language more explicit, lest he should incur

the calumnious charge of wishing ill to the empire which it was hoped

would be eternal; so that in saying, "For the mystery of iniquity doth

already work," he alluded to Nero, whose deeds already seemed to be

as the deeds of Antichrist. And hence some suppose that he shall rise

again and be Antichrist. Others, again, suppose that he is not even

dead, but that he was concealed that he might be supposed to have been

killed, and that he now lives in concealment in the vigour of that

same age which he had reached when he was believed to have perished,

and will live until he is revealed in his own time and restored to

his kingdom.[765] But I wonder that men can be so audacious in their

conjectures. However, it is not absurd to believe that these words

of the apostle, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be

taken out of the way," refer to the Roman empire, as if it were said,

"Only he who now reigneth, let him reign until he be taken out of the

way." "And then shall the wicked be revealed:" no one doubts that

this means Antichrist. But others think that the words, "Ye know what

withholdeth," and "The mystery of iniquity worketh," refer only to the

wicked and the hypocrites who are in the Church, until they reach a

number so great as to furnish Antichrist with a great people, and that

this is the \_mystery\_ of iniquity, because it seems hidden; also that

the apostle is exhorting the faithful tenaciously to hold the faith

they hold when he says, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he

be taken out of the way," that is, until the mystery of iniquity which

now is hidden departs from the Church. For they suppose that it is to

this same mystery John alludes when in his epistle he says, "Little

children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist

shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that

it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us;

for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with

us."[766] As therefore there went out from the Church many heretics,

whom John calls "many antichrists," at that time prior to the end, and

which John calls "the last time," so in the end they shall go out who

do not belong to Christ, but to that last Antichrist, and then he shall

be revealed.

Thus various, then, are the conjectural explanations of the obscure

words of the apostle. That which there is no doubt he said is this,

that Christ will not come to judge quick and dead unless Antichrist,

His adversary, first come to seduce those who are dead in soul;

although their seduction is a result of God's secret judgment already

passed. For, as it is said, "his presence shall be after the working

of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with

all seduction of unrighteousness in them that perish." For then

shall Satan be loosed, and by means of that Antichrist shall work

with all power in a lying though a wonderful manner. It is commonly

questioned whether these works are called "signs and lying wonders"

because he is to deceive men's senses by false appearances, or

because the things he does, though they be true prodigies, shall be

a lie to those who shall believe that such things could be done only

by God, being ignorant of the devil's power, and especially of such

unexampled power as he shall then for the first time put forth. For

when he fell from heaven as fire, and at a stroke swept away from the

holy Job his numerous household and his vast flocks, and then as a

whirlwind rushed upon and smote the house and killed his children,

these were not deceitful appearances, and yet they were the works of

Satan to whom God had given this power. Why they are called signs

and lying wonders we shall then be more likely to know when the time

itself arrives. But whatever be the reason of the name, they shall

be such signs and wonders as shall seduce those who shall deserve to

be seduced, "because they received not the love of the truth that

they might be saved." Neither did the apostle scruple to go on to

say, "For this cause God shall send upon them the working of error

that they should believe a lie." For God shall \_send\_, because God

shall permit the devil to do these things, the permission being by

His own just judgment, though the doing of them is in pursuance

of the devil's unrighteous and malignant purpose, "that they all

might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in

unrighteousness." Therefore, being judged, they shall be seduced,

and, being seduced, they shall be judged. But, being judged, they

shall be seduced by those secretly just and justly secret judgments

of God, with which He has never ceased to judge since the first sin

of the rational creatures; and, being seduced, they shall be judged

in that last and manifest judgment administered by Jesus Christ, who

was Himself most unjustly judged and shall most justly judge.

20. \_What the same apostle taught in the first Epistle to the

Thessalonians regarding the resurrection of the dead.\_

But the apostle has said nothing here regarding the resurrection of

the dead; but in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians he says, "We

would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which

are asleep,"[767] etc. These words of the apostle most distinctly

proclaim the future resurrection of the dead, when the Lord Christ

shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

But it is commonly asked whether those whom our Lord shall find alive

upon earth, personated in this passage by the apostle and those who

were alive with him, shall never die at all, or shall pass with

incomprehensible swiftness through death to immortality in the very

moment during which they shall be caught up along with those who

rise again to meet the Lord in the air? For we cannot say that it is

impossible that they should both die and revive again while they are

carried aloft through the air. For the words, "And so shall we ever

be with the Lord," are not to be understood as if he meant that we

shall always remain in the air with the Lord; for He Himself shall

not remain there, but shall only pass through it as He comes. For

we shall go to meet Him as He comes, not where He remains; but "so

shall we be with the Lord," that is, we shall be with Him possessed

of immortal bodies wherever we shall be with Him. We seem compelled

to take the words in this sense, and to suppose that those whom the

Lord shall find alive upon earth shall in that brief space both

suffer death and receive immortality; for this same apostle says, "In

Christ shall all be made alive;"[768] while, speaking of the same

resurrection of the body, he elsewhere says, "That which thou sowest

is not quickened, except it die."[769] How, then, shall those whom

Christ shall find alive upon earth be made alive to immortality in

Him if they die not, since on this very account it is said, "That

which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die?" Or if we cannot

properly speak of human bodies as sown, unless in so far as by dying

they do in some sort return to the earth, as also the sentence

pronounced by God against the sinning father of the human race runs,

"Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return,"[770] we must

acknowledge that those whom Christ at His coming shall find still in

the body are not included in these words of the apostle nor in those

of Genesis; for, being caught up into the clouds, they are certainly

not sown, neither going nor returning to the earth, whether they

experience no death at all or die for a moment in the air.

But, on the other hand, there meets us the saying of the same apostle

when he was speaking to the Corinthians about the resurrection of

the body, "We shall all rise," or, as other MSS. read, "We shall all

sleep."[771] Since, then, there can be no resurrection unless death

has preceded, and since we can in this passage understand by sleep

nothing else than death, how shall \_all\_ either sleep or rise again

if so many persons whom Christ shall find in the body shall neither

sleep nor rise again? If, then, we believe that the saints who shall

be found alive at Christ's coming, and shall be caught up to meet

Him, shall in that same ascent pass from mortal to immortal bodies,

we shall find no difficulty in the words of the apostle, either when

he says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die," or

when he says, "We shall all rise," or "all sleep," for not even the

saints shall be quickened to immortality unless they first die, however

briefly; and consequently they shall not be exempt from resurrection

which is preceded by sleep, however brief. And why should it seem to

us incredible that that multitude of bodies should be, as it were,

sown in the air, and should in the air forthwith revive immortal and

incorruptible, when we believe, on the testimony of the same apostle,

that the resurrection shall take place in the twinkling of an eye, and

that the dust of bodies long dead shall return with incomprehensible

facility and swiftness to those members that are now to live endlessly?

Neither do we suppose that in the case of these saints the sentence,

"Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return," is null, though

their bodies do not, on dying, fall to earth, but both die and rise

again at once while caught up into the air. For "Thou shalt return to

earth" means, Thou shalt at death return to that which thou wert before

life began. Thou shalt, when exanimate, be that which thou wert before

thou wast animate. For it was into a face of earth that God breathed

the breath of life when man was made a living soul; as if it were

said, Thou art earth with a soul, which thou wast not; thou shalt be

earth without a soul, as thou wast. And this is what all bodies of the

dead are before they rot; and what the bodies of those saints shall be

if they die, no matter where they die, as soon as they shall give up

that life which they are immediately to receive back again. In this

way, then, they return or go to earth, inasmuch as from being living

men they shall be earth, as that which becomes cinder is said to go

to cinder; that which decays, to go to decay; and so of six hundred

other things. But the manner in which this shall take place we can now

only feebly conjecture, and shall understand it only when it comes to

pass. For that there shall be a bodily resurrection of the dead when

Christ comes to judge quick and dead, we must believe if we would be

Christians. But if we are unable perfectly to comprehend the manner

in which it shall take place, our faith is not on this account vain.

Now, however, we ought, as we formerly promised, to show, as far as

seems necessary, what the ancient prophetic books predicted concerning

this final judgment of God; and I fancy no great time need be spent in

discussing and explaining these predictions, if the reader has been

careful to avail himself of the help we have already furnished.

21. \_Utterances of the prophet Isaiah regarding the resurrection

of the dead and the retributive judgment.\_

The prophet Isaiah says, "The dead shall rise again, and all who were

in the graves shall rise again; and all who are in the earth shall

rejoice: for the dew which is from Thee is their health, and the earth

of the wicked shall fall."[772] All the former part of this passage

relates to the resurrection of the blessed; but the words, "the earth

of the wicked shall fall," is rightly understood as meaning that the

bodies of the wicked shall fall into the ruin of damnation. And if we

would more exactly and carefully scrutinize the words which refer to

the resurrection of the good, we may refer to the first resurrection

the words, "the dead shall rise again," and to the second the following

words, "and all who were in the graves shall rise again." And if we

ask what relates to those saints whom the Lord at His coming shall

find alive upon earth, the following clause may suitably be referred

to them: "All who are in the earth shall rejoice: for the dew which

is from Thee is their health." By "health" in this place it is best

to understand immortality. For that is the most perfect health which

is not repaired by nourishment as by a daily remedy. In like manner

the same prophet, affording hope to the good and terrifying the wicked

regarding the day of judgment, says, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold,

I will flow down upon them as a river of peace, and upon the glory

of the Gentiles as a rushing torrent: their sons shall be carried on

the shoulders, and shall be comforted on the knees. As one whom his

mother comforteth, so shall I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted

in Jerusalem. And ye shall see, and your heart shall rejoice, and your

bones shall rise up like a herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be

known by His worshippers, and He shall threaten the contumacious. For,

behold, the Lord shall come as a fire, and as a whirlwind His chariots,

to execute vengeance with indignation, and wasting with a flame of

fire. For with fire of the Lord shall all the earth be judged, and all

flesh with His sword: many shall be wounded by the Lord."[773] In His

promise to the good he says that He will flow down as a river of peace,

that is to say, in the greatest possible abundance of peace. With this

peace we shall in the end be refreshed; but of this we have spoken

abundantly in the preceding book. It is this river in which he says

He shall flow down upon those to whom He promises so great happiness,

that we may understand that in the region of that felicity, which is

in heaven, all things are satisfied from this river. But because there

shall thence flow, even upon earthly bodies, the peace of incorruption

and immortality, therefore he says that He shall flow down as this

river, that He may as it were pour Himself from things above to things

beneath, and make men the equals of the angels. By "Jerusalem," too,

we should understand not that which serves with her children, but that

which, according to the apostle, is our free mother, eternal in the

heavens.[774] In her we shall be comforted as we pass toilworn from

earth's cares and calamities, and be taken up as her children on her

knees and shoulders. Inexperienced and new to such blandishments, we

shall be received into unwonted bliss. There we shall see, and our

heart shall rejoice. He does not say what we shall see; but what but

God, that the promise in the Gospel may be fulfilled in us, "Blessed

are the pure in heart, for they shall see God?"[775] What shall we see

but all those things which now we see not, but believe in, and of which

the idea we form, according to our feeble capacity, is incomparably

less than the reality? "And ye shall see," he says, "and your heart

shall rejoice." Here ye believe, there ye shall see.

But because he said, "Your heart shall rejoice," lest we should suppose

that the blessings of that Jerusalem are only spiritual, he adds, "And

your bones shall rise up like a herb," alluding to the resurrection

of the body, and as it were supplying an omission he had made. For

it will not take place when we have seen; but we shall see when it

has taken place. For he had already spoken of the new heavens and the

new earth, speaking repeatedly, and under many figures, of the things

promised to the saints, and saying, "There shall be new heavens, and a

new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind;

but they shall find in it gladness and exultation. Behold, I will

make Jerusalem an exultation, and my people a joy. And I will exult in

Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no

more heard in her;"[776] and other promises, which some endeavour to

refer to carnal enjoyment during the thousand years. For, in the manner

of prophecy, figurative and literal expressions are mingled, so that a

serious mind may, by useful and salutary effort, reach the spiritual

sense; but carnal sluggishness, or the slowness of an uneducated and

undisciplined mind, rests in the superficial letter, and thinks there

is nothing beneath to be looked for. But let this be enough regarding

the style of those prophetic expressions just quoted. And now, to

return to their interpretation. When he had said, "And your bones shall

rise up like a herb," in order to show that it was the resurrection of

the good, though a bodily resurrection, to which he alluded, he added,

"And the hand of the Lord shall be known by His worshippers." What

is this but the hand of Him who distinguishes those who worship from

those who despise Him? Regarding these the context immediately adds,

"And He shall threaten the contumacious," or, as another translator has

it, "the unbelieving." He shall not actually threaten then, but the

threats which are now uttered shall then be fulfilled in effect. "For

behold," he says, "the Lord shall come as a fire, and as a whirlwind

His chariots, to execute vengeance with indignation, and wasting with a

flame of fire. For with fire of the Lord shall all the earth be judged,

and all flesh with His sword: many shall be wounded by the Lord." By

\_fire\_, \_whirlwind\_, \_sword\_, he means the judicial punishment of God.

For he says that the Lord Himself shall come as a fire, to those, that

is to say, to whom His coming shall be penal. By His \_chariots\_ (for

the word is plural) we suitably understand the ministration of angels.

And when he says that all flesh and all the earth shall be judged with

His fire and sword, we do not understand the spiritual and holy to be

included, but the earthly and carnal, of whom it is said that they

"mind earthly things,"[777] and "to be carnally minded is death,"[778]

and whom the Lord calls simply flesh when He says, "My Spirit shall

not always remain in these men, for they are flesh."[779] As to the

words, "Many shall be wounded by the Lord," this wounding shall produce

the second death. It is possible, indeed, to understand \_fire\_,

\_sword\_, and \_wound\_ in a good sense. For the Lord said that He wished

to send fire on the earth.[780] And the cloven tongues appeared to

them as fire when the Holy Spirit came.[781] And our Lord says, "I am

not come to send peace on earth, but a sword."[782] And Scripture says

that the word of God is a doubly sharp sword,[783] on account of the

two edges, the two Testaments. And in the Song of Songs the holy Church

says that she is wounded with love,[784]--pierced, as it were, with the

arrow of love. But here, where we read or hear that the Lord shall come

to execute vengeance, it is obvious in what sense we are to understand

these expressions.

After briefly mentioning those who shall be consumed in this

judgment, speaking of the wicked and sinners under the figure of the

meats forbidden by the old law, from which they had not abstained,

he summarily recounts the grace of the new testament, from the first

coming of the Saviour to the last judgment, of which we now speak;

and herewith he concludes his prophecy. For he relates that the Lord

declares that He is coming to gather all nations, that they may come

and witness His glory.[785] For, as the apostle says, "All have

sinned and are in want of the glory of God."[786] And he says that He

will do wonders among them, at which they shall marvel and believe in

Him; and that from them He will send forth those that are saved into

various nations, and distant islands which have not heard His name

nor seen His glory, and that they shall declare His glory among the

nations, and shall \_bring\_ the brethren of those to whom the prophet

was speaking, \_i.e.\_ shall bring to the faith under God the Father

the brethren of the elect Israelites; and that they shall bring from

all nations an offering to the Lord on beasts of burden and waggons

(which are understood to mean the aids furnished by God in the shape

of angelic or human ministry), to the holy city Jerusalem, which at

present is scattered over the earth, in the faithful saints. For

where divine aid is given, men believe, and where they believe, they

come. And the Lord compared them, in a figure, to the children of

Israel offering sacrifice to Him in His house with psalms, which

is already everywhere done by the Church; and He promised that

from among them He would choose for Himself priests and Levites,

which also we see already accomplished. For we see that priests and

Levites are now chosen, not from a certain family and blood, as was

originally the rule in the priesthood according to the order of

Aaron, but as befits the new testament, under which Christ is the

High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, in consideration of the

merit which is bestowed upon each man by divine grace. And these

priests are not to be judged by their mere title, which is often

borne by unworthy men, but by that holiness which is not common to

good men and bad.

After having thus spoken of this mercy of God which is now

experienced by the Church, and is very evident and familiar to us,

he foretells also the ends to which men shall come when the last

judgment has separated the good and the bad, saying by the prophet,

or the prophet himself speaking for God, "For as the new heavens

and the new earth shall remain before me, said the Lord, so shall

your seed and your name remain, and there shall be to them month

after month, and Sabbath after Sabbath. All flesh shall come to

worship before me in Jerusalem, said the Lord. And they shall go

out, and shall see the members of the men who have sinned against

me: their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched;

and they shall be for a spectacle to all flesh."[787] At this point

the prophet closed his book, as at this point the world shall come

to an end. Some, indeed, have translated "carcases"[788] instead of

"members of the men," meaning by \_carcases\_ the manifest punishment

of the body, although \_carcase\_ is commonly used only of dead flesh,

while the bodies here spoken of shall be animated, else they could

not be sensible of any pain; but perhaps they may, without absurdity,

be called carcases, as being the bodies of those who are to fall into

the second death. And for the same reason it is said, as I have

already quoted, by this same prophet, "The earth of the wicked shall

fall."[789] It is obvious that those translators who use a different

word for \_men\_ do not mean to include only males, for no one will

say that the women who sinned shall not appear in that judgment; but

the male sex, being the more worthy, and that from which the woman

was derived, is intended to include both sexes. But that which is

especially pertinent to our subject is this, that since the words

"All flesh shall come" apply to the good, for the people of God shall

be composed of every race of men,--for all men shall not be present,

since the greater part shall be in punishment,--but, as I was saying,

since \_flesh\_ is used of the good, and \_members\_ or \_carcases\_ of the

bad, certainly it is thus put beyond a doubt that that judgment in

which the good and the bad shall be allotted to their destinies shall

take place after the resurrection of the body, our faith in which is

thoroughly established by the use of these words.

22. \_What is meant by the good going out to see the punishment of

the wicked.\_

But in what way shall the good go out to see the punishment of the

wicked? Are they to leave their happy abodes by a bodily movement, and

proceed to the places of punishment, so as to witness the torments of

the wicked in their bodily presence? Certainly not; but they shall

go out by knowledge. For this expression, \_go out\_, signifies that

those who shall be punished shall be without. And thus the Lord also

calls these places "the outer darkness,"[790] to which is opposed that

entrance concerning which it is said to the good servant, "Enter into

the joy of thy Lord," that it may not be supposed that the wicked

can enter thither and be known, but rather that the good by their

knowledge go out to them, because the good are to know that which is

without. For those who shall be in torment shall not know what is

going on within in the joy of the Lord; but they who shall enter into

that joy shall know what is going on outside in the outer darkness.

Therefore it is said, "They shall go out," because they shall know

what is done by those who are without. For if the prophets were able

to know things that had not yet happened, by means of that indwelling

of God in their minds, limited though it was, shall not the immortal

saints know things that have already happened, when God shall be all

in all?[791] The seed, then, and the name of the saints shall remain

in that blessedness,--the seed, to wit, of which John says, "And his

seed remaineth in him;"[792] and the name, of which it was said through

Isaiah himself, "I will give them an everlasting name."[793] "And there

shall be to them month after month, and Sabbath after Sabbath," as if

it were said, Moon after moon, and rest upon rest, both of which they

shall themselves be when they shall pass from the old shadows of time

into the new lights of eternity. The worm that dieth not, and the fire

that is not quenched, which constitute the punishment of the wicked,

are differently interpreted by different people. For some refer both

to the body, others refer both to the soul; while others again refer

the fire literally to the body, and the worm figuratively to the soul,

which seems the more credible idea. But the present is not the time to

discuss this difference, for we have undertaken to occupy this book

with the last judgment, in which the good and the bad are separated:

their rewards and punishments we shall more carefully discuss elsewhere.

23. \_What Daniel predicted regarding the persecution of Antichrist,

the judgment of God, and the kingdom of the saints.\_

Daniel prophesies of the last judgment in such a way as to indicate

that Antichrist shall first come, and to carry on his description to

the eternal reign of the saints. For when in prophetic vision he had

seen four beasts, signifying four kingdoms, and the fourth conquered

by a certain king, who is recognised as Antichrist, and after this

the eternal kingdom of the Son of man, that is to say, of Christ, he

says, "My spirit was terrified, I Daniel in the midst of my body, and

the visions of my head troubled me,"[794] etc. Some have interpreted

these four kingdoms as signifying those of the Assyrians, Persians,

Macedonians, and Romans. They who desire to understand the fitness

of this interpretation may read Jerome's book on Daniel, which is

written with a sufficiency of care and erudition. But he who reads

this passage, even half-asleep, cannot fail to see that the kingdom of

Antichrist shall fiercely, though for a short time, assail the Church

before the last judgment of God shall introduce the eternal reign

of the saints. For it is patent from the context that the \_time\_,

\_times\_, \_and half a time\_, means a year, and two years, and half a

year, that is to say, three years and a half. Sometimes in Scripture

the same thing is indicated by months. For though the word \_times\_

seems to be used here in the Latin indefinitely, that is only because

the Latins have no dual, as the Greeks have, and as the Hebrews also

are said to have. Times, therefore, is used for two times. As for the

ten kings, whom, as it seems, Antichrist is to find in the person of

ten individuals when he comes, I own I am afraid we may be deceived in

this, and that he may come unexpectedly while there are not ten kings

living in the Roman world. For what if this number ten signifies the

whole number of kings who are to precede his coming, as totality is

frequently symbolized by a thousand, or a hundred, or seven, or other

numbers, which it is not necessary to recount?

In another place the same Daniel says, "And there shall be a time of

trouble, such as was not since there was born a nation upon earth

until that time: and in that time all Thy people which shall be

found written in the book shall be delivered. And many of them that

sleep in the mound of earth shall arise, some to everlasting life,

and some to shame and everlasting confusion. And they that be wise

shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and many of the just

as the stars for ever."[795] This passage is very similar to the

one we have quoted from the Gospel,[796] at least so far as regards

the resurrection of dead bodies. For those who are there said to

be "in the graves" are here spoken of as "sleeping in the mound of

earth," or, as others translate, "in the dust of earth." There it is

said, "They shall come forth;" so here, "They shall arise." There,

"They that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they

that have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment;" here, "Some

to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting confusion."

Neither is it to be supposed a difference, though in place of the

expression in the Gospel, "All who are in their graves," the prophet

does not say "all," but "many of them that sleep in the mound of

earth." For \_many\_ is sometimes used in Scripture for \_all\_. Thus it

was said to Abraham, "I have set thee as the father of many nations,"

though in another place it was said to him, "In thy seed shall all

nations be blessed."[797] Of such a resurrection it is said a little

afterwards to the prophet himself, "And come thou and rest: for there

is yet a day till the completion of the consummation; and thou shalt

rest, and rise in thy lot in the end of the days."[798]

24. \_Passages from the Psalms of David which predict the end of

the world and the last judgment.\_

There are many allusions to the last judgment in the Psalms, but

for the most part only casual and slight. I cannot, however, omit

to mention what is said there in express terms of the end of this

world: "In the beginning hast Thou laid the foundations of the

earth, O Lord; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They

shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old

like a garment; and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they

shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not

fail."[799] Why is it that Porphyry, while he lauds the piety of the

Hebrews in worshipping a God great and true, and terrible to the

gods themselves, follows the oracles of these gods in accusing the

Christians of extreme folly because they say that this world shall

perish? For here we find it said in the sacred books of the Hebrews,

to that God whom this great philosopher acknowledges to be terrible

even to the gods themselves, "The heavens are the work of Thy hands:

they shall perish." When the heavens, the higher and more secure

part of the world, perish, shall the world itself be preserved? If

this idea is not relished by Jupiter, whose oracle is quoted by this

philosopher as an unquestionable authority in rebuke of the credulity

of the Christians, why does he not similarly rebuke the wisdom of

the Hebrews as folly, seeing that the prediction is found in their

most holy books? But if this Hebrew wisdom, with which Porphyry is so

captivated that he extols it through the utterances of his own gods,

proclaims that the heavens are to perish, how is he so infatuated

as to detest the faith of the Christians partly, if not chiefly, on

this account, that they believe the world is to perish?--though how

the heavens are to perish if the world does not is not easy to see.

And, indeed, in the sacred writings which are peculiar to ourselves,

and not common to the Hebrews and us,--I mean the evangelic and

apostolic books,--the following expressions are used: "The figure

of this world passeth away;"[800] "The world passeth away;"[801]

"Heaven and earth shall pass away,"[802]--expressions which are, I

fancy, somewhat milder than "They shall \_perish\_." In the Epistle

of the Apostle Peter, too, where the world which then was is said

to have perished, being overflowed with water, it is sufficiently

obvious what part of the world is signified by the whole, and in

what sense the word \_perished\_ is to be taken, and what heavens were

kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and

perdition of ungodly men.[803] And when he says a little afterwards,

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens

shall pass away with a great rush, and the elements shall melt with

burning heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be

burned up;" and then adds, "Seeing, then, that all these things shall

be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?"[804]--these

heavens which are to perish may be understood to be the same which

he said were kept in store reserved for fire; and the elements which

are to be burned are those which are full of storm and disturbance

in this lowest part of the world in which he said that these heavens

were kept in store; for the higher heavens in whose firmament

are set the stars are safe, and remain in their integrity. For

even the expression of Scripture, that "the stars shall fall from

heaven,"[805] not to mention that a different interpretation is much

preferable, rather shows that the heavens themselves shall remain,

if the stars are to fall from them. This expression, then, is either

figurative, as is more credible, or this phenomenon will take place

in this lowest heaven, like that mentioned by Virgil,--

"A meteor with a train of light

Athwart the sky gleamed dazzling bright,

Then in Idæan woods was lost."[806]

But the passage I have quoted from the psalm seems to except none

of the heavens from the destiny of destruction; for he says, "The

heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish;" so that,

as none of them are excepted from the category of God's works,

none of them are excepted from destruction. For our opponents

will not condescend to defend the Hebrew piety, which has won the

approbation of their gods, by the words of the Apostle Peter, whom

they vehemently detest; nor will they argue that, as the apostle in

his epistle understands a part when he speaks of the whole world

perishing in the flood, though only the lowest part of it, and the

corresponding heavens were destroyed, so in the psalm the whole is

used for a part, and it is said "They shall perish," though only

the lowest heavens are to perish. But since, as I said, they will

not condescend to reason thus, lest they should seem to approve

of Peter's meaning, or ascribe as much importance to the final

conflagration as we ascribe to the deluge, whereas they contend that

no waters or flames could destroy the whole human race, it only

remains to them to maintain that their gods lauded the wisdom of the

Hebrews because they had not read this psalm.

It is the last judgment of God which is referred to also in the 50th

Psalm in the words, "God shall come manifestly, our God, and shall

not keep silence: fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very

tempestuous round about Him. He shall call the heaven above, and

the earth, to judge His people. Gather His saints together to Him;

they who make a covenant with Him over sacrifices."[807] This we

understand of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we look for from heaven

to judge the quick and the dead. For He shall come manifestly to

judge justly the just and the unjust, who before came hiddenly to

be unjustly judged by the unjust. He, I say, shall come manifestly,

and shall not keep silence, that is, shall make Himself known by

His voice of judgment, who before, when He came hiddenly, was silent

before His judge when He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and,

as a lamb before the shearer, opened not His mouth, as we read that

it was prophesied of Him by Isaiah,[808] and as we see it fulfilled

in the Gospel.[809] As for the \_fire\_ and \_tempest\_, we have already

said how these are to be interpreted when we were explaining a

similar passage in Isaiah.[810] As to the expression, "He shall call

the heaven above," as the saints and the righteous are rightly called

\_heaven\_, no doubt this means what the apostle says, "We shall be

caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the

air."[811] For if we take the bare literal sense, how is it possible

to call the heaven above, as if the heaven could be anywhere else

than above? And the following expression, "And the earth to judge

His people," if we supply only the words, "He shall call," that is

to say, "He shall call the earth also," and do not supply "above,"

seems to give us a meaning in accordance with sound doctrine, the

heaven symbolizing those who will judge along with Christ, and the

earth those who shall be judged; and thus the words, "He shall call

the heaven above," would not mean, "He shall catch up into the air,"

but "He shall lift up to seats of judgment." Possibly, too, "He shall

call the heaven," may mean, He shall call the angels in the high

and lofty places, that He may descend with them to do judgment; and

"He shall call the earth also" would then mean, He shall call the

men on the earth to judgment. But if with the words "and the earth"

we understand not only "He shall call," but also "above," so as to

make the full sense be, He shall call the heaven above, and He shall

call the earth above, then I think it is best understood of the men

who shall be caught up to meet Christ in the air, and that they are

called \_the heaven\_ with reference to their souls, and \_the earth\_

with reference to their bodies. Then what is "to judge His people,"

but to separate by judgment the good from the bad, as the sheep from

the goats? Then he turns to address the angels: "Gather His saints

together unto Him." For certainly a matter so important must be

accomplished by the ministry of angels. And if we ask who the saints

are who are gathered unto Him by the angels, we are told, "They who

make a covenant with Him over sacrifices." This is the whole life of

the saints, to make a covenant with God over sacrifices. For "over

sacrifices" either refers to works of mercy, which are preferable to

sacrifices in the judgment of God, who says, "I desire mercy more

than sacrifices;"[812] or if "over sacrifices" means in sacrifices,

then these very works of mercy are the sacrifices with which God

is pleased, as I remember to have stated in the tenth book of this

work;[813] and in these works the saints make a covenant with God,

because they do them for the sake of the promises which are contained

in His new testament or covenant. And hence, when His saints have

been gathered to Him and set at His right hand in the last judgment,

Christ shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of

the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I

was hungry, and ye gave me to eat,"[814] and so on, mentioning the

good works of the good, and their eternal rewards assigned by the

last sentence of the Judge.

25. \_Of Malachi's prophecy, in which he speaks of the last

judgment, and of a cleansing which some are to undergo by

purifying punishments.\_

The prophet Malachi or Malachias, who is also called Angel, and

is by some (for Jerome[815] tells us that this is the opinion of

the Hebrews) identified with Ezra the priest,[816] others of whose

writings have been received into the canon, predicts the last

judgment, saying, "Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty; and

who shall abide the day of His entrance? ... for I am the Lord your

God, and I change not."[817] From these words it more evidently

appears that some shall in the last judgment suffer some kind of

purgatorial punishments; for what else can be understood by the word,

"Who shall abide the day of His entrance, or who shall be able to

look upon Him? for He enters as a moulder's fire, and as the herb

of fullers: and He shall sit fusing and purifying as if over gold

and silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out

like gold and silver?" Similarly Isaiah says, "The Lord shall wash

the filthiness of the sons and daughters of Zion, and shall cleanse

away the blood from their midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the

spirit of burning."[818] Unless perhaps we should say that they are

cleansed from filthiness and in a manner clarified, when the wicked

are separated from them by penal judgment, so that the elimination

and damnation of the one party is the purgation of the others,

because they shall henceforth live free from the contamination of

such men. But when he says, "And he shall purify the sons of Levi,

and pour them out like gold and silver, and they shall offer to the

Lord sacrifices in righteousness; and the sacrifices of Judah and

Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord," he declares that those

who shall be purified shall then please the Lord with sacrifices of

righteousness, and consequently they themselves shall be purified

from their own unrighteousness which made them displeasing to

God. Now they themselves, when they have been purified, shall be

sacrifices of complete and perfect righteousness; for what more

acceptable offering can such persons make to God than themselves? But

this question of purgatorial punishments we must defer to another

time, to give it a more adequate treatment. By the sons of Levi

and Judah and Jerusalem we ought to understand the Church herself,

gathered not from the Hebrews only, but from other nations as well;

nor such a Church as she now is, when "if we say that we have no

sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"[819] but as

she shall then be, purged by the last judgment as a threshing-floor

by a winnowing wind, and those of her members who need it being

cleansed by fire, so that there remains absolutely not one who offers

sacrifice for his sins. For all who make such offerings are assuredly

in their sins, for the remission of which they make offerings, that

having made to God an acceptable offering, they may then be absolved.

26. \_Of the sacrifices offered to God by the saints, which are to

be pleasing to Him, as in the primitive days and former years.\_

And it was with the design of showing that His city shall not then

follow this custom, that God said that the sons of Levi should offer

sacrifices in righteousness,--not therefore in sin, and consequently

not for sin. And hence we see how vainly the Jews promise themselves

a return of the old times of sacrificing according to the law of

the old testament, grounding on the words which follow, "And the

sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord, as

in the primitive days, and as in former years." For in the times

of the law they offered sacrifices not in righteousness but in

sins, offering especially and primarily for sins, so much so that

even the priest himself, whom we must suppose to have been their

most righteous man, was accustomed to offer, according to God's

commandments, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the

people. And therefore we must explain how we are to understand the

words, "as in the primitive days, and as in former years;" for

perhaps he alludes to the time in which our first parents were in

paradise. Then, indeed, intact and pure from all stain and blemish

of sin, they offered themselves to God as the purest sacrifices. But

since they were banished thence on account of their transgression,

and human nature was condemned in them, with the exception of the one

Mediator and those who have been baptized, and are as yet infants,

"there is none clean from stain, not even the babe whose life has

been but for a day upon the earth."[820] But if it be replied that

those who offer in faith may be said to offer in righteousness,

because the righteous lives by faith,[821]--he deceives himself,

however, if he says that he has no sin, and therefore he does not say

so, because he lives by faith,--will any man say this time of faith

can be placed on an equal footing with that consummation when they

who offer sacrifices in righteousness shall be purified by the fire

of the last judgment? And consequently, since it must be believed

that after such a cleansing the righteous shall retain no sin,

assuredly that time, so far as regards its freedom from sin, can be

compared to no other period, unless to that during which our first

parents lived in paradise in the most innocent happiness before their

transgression. It is this period, then, which is properly understood

when it is said, "as in the primitive days, and as in former years."

For in Isaiah, too, after the new heavens and the new earth have been

promised, among other elements in the blessedness of the saints which

are there depicted by allegories and figures, from giving an adequate

explanation of which I am prevented by a desire to avoid prolixity,

it is said, "According to the days of the tree of life shall be the

days of my people."[822] And who that has looked at Scripture does

not know where God planted the tree of life, from whose fruit He

excluded our first parents when their own iniquity ejected them from

paradise, and round which a terrible and fiery fence was set?

But if any one contends that those days of the tree of life mentioned

by the prophet Isaiah are the present times of the Church of Christ,

and that Christ Himself is prophetically called the Tree of Life,

because He is Wisdom, and of wisdom Solomon says, "It is a tree of

life to all who embrace it;"[823] and if they maintain that our

first parents did not pass \_years\_ in paradise, but were driven

from it so soon that none of their children were begotten there,

and that therefore that time cannot be alluded to in words which

run, "as in the primitive days, and as in former years," I forbear

entering on this question, lest by discussing everything I become

prolix, and leave the whole subject in uncertainty. For I see another

meaning, which should keep us from believing that a restoration of

the primitive days and former years of the legal sacrifices could

have been promised to us by the prophet as a great boon. For the

animals selected as victims under the old law were required to be

immaculate, and free from all blemish whatever, and symbolized holy

men free from all sin, the only instance of which character was found

in Christ. As, therefore, after the judgment those who are worthy

of such purification shall be purified even by fire, and shall be

rendered thoroughly sinless, and shall offer themselves to God in

righteousness, and be indeed victims immaculate and free from all

blemish whatever, they shall then certainly be "as in the primitive

days, and as in former years," when the purest victims were offered,

the shadow of this future reality. For there shall then be in the

body and soul of the saints the purity which was symbolized in the

bodies of these victims.

Then, with reference to those who are worthy not of cleansing but of

damnation, He says, "And I will draw near to you to judgment, and I

will be a swift witness against evil-doers and against adulterers;"

and after enumerating other damnable crimes, He adds, "For I am the

Lord your God, and I am not changed." It is as if He said, Though

your fault has changed you for the worse, and my grace has changed

you for the better, I am not changed. And he says that He Himself

will be a witness, because in His judgment He needs no witnesses;

and that He will be "swift," either because He is to come suddenly,

and the judgment which seemed to lag shall be very swift by His

unexpected arrival, or because He will convince the consciences

of men directly and without any prolix harangue. "For," as it is

written, "in the thoughts of the wicked His examination shall be

conducted."[824] And the apostle says, "The thoughts accusing or else

excusing, in the day in which God shall judge the hidden things of

men, according to my gospel in Jesus Christ."[825] Thus, then, shall

the Lord be a swift witness, when He shall suddenly bring back into

the memory that which shall convince and punish the conscience.

27. \_Of the separation of the good and the bad, which proclaim the

discriminating influence of the last judgment.\_

The passage also which I formerly quoted for another purpose from

this prophet refers to the last judgment, in which he says, "They

shall be mine, saith the Lord Almighty, in the day in which I make

up my gains,"[826] etc. When this diversity between the rewards and

punishments which distinguish the righteous from the wicked shall

appear under that Sun of righteousness in the brightness of life

eternal,--a diversity which is not discerned under this sun which

shines on the vanity of this life,--there shall then be such a

judgment as has never before been.

28. \_That the law of Moses must be spiritually understood to

preclude the damnable murmurs of a carnal interpretation.\_

In the succeeding words, "Remember the law of Moses my servant,

which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel,"[827] the prophet

opportunely mentions precepts and statutes, after declaring the

important distinction hereafter to be made between those who observe

and those who despise the law. He intends also that they learn to

interpret the law spiritually, and find Christ in it, by whose

judgment that separation between the good and the bad is to be made.

For it is not without reason that the Lord Himself says to the Jews,

"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of

me."[828] For by receiving the law carnally, without perceiving that

its earthly promises were figures of things spiritual, they fell into

such murmurings as audaciously to say, "It is vain to serve God; and

what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have

walked suppliantly before the face of the Lord Almighty? And now we

call aliens happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up."[829]

It was these words of theirs which in a manner compelled the prophet

to announce the last judgment, in which the wicked shall not even

in appearance be happy, but shall manifestly be most miserable; and

in which the good shall be oppressed with not even a transitory

wretchedness, but shall enjoy unsullied and eternal felicity. For

he had previously cited some similar expressions of those who said,

"Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and

such are pleasing to Him."[830] It was, I say, by understanding the

law of Moses carnally that they had come to murmur thus against God.

And hence, too, the writer of the 73d Psalm says that his feet were

almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped, because he was envious

of sinners while he considered their prosperity, so that he said

among other things, How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the

Most High? and again, Have I sanctified my heart in vain, and washed

my hands in innocency?[831] He goes on to say that his efforts to

solve this most difficult problem, which arises when the good seem

to be wretched and the wicked happy, were in vain until he went into

the sanctuary of God, and understood the last things.[832] For in the

last judgment things shall not be so; but in the manifest felicity of

the righteous and manifest misery of the wicked quite another state

of things shall appear.

29. \_Of the coming of Elias before the judgment, that the Jews may

be converted to Christ by his preaching and explanation of

Scripture.\_

After admonishing them to give heed to the law of Moses, as he

foresaw that for a long time to come they would not understand it

spiritually and rightly, he went on to say, "And, behold, I will send

to you Elias the Tishbite before the great and signal day of the Lord

come: and he shall turn the heart of the father to the son, and the

heart of a man to his next of kin, lest I come and utterly smite the

earth."[833] It is a familiar theme in the conversation and heart

of the faithful, that in the last days before the judgment the Jews

shall believe in the true Christ, that is, our Christ, by means of

this great and admirable prophet Elias who shall expound the law to

them. For not without reason do we hope that before the coming of

our Judge and Saviour Elias shall come, because we have good reason

to believe that he is now alive; for, as Scripture most distinctly

informs us,[834] he was taken up from this life in a chariot of fire.

When, therefore, he is come, he shall give a spiritual explanation

of the law which the Jews at present understand carnally, and shall

thus "turn the heart of the father to the son," that is, the heart

of fathers to their children; for the Septuagint translators have

frequently put the singular for the plural number. And the meaning

is, that the sons, that is, the Jews, shall understand the law as

the fathers, that is, the prophets, and among them Moses himself,

understood it. For the heart of the fathers shall be turned to their

children when the children understand the law as their fathers did;

and the heart of the children shall be turned to their fathers when

they have the same sentiments as the fathers. The Septuagint used

the expression, "and the heart of a man to his next of kin," because

fathers and children are eminently neighbours to one another. Another

and a preferable sense can be found in the words of the Septuagint

translators, who have translated Scripture with an eye to prophecy,

the sense, viz., that Elias shall turn the heart of God the Father

to the Son, not certainly as if he should bring about this love of

the Father for the Son, but meaning that he should make it known, and

that the Jews also, who had previously hated, should then love the

Son who is our Christ. For so far as regards the Jews, God has His

heart turned away from our Christ, this being their conception about

God and Christ. But in their case the heart of God shall be turned to

the Son when they themselves shall turn in heart, and learn the love

of the Father towards the Son. The words following, "and the heart of

a man to his next of kin,"--that is, Elias shall also turn the heart

of a man to his next of kin,--how can we understand this better than

as the heart of a man to the man Christ? For though in the form of

God He is our God, yet, taking the form of a servant, He condescended

to become also our next of kin. It is this, then, which Elias will

do, "lest," he says, "I come and smite the earth utterly." For they

who mind earthly things are the earth. Such are the carnal Jews until

this day; and hence these murmurs of theirs against God, "The wicked

are pleasing to Him," and "It is a vain thing to serve God."[835]

30. \_That in the books of the Old Testament, where it is said

that God shall judge the world, the person of Christ is not

explicitly indicated, but it plainly appears from some passages

in which the Lord God speaks that Christ is meant.\_

There are many other passages of Scripture bearing on the last

judgment of God,--so many, indeed, that to cite them all would swell

this book to an unpardonable size. Suffice it to have proved that

both Old and New Testament enounce the judgment. But in the Old it

is not so definitely declared as in the New that the judgment shall

be administered by Christ, that is, that Christ shall descend from

heaven as the Judge; for when it is therein stated by the Lord God

or His prophet that the Lord God shall come, we do not necessarily

understand this of Christ. For both the Father, and the Son, and the

Holy Ghost are the Lord God. We must not, however, leave this without

proof. And therefore we must first show how Jesus Christ speaks in

the prophetical books under the title of the Lord God, while yet

there can be no doubt that it is Jesus Christ who speaks; so that

in other passages where this is not at once apparent, and where

nevertheless it is said that the Lord God will come to that last

judgment, we may understand that Jesus Christ is meant. There is a

passage in the prophet Isaiah which illustrates what I mean. For God

says by the prophet, "Hear me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. I am

the first, and I am for ever: and my hand has founded the earth, and

my right hand has established the heaven. I will call them, and they

shall stand together, and be gathered, and hear. Who has declared

to them these things? In love of thee I have done thy pleasure upon

Babylon, that I might take away the seed of the Chaldeans. I have

spoken, and I have called: I have brought him, and have made his way

prosperous. Come ye near unto me, and hear this. I have not spoken in

secret from the beginning; when they were made, there was I. And now

the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me."[836] It was Himself who

was speaking as the Lord God; and yet we should not have understood

that it was Jesus Christ had He not added, "And now the Lord God

and His Spirit hath sent me." For He said this with reference to

the form of a servant, speaking of a future event as if it were

past, as in the same prophet we read, "He was led as a sheep to the

slaughter,"[837] not "He shall be led;" but the past tense is used to

express the future. And prophecy constantly speaks in this way.

There is also another passage in Zechariah which plainly declares

that the Almighty sent the Almighty; and of what persons can this be

understood but of God the Father and God the Son? For it is written,

"Thus saith the Lord Almighty, After the glory hath He sent me unto

the nations which spoiled you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the

apple of His eye. Behold, I will bring mine hand upon them, and they

shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord

Almighty hath sent me."[838] Observe, the Lord Almighty saith that

the Lord Almighty sent Him. Who can presume to understand these words

of any other than Christ, who is speaking to the lost sheep of the

house of Israel? For He says in the Gospel, "I am not sent save to

the lost sheep of the house of Israel,"[839] which He here compared

to the pupil of God's eye, to signify the profoundest love. And

to this class of sheep the apostles themselves belonged. But after

the glory, to wit, of His resurrection,--for before it happened the

evangelist said that "Jesus was not yet glorified,"[840]--He was

sent unto the nations in the persons of His apostles; and thus the

saying of the psalm was fulfilled, "Thou wilt deliver me from the

contradictions of the people; Thou wilt set me as the head of the

nations."[841] So that those who had spoiled the Israelites, and

whom the Israelites had served when they were subdued by them, were

not themselves to be spoiled in the same fashion, but were in their

own persons to become the spoil of the Israelites. For this had been

promised to the apostles when the Lord said, "I will make you fishers

of men."[842] And to one of them He says, "From henceforth thou shalt

catch men."[843] They were then to become a spoil, but in a good

sense, as those who are snatched from that strong one when he is

bound by a stronger.[844]

In like manner the Lord, speaking by the same prophet, says, "And it

shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the

nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house

of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace

and mercy; and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me,

and they shall mourn for Him as for one very dear, and shall be in

bitterness as for an only-begotten."[845] To whom but to God does it

belong to destroy all the nations that are hostile to the holy city

Jerusalem, which "come against it," that is, are opposed to it, or, as

some translate, "come upon it," as if putting it down under them; or

to pour out upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

the spirit of grace and mercy? This belongs doubtless to God, and it

is to God the prophet ascribes the words; and yet Christ shows that He

is the God who does these so great and divine things, when He goes on

to say, "And they shall look upon me because they have insulted me,

and they shall mourn for Him as if for one very dear (or beloved), and

shall be in bitterness for Him as for an only-begotten." For in that

day the Jews--those of them, at least, who shall receive the spirit of

grace and mercy--when they see Him coming in His majesty, and recognise

that it is He whom they, in the person of their parents, insulted when

He came before in His humiliation, shall repent of insulting Him in

His passion: and their parents themselves, who were the perpetrators

of this huge impiety, shall see Him when they rise; but this will be

only for their punishment, and not for their correction. It is not of

them we are to understand the words, "And I will pour upon the house

of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace

and mercy, and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me;"

but we are to understand the words of their descendants, who shall at

that time believe through Elias. But as we say to the Jews, You killed

Christ, although it was their parents who did so, so these persons

shall grieve that they in some sort did what their progenitors did.

Although, therefore, those that receive the spirit of mercy and grace,

and believe, shall not be condemned with their impious parents, yet

they shall mourn as if they themselves had done what their parents

did. Their grief shall arise not so much from guilt as from pious

affection. Certainly the words which the Septuagint have translated,

"They shall look upon me because they insulted me," stand in the

Hebrew, "They shall look upon me whom they pierced."[846] And by this

word the crucifixion of Christ is certainly more plainly indicated. But

the Septuagint translators preferred to allude to the insult which was

involved in His whole passion. For in point of fact they insulted Him

both when He was arrested and when He was bound, when He was judged,

when He was mocked by the robe they put on Him and the homage they did

on bended knee, when He was crowned with thorns and struck with a rod

on the head, when He bore His cross, and when at last He hung upon the

tree. And therefore we recognise more fully the Lord's passion when we

do not confine ourselves to one interpretation, but combine both, and

read both "insulted" and "pierced."

When, therefore, we read in the prophetical books that God is to come

to do judgment at the last, from the mere mention of the judgment,

and although there is nothing else to determine the meaning, we

must gather that Christ is meant; for though the Father will judge,

He will judge by the coming of the Son. For He Himself, by His own

manifested presence, "judges no man, but has committed all judgment

to the Son;"[847] for as the Son was judged as a man, He shall also

judge in human form. For it is none but He of whom God speaks by

Isaiah under the name of Jacob and Israel, of whose seed Christ

took a body, as it is written, "Jacob is my servant, I will uphold

Him; Israel is mine elect, my Spirit has assumed Him: I have put my

Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He

shall not cry, nor cease, neither shall His voice be heard without.

A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not

quench: but in truth shall He bring forth judgment. He shall shine

and shall not be broken, until He sets judgment in the earth: and

the nations shall hope in His name."[848] The Hebrew has not "Jacob"

and "Israel;" but the Septuagint translators, wishing to show the

significance of the expression "my servant," and that it refers

to the form of a servant in which the Most High humbled Himself,

inserted the name of that man from whose stock He took the form of a

servant. The Holy Spirit was given to Him, and was manifested, as the

evangelist testifies, in the form of a dove.[849] He brought forth

judgment to the Gentiles, because He predicted what was hidden from

them. In His meekness He did not cry, nor did He cease to proclaim

the truth. But His voice was not heard, nor is it heard, without,

because He is not obeyed by those who are outside of His body. And

the Jews themselves, who persecuted Him, He did not break, though

as a bruised reed they had lost their integrity, and as smoking

flax their light was quenched; for He spared them, having come to

be judged and not yet to judge. He brought forth judgment in truth,

declaring that they should be punished did they persist in their

wickedness. His face shone on the Mount,[850] His fame in the world.

He is not broken nor overcome, because neither in Himself nor in His

Church has persecution prevailed to annihilate Him. And therefore

that has not, and shall not, be brought about which His enemies said

or say, "When shall He die, and His name perish?"[851] "until He

set judgment in the earth." Behold, the hidden thing which we were

seeking is discovered. For this is the last judgment, which He will

set in the earth when He comes from heaven. And it is in Him, too,

we already see the concluding expression of the prophecy fulfilled:

"In His name shall the nations hope." And by this fulfilment, which

no one can deny, men are encouraged to believe in that which is most

impudently denied. For who could have hoped for that which even those

who do not yet believe in Christ now see fulfilled among us, and

which is so undeniable that they can but gnash their teeth and pine

away? Who, I say, could have hoped that the nations would hope in

the name of Christ, when He was arrested, bound, scourged, mocked,

crucified, when even the disciples themselves had lost the hope which

they had begun to have in Him? The hope which was then entertained

scarcely by the one thief on the cross, is now cherished by nations

everywhere on the earth, who are marked with the sign of the cross on

which He died that they may not die eternally.

That the last judgment, then, shall be administered by Jesus Christ

in the manner predicted in the sacred writings is denied or doubted

by no one, unless by those who, through some incredible animosity or

blindness, decline to believe these writings, though already their

truth is demonstrated to all the world. And at or in connection with

that judgment the following events shall come to pass, as we have

learned: Elias the Tishbite shall come; the Jews shall believe;

Antichrist shall persecute; Christ shall judge; the dead shall rise;

the good and the wicked shall be separated; the world shall be burned

and renewed. All these things, we believe, shall come to pass; but how,

or in what order, human understanding cannot perfectly teach us, but

only the experience of the events themselves. My opinion, however, is,

that they will happen in the order in which I have related them.

Two books yet remain to be written by me, in order to complete, by

God's help, what I promised. One of these will explain the punishment

of the wicked, the other the happiness of the righteous; and in them

I shall be at special pains to refute, by God's grace, the arguments

by which some unhappy creatures seem to themselves to undermine the

divine promises and threatenings, and to ridicule as empty words

statements which are the most salutary nutriment of faith. But they

who are instructed in divine things hold the truth and omnipotence

of God to be the strongest arguments in favour of those things

which, however incredible they seem to men, are yet contained in the

Scriptures, whose truth has already in many ways been proved; for

they are sure that God can in no wise lie, and that He can do what is

impossible to the unbelieving.

FOOTNOTES:

[673] Matt. viii. 29.

[674] Rom. ix. 14.

[675] Rom. xi. 33.

[676] Ps. cxliv. 4.

[677] Eccles. i. 2, 3.

[678] Eccles. ii. 13, 14.

[679] Eccles. viii. 14.

[680] Eccles. xii. 13, 14.

[681] Rom. iii. 20-22.

[682] Matt. xiii. 52.

[683] Matt. xi. 22.

[684] Matt. xi. 24.

[685] Matt. xii. 41, 42.

[686] Augustine quotes the whole passage, Matt. xiii. 37-43.

[687] Matt. xix. 28.

[688] Matt. xii. 27.

[689] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

[690] 1 Cor. vi. 3.

[691] \_Ep.\_ 199.

[692] Matt. xxv. 34-41, given in full.

[693] John v. 22-24.

[694] John v. 25, 26.

[695] Matt. viii. 22.

[696] Cor. v. 14, 15.

[697] Ps. ci. 1.

[698] John v. 28, 29.

[699] Rev. xx. 1-6. The whole passage is quoted.

[700] Pet. iii. 8.

[701] \_Serm.\_ 259.

[702] Milliarii.

[703] Mark iii. 27; "Vasa" for "goods."

[704] Matt. xix. 29.

[705] 2 Cor. vi. 10.

[706] Ps. cv. 8.

[707] Col. i. 13.

[708] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[709] Ps. cxxiii. 2.

[710] Rev. xx. 9, 10.

[711] 1 John ii. 19.

[712] Matt. xxiv. 12.

[713] Between His first and second coming.

[714] Matt. xxv. 34.

[715] Matt. xxviii. 20.

[716] Matt. xiii. 39-41.

[717] Matt. v. 19.

[718] Matt. xxiii. 3.

[719] Matt. v. 20.

[720] Col. iii. 1, 2.

[721] Phil. iii. 20.

[722] Phil. ii. 21.

[723] Matt. xviii. 18.

[724] 1 Cor. v. 12.

[725] Rev. xx. 4.

[726] Rev. xiv. 13.

[727] Rom. xiv. 9.

[728] 2 Cor. vi. 14.

[729] And, as Augustine remarks, are therefore called \_cadavera\_,

from \_cadere\_, "to fall."

[730] Col. iii. 1.

[731] Rom. vi. 4.

[732] Eph. v. 14.

[733] Ecclus. ii. 7.

[734] Rom. xiv. 4.

[735] 1 Cor. x. 12.

[736] 1 Peter ii. 9.

[737] Matt. xxv. 41.

[738] Ps. lxix. 9.

[739] Isa. xxvi. 11.

[740] 2 Thess. ii. 8.

[741] Ch. 24.

[742] 1 Cor. vii. 31, 32.

[743] Col. iii. 3.

[744] Matt. viii. 22.

[745] Rom. viii. 10.

[746] "Apud inferos," \_i.e.\_ in hell, in the sense in which the word

is used in the Psalms and in the Creed.

[747] Matt. xxv. 46.

[748] Rev. xxi. 1.

[749] Rev. xv. 2.

[750] Rev. xxi. 2-5.

[751] Isa. xlv. 8.

[752] Ps. xlii. 3.

[753] Ps. vi. 6.

[754] Ps. xxxviii. 9.

[755] Ps. xxxix. 2.

[756] 2 Cor. v. 4.

[757] Rom. viii. 23.

[758] Rom. ix. 2.

[759] Augustine therefore read νεικος, and not with the Vulgate, νίκη.

[760] 1 Cor. xv. 55.

[761] 1 John i. 8.

[762] 2 Pet. iii. 3-13. The whole passage is quoted by Augustine.

[763] 2 Thess. ii. 1-11. Whole passage given in the Latin. In ver. 3

\_refuga\_ is used instead of the Vulgate's \_discessio\_.

[764] Augustine adds the words, "Sicut dicimus, Sedet in amicum, id

est, velut amicus; vel si quid aliud isto locutionis genere dici

solet."

[765] Suetonius' \_Nero\_, c. 57.

[766] 1 John ii. 18, 19.

[767] 1 Thess. iv. 13-16.

[768] 1 Cor. xv. 22.

[769] 1 Cor. xv. 36.

[770] Gen. iii. 19.

[771] 1 Cor. xv. 51.

[772] Isa. xxvi. 19.

[773] Isa. lxvi. 12-16.

[774] Gal. iv. 26.

[775] Matt. v. 8.

[776] Isa. lxv. 17-19.

[777] Phil. iii. 19.

[778] Rom. viii. 6.

[779] Gen. vi. 3.

[780] Luke xii. 49.

[781] Acts ii. 3.

[782] Matt. x. 34.

[783] Heb. iv. 12.

[784] Song of Sol. ii. 5.

[785] Isa. lxvi. 18.

[786] Rom. iii. 23.

[787] Isa. lxvi. 22-24.

[788] As the Vulgate: \_cadavera virorum\_.

[789] Here Augustine inserts the remark, "Who does not see that

\_cadavera\_ (carcases) are so called from \_cadendo\_ (falling)?"

[790] Matt. xxv. 30.

[791] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

[792] 1 John iii. 9.

[793] Isa. lvi. 5.

[794] Dan. vii. 15-28. Passage cited at length.

[795] Dan. xii. 1-3.

[796] John v. 28.

[797] Gen. xvii. 5, and xxii. 18.

[798] Dan. xii. 13.

[799] Ps. cii. 25-27.

[800] 1 Cor. vii. 31.

[801] 1 John ii. 17.

[802] Matt. xxiv. 35.

[803] 2 Pet. iii. 6.

[804] 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11.

[805] Matt. xxiv. 29.

[806] \_Æneid\_, ii. 694.

[807] Ps. l. 3-5.

[808] Isa. liii. 7.

[809] Matt. xxvi. 63.

[810] Ch. 21.

[811] 1 Thess. iv. 17.

[812] Hos. vi. 6.

[813] Ch. 6.

[814] Matt. xxv. 34.

[815] In his \_Proem. ad Mal.\_

[816] See Smith's \_Bible Dict.\_

[817] Mal. iii. 1-6. Whole passage quoted.

[818] Isa. iv. 4.

[819] 1 John i. 8.

[820] Job xiv. 4.

[821] Rom. i. 17.

[822] Isa. lxv. 22.

[823] Prov. iii. 18.

[824] Wisd. i. 9.

[825] Rom. ii. 15, 16.

[826] Mal. iii. 17-iv. 3.

[827] Mal. iv. 4.

[828] John v. 46.

[829] Mal. iii. 14, 15.

[830] Mal. ii. 17.

[831] In innocentibus.

[832] Ps. lxxiii.

[833] Mal. iv. 5, 6.

[834] 2 Kings ii. 11.

[835] Mal. ii. 17, iii. 14.

[836] Isa. xlviii. 12-16.

[837] Isa. liii. 7.

[838] Zech. ii. 8, 9.

[839] Matt. xv. 24.

[840] John vii. 39.

[841] Ps. xviii. 43.

[842] Matt. iv. 19.

[843] Luke v. 10.

[844] Matt. xii. 29.

[845] Zech. xii. 9, 10.

[846] So the Vulgate.

[847] John v. 22.

[848] Isa. xlii. 1-4.

[849] John i. 32.

[850] Matt. xvii. 1, 2.

[851] Ps. xli. 5.

BOOK TWENTY-FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

OF THE END RESERVED FOR THE CITY OF THE DEVIL, NAMELY, THE ETERNAL

PUNISHMENT OF THE DAMNED; AND OF THE ARGUMENTS WHICH UNBELIEF

BRINGS AGAINST IT.

1. \_Of the order of the discussion, which requires that we first

speak of the eternal punishment of the lost in company with the

devil, and then of the eternal happiness of the saints.\_

I propose, with such ability as God may grant me, to discuss in this

book more thoroughly the nature of the punishment which shall be

assigned to the devil and all his retainers, when the two cities, the

one of God, the other of the devil, shall have reached their proper

ends through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Judge of quick and dead.

And I have adopted this order, and preferred to speak, first of the

punishment of the devils, and afterwards of the blessedness of the

saints, because the \_body\_ partakes of either destiny; and it seems

to be more incredible that bodies endure in everlasting torments than

that they continue to exist without any pain in everlasting felicity.

Consequently, when I shall have demonstrated that that punishment

ought not to be incredible, this will materially aid me in proving

that which is much more credible, viz. the immortality of the bodies

of the saints which are delivered from all pain. Neither is this

order out of harmony with the divine writings, in which sometimes,

indeed, the blessedness of the good is placed first, as in the words,

"They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they

that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation;"[852] but

sometimes also last, as, "The Son of man shall send forth His angels,

and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things which offend,

and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing

and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as

the sun in the kingdom of His Father;"[853] and that, "These shall

go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life

eternal."[854] And though we have not room to cite instances, any

one who examines the prophets will find that they adopt now the one

arrangement and now the other. My own reason for following the latter

order I have given.

2. \_Whether it is possible for bodies to last for ever in

burning fire.\_

What, then, can I adduce to convince those who refuse to believe that

human bodies, animated and living, can not only survive death, but

also last in the torments of everlasting fires? They will not allow

us to refer this simply to the power of the Almighty, but demand

that we persuade them by some example. If, then, we reply to them,

that there are animals which certainly are corruptible, because they

are mortal, and which yet live in the midst of flames; and likewise,

that in springs of water so hot that no one can put his hand in it

with impunity a species of worm is found, which not only lives there,

but cannot live elsewhere; they either refuse to believe these facts

unless we can show them, or, if we are in circumstances to prove them

by ocular demonstration or by adequate testimony, they contend, with

the same scepticism, that these facts are not examples of what we

seek to prove, inasmuch as these animals do not live for ever, and

besides, they live in that blaze of heat without pain, the element

of fire being congenial to their nature, and causing it to thrive

and not to suffer,--just as if it were not more incredible that it

should thrive than that it should suffer in such circumstances. It

is strange that anything should suffer in fire and yet live, but

stranger that it should live in fire and not suffer. If, then, the

latter be believed, why not also the former?

3. \_Whether bodily suffering necessarily terminates in the

destruction of the flesh.\_

But, say they, there is no body which can suffer and cannot also

die. How do we know this? For who can say with certainty that the

devils do not suffer in their bodies, when they own that they are

grievously tormented? And if it is replied that there is no earthly

body--that is to say, no solid and perceptible body, or, in one word,

no flesh--which can suffer and cannot die, is not this to tell us

only what men have gathered from experience and their bodily senses?

For they indeed have no acquaintance with any flesh but that which

is mortal; and this is their whole argument, that what they have had

no experience of they judge quite impossible. For we cannot call it

reasoning to make pain a presumption of death, while, in fact, it

is rather a sign of life. For though it be a question whether that

which suffers can continue to live for ever, yet it is certain that

everything which suffers pain does live, and that pain can exist

only in a living subject. It is necessary, therefore, that he who is

pained be living, not necessary that pain kill him; for every pain

does not kill even those mortal bodies of ours which are destined to

die. And that any pain kills them is caused by the circumstance that

the soul is so connected with the body that it succumbs to great pain

and withdraws; for the structure of our members and vital parts is

so infirm that it cannot bear up against that violence which causes

great or extreme agony. But in the life to come this connection of

soul and body is of such a kind, that as it is dissolved by no lapse

of time, so neither is it burst asunder by any pain. And so, although

it be true that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain

and yet cannot die, yet in the world to come there shall be flesh

such as now there is not, as there will also be death such as now

there is not. For death will not be abolished, but will be eternal,

since the soul will neither be able to enjoy God and live, nor to die

and escape the pains of the body. The first death drives the soul

from the body against her will: the second death holds the soul in

the body against her will. The two have this in common, that the soul

suffers against her will what her own body inflicts.

Our opponents, too, make much of this, that in this world there is no

flesh which can suffer pain and cannot die; while they make nothing

of the fact that there is something which is greater than the body.

For the spirit, whose presence animates and rules the body, can both

suffer pain and cannot die. Here then is something which, though it

can feel pain, is immortal. And this capacity, which we now see in

the spirit of all, shall be hereafter in the bodies of the damned.

Moreover, if we attend to the matter a little more closely, we see

that what is called bodily pain is rather to be referred to the soul.

For it is the soul, not the body, which is pained, even when the pain

originates with the body,--the soul feeling pain at the point where

the body is hurt. As then we speak of bodies feeling and living,

though the feeling and life of the body are from the soul, so also we

speak of bodies being pained, though no pain can be suffered by the

body apart from the soul. The soul, then, is pained with the body in

that part where something occurs to hurt it; and it is pained alone,

though it be in the body, when some invisible cause distresses it,

while the body is safe and sound. Even when not associated with the

body it is pained; for certainly that rich man was suffering in hell

when he cried, "I am tormented in this flame."[855] But as for the

body, it suffers no pain when it is soulless; and even when animate

it can suffer only by the soul's suffering. If, therefore, we might

draw a just presumption from the existence of pain to that of death,

and conclude that where pain can be felt death can occur, death would

rather be the property of the soul, for to it pain more peculiarly

belongs. But, seeing that that which suffers most cannot die, what

ground is there for supposing that those bodies, because destined

to suffer, are therefore destined to die? The Platonists indeed

maintained that these earthly bodies and dying members gave rise

to the fears, desires, griefs, and joys of the soul. "Hence," says

Virgil (\_i.e.\_ from these earthly bodies and dying members),

"Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears."[856]

But in the fourteenth book of this work[857] we have proved that,

according to the Platonists' own theory, souls, even when purged

from all pollution of the body, are yet possessed by a monstrous

desire to return again into their bodies. But where desire can exist,

certainly pain also can exist; for desire frustrated, either by

missing what it aims at or losing what it had attained, is turned

into pain. And therefore, if the soul, which is either the only or

the chief sufferer, has yet a kind of immortality of its own, it

is inconsequent to say that because the bodies of the damned shall

suffer pain, therefore they shall die. In fine, if the body causes

the soul to suffer, why can the body not cause death as well as

suffering, unless because it does not follow that what causes pain

causes death as well? And why then is it incredible that these fires

can cause pain but not death to those bodies we speak of, just as the

bodies themselves cause pain, but not therefore death, to the souls?

Pain is therefore no necessary presumption of death.

4. \_Examples from nature proving that bodies may remain

unconsumed and alive in fire.\_

If, therefore, the salamander lives in fire, as naturalists[858]

have recorded, and if certain famous mountains of Sicily have been

continually on fire from the remotest antiquity until now, and yet

remain entire, these are sufficiently convincing examples that

everything which burns is not consumed. As the soul, too, is a proof

that not everything which can suffer pain can also die, why then do

they yet demand that we produce real examples to prove that it is not

incredible that the bodies of men condemned to everlasting punishment

may retain their soul in the fire, may burn without being consumed,

and may suffer without perishing? For suitable properties will be

communicated to the substance of the flesh by Him who has endowed the

things we see with so marvellous and diverse properties, that their

very multitude prevents our wonder. For who but God the Creator of all

things has given to the flesh of the peacock its antiseptic property?

This property, when I first heard of it, seemed to me incredible;

but it happened at Carthage that a bird of this kind was cooked and

served up to me, and, taking a suitable slice of flesh from its breast,

I ordered it to be kept, and when it had been kept as many days as

make any other flesh stinking, it was produced and set before me, and

emitted no offensive smell. And after it had been laid by for thirty

days and more, it was still in the same state; and a year after, the

same still, except that it was a little more shrivelled, and drier. Who

gave to chaff such power to freeze that it preserves snow buried under

it, and such power to warm that it ripens green fruit?

But who can explain the strange properties of fire itself, which

blackens everything it burns, though itself bright; and which, though

of the most beautiful colours, discolours almost all it touches and

feeds upon, and turns blazing fuel into grimy cinders? Still this is

not laid down as an absolutely uniform law; for, on the contrary,

stones baked in glowing fire themselves also glow, and though the

fire be rather of a red hue, and they white, yet white is congruous

with light, and black with darkness. Thus, though the fire burns

the wood in calcining the stones, these contrary effects do not

result from the contrariety of the materials. For though wood and

stone differ, they are not contraries, like black and white, the

one of which colours is produced in the stones, while the other is

produced in the wood by the same action of fire, which imparts its

own brightness to the former, while it begrimes the latter, and which

could have no effect on the one were it not fed by the other. Then

what wonderful properties do we find in charcoal, which is so brittle

that a light tap breaks it and a slight pressure pulverizes it, and

yet is so strong that no moisture rots it, nor any time causes it

to decay. So enduring is it, that it is customary in laying down

landmarks to put charcoal underneath them, so that if, after the

longest interval, any one raises an action, and pleads that there is

no boundary stone, he may be convicted by the charcoal below. What

then has enabled it to last so long without rotting, though buried in

the damp earth in which [its original] wood rots, except this same

fire which consumes all things?

Again, let us consider the wonders of lime; for besides growing

white in fire, which makes other things black, and of which I have

already said enough, it has also a mysterious property of conceiving

fire within it. Itself cold to the touch, it yet has a hidden store

of fire, which is not at once apparent to our senses, but which

experience teaches us, lies as it were slumbering within it even

while unseen. And it is for this reason called "quick lime," as if

the fire were the invisible soul quickening the visible substance or

body. But the marvellous thing is, that this fire is kindled when

it is extinguished. For to disengage the hidden fire the lime is

moistened or drenched with water, and then, though it be cold before,

it becomes hot by that very application which cools what is hot. As

if the fire were departing from the lime and breathing its last,

it no longer lies hid, but appears; and then the lime lying in the

coldness of death cannot be requickened, and what we before called

"quick," we now call "slaked." What can be stranger than this? Yet

there is a greater marvel still. For if you treat the lime, not with

water, but with oil, which is as fuel to fire, no amount of oil will

heat it. Now if this marvel had been told us of some Indian mineral

which we had no opportunity of experimenting upon, we should either

have forthwith pronounced it a falsehood, or certainly should have

been greatly astonished. But things that daily present themselves

to our own observation we despise, not because they are really less

marvellous, but because they are common; so that even some products

of India itself, remote as it is from ourselves, cease to excite our

admiration as soon as we can admire them at our leisure.[859]

The diamond is a stone possessed by many among ourselves, especially

by jewellers and lapidaries, and the stone is so hard that it can

be wrought neither by iron nor fire, nor, they say, by anything at

all except goat's blood. But do you suppose it is as much admired by

those who own it and are familiar with its properties as by those to

whom it is shown for the first time? Persons who have not seen it

perhaps do not believe what is said of it, or if they do, they wonder

as at a thing beyond their experience; and if they happen to see

it, still they marvel because they are unused to it, but gradually

familiar experience [of it] dulls their admiration. We know that

the loadstone has a wonderful power of attracting iron. When I first

saw it I was thunderstruck, for I saw an iron ring attracted and

suspended by the stone; and then, as if it had communicated its own

property to the iron it attracted, and had made it a substance like

itself, this ring was put near another, and lifted it up; and as the

first ring clung to the magnet, so did the second ring to the first.

A third and a fourth were similarly added, so that there hung from

the stone a kind of chain of rings, with their hoops connected, not

interlinking, but attached together by their outer surface. Who would

not be amazed at this virtue of the stone, subsisting as it does not

only in itself, but transmitted through so many suspended rings, and

binding them together by invisible links? Yet far more astonishing

is what I heard about this stone from my brother in the episcopate,

Severus bishop of Milevis. He told me that Bathanarius, once count of

Africa, when the bishop was dining with him, produced a magnet, and

held it under a silver plate on which he placed a bit of iron; then

as he moved his hand with the magnet underneath the plate, the iron

upon the plate moved about accordingly. The intervening silver was

not affected at all, but precisely as the magnet was moved backwards

and forwards below it, no matter how quickly, so was the iron

attracted above. I have related what I myself have witnessed; I have

related what I was told by one whom I trust as I trust my own eyes.

Let me further say what I have read about this magnet. When a diamond

is laid near it, it does not lift iron; or if it has already lifted

it, as soon as the diamond approaches, it drops it. These stones

come from India. But if we cease to admire them because they are now

familiar, how much less must they admire them who procure them very

easily and send them to us? Perhaps they are held as cheap as we hold

lime, which, because it is common, we think nothing of, though it has

the strange property of burning when water, which is wont to quench

fire, is poured on it, and of remaining cool when mixed with oil,

which ordinarily feeds fire.

5. \_That there are many things which reason cannot account for,

and which are nevertheless true.\_

Nevertheless, when we declare the miracles which God has wrought,

or will yet work, and which we cannot bring under the very eyes of

men, sceptics keep demanding that we shall explain these marvels

to reason. And because we cannot do so, inasmuch as they are above

human comprehension, they suppose we are speaking falsely. These

persons themselves, therefore, ought to account for all these marvels

which we either can or do see. And if they perceive that this is

impossible for man to do, they should acknowledge that it cannot be

concluded that a thing has not been or shall not be because it cannot

be reconciled to reason, since there are things now in existence of

which the same is true. I will not, then, detail the multitude of

marvels which are related in books, and which refer not to things

that happened once and passed away, but that are permanent in certain

places, where, if any one has the desire and opportunity, he may

ascertain their truth; but a few only I recount. The following are

some of the marvels men tell us:--The salt of Agrigentum in Sicily,

when thrown into the fire, becomes fluid as if it were in water, but

in the water it crackles as if it were in the fire. The Garamantæ

have a fountain so cold by day that no one can drink it, so hot by

night no one can touch it.[860] In Epirus, too, there is a fountain

which, like all others, quenches lighted torches, but, unlike all

others, lights quenched torches. There is a stone found in Arcadia,

and called asbestos, because once lit it cannot be put out. The wood

of a certain kind of Egyptian fig-tree sinks in water, and does not

float like other wood; and, stranger still, when it has been sunk

to the bottom for some time, it rises again to the surface, though

nature requires that when soaked in water it should be heavier than

ever. Then there are the apples of Sodom, which grow indeed to an

appearance of ripeness, but, when you touch them with hand or tooth,

the peel cracks, and they crumble into dust and ashes. The Persian

stone pyrites burns the hand when it is tightly held in it, and so

gets its name from fire. In Persia, too, there is found another

stone called selenite, because its interior brilliancy waxes and

wanes with the moon. Then in Cappadocia the mares are impregnated by

the wind, and their foals live only three years. Tilon, an Indian

island, has this advantage over all other lands, that no tree which

grows in it ever loses its foliage.

These and numberless other marvels recorded in the history, not of

past events, but of permanent localities, I have no time to enlarge

upon and diverge from my main object; but let those sceptics who

refuse to credit the divine writings give me, if they can, a rational

account of them. For their only ground of unbelief in the Scriptures

is, that they contain incredible things, just such as I have been

recounting. For, say they, reason cannot admit that flesh burn and

remain unconsumed, suffer without dying. Mighty reasoners, indeed,

who are competent to give the reason of all the marvels that exist!

Let them then give us the reason of the few things we have cited,

and which, if they did not know they existed, and were only assured

by us they would at some future time occur, they would believe still

less than that which they now refuse to credit on our word. For

which of them would believe us if, instead of saying that the living

bodies of men hereafter will be such as to endure everlasting pain

and fire without ever dying, we were to say that in the world to

come there will be salt which becomes liquid in fire as if it were

in water, and crackles in water as if it were in fire; or that there

will be a fountain whose water in the chill air of night is so hot

that it cannot be touched, while in the heat of day it is so cold

that it cannot be drunk; or that there will be a stone which by its

own heat burns the hand when tightly held, or a stone which cannot

be extinguished if it has been lit in any part; or any of those

wonders I have cited, while omitting numberless others? If we were

to say that these things would be found in the world to come, and

our sceptics were to reply, "If you wish us to believe these things,

satisfy our reason about each of them," we should confess that we

could not, because the frail comprehension of man cannot master these

and such-like wonders of God's working; and that yet our reason was

thoroughly convinced that the Almighty does nothing without reason,

though the frail mind of man cannot explain the reason; and that

while we are in many instances uncertain what He intends, yet that it

is always most certain that nothing which He intends is impossible

to Him; and that when He declares His mind, we believe Him whom we

cannot believe to be either powerless or false. Nevertheless these

cavillers at faith and exactors of reason, how do they dispose of

those things of which a reason cannot be given, and which yet exist,

though in apparent contrariety to the nature of things? If we had

announced that these things were to be, these sceptics would have

demanded from us the reason of them, as they do in the case of those

things which we are announcing as destined to be. And consequently,

as these present marvels are not non-existent, though human reason

and discourse are lost in such works of God, so those things we speak

of are not impossible because inexplicable; for in this particular

they are in the same predicament as the marvels of earth.

6. \_That all marvels are not of nature's production, but that some

are due to human ingenuity and others to diabolic contrivance.\_

At this point they will perhaps reply, "These things have no

existence; we don't believe one of them; they are travellers' tales

and fictitious romances;" and they may add what has the appearance

of argument, and say, "If you believe such things as these, believe

what is recorded in the same books, that there was or is a temple of

Venus in which a candelabrum set in the open air holds a lamp, which

burns so strongly that no storm or rain extinguishes it, and which

is therefore called, like the stone mentioned above, the asbestos

or inextinguishable lamp." They may say this with the intention of

putting us into a dilemma: for if we say this is incredible, then

we shall impugn the truth of the other recorded marvels; if, on the

other hand, we admit that this is credible, we shall avouch the pagan

deities. But, as I have already said in the eighteenth book of this

work, we do not hold it necessary to believe all that profane history

contains, since, as Varro says, even historians themselves disagree

on so many points, that one would think they intended and were at

pains to do so; but we believe, if we are disposed, those things

which are not contradicted by these books, which we do not hesitate

to say we \_are\_ bound to believe. But as to those permanent miracles

of nature, whereby we wish to persuade the sceptical of the miracles

of the world to come, those are quite sufficient for our purpose

which we ourselves can observe, or of which it is not difficult to

find trustworthy witnesses. Moreover, that temple of Venus, with its

inextinguishable lamp, so far from hemming us into a corner, opens

an advantageous field to our argument. For to this inextinguishable

lamp we add a host of marvels wrought by men, or by magic,--that is,

by men under the influence of devils, or by the devils directly,--for

such marvels we cannot deny without impugning the truth of the sacred

Scriptures we believe. That lamp, therefore, was either by some

mechanical and human device fitted with asbestos, or it was arranged

by magical art in order that the worshippers might be astonished, or

some devil under the name of Venus so signally manifested himself

that this prodigy both began and became permanent. Now devils are

attracted to dwell in certain temples by means of the creatures

(God's creatures, not theirs), who present to them what suits their

various tastes. They are attracted not by food like animals, but,

like spirits, by such symbols as suit their taste, various kinds

of stones, woods, plants, animals, songs, rites. And that men may

provide these attractions, the devils first of all cunningly seduce

them, either by imbuing their hearts with a secret poison, or by

revealing themselves under a friendly guise, and thus make a few of

them their disciples, who become the instructors of the multitude.

For unless they first instructed men, it were impossible to know what

each of them desires, what they shrink from, by what name they should

be invoked or constrained to be present. Hence the origin of magic

and magicians. But, above all, they possess the hearts of men, and

are chiefly proud of this possession when they transform themselves

into angels of light. Very many things that occur, therefore,

are their doing; and these deeds of theirs we ought all the more

carefully to shun as we acknowledge them to be very surprising.

And yet these very deeds forward my present arguments. For if such

marvels are wrought by unclean devils, how much mightier are the holy

angels! and what cannot that God do who made the angels themselves

capable of working miracles!

If, then, very many effects can be contrived by human art, of so

surprising a kind that the uninitiated think them divine, as when,

\_e.g.\_, in a certain temple two magnets have been adjusted, one in

the roof, another in the floor, so that an iron image is suspended in

mid-air between them, one would suppose by the power of the divinity,

were he ignorant of the magnets above and beneath; or, as in the case

of that lamp of Venus which we already mentioned as being a skilful

adaptation of asbestos; if, again, by the help of magicians, whom

Scripture calls sorcerers and enchanters, the devils could gain such

power that the noble poet Virgil should consider himself justified in

describing a very powerful magician in these lines:

"Her charms can cure what souls she please,

Rob other hearts of healthful ease,

Turn rivers backward to their source,

And make the stars forget their course,

And call up ghosts from night:

The ground shall bellow 'neath your feet:

The mountain-ash shall quit its seat,

And travel down the height;"[861]--

if this be so, how much more able is God to do those things which to

sceptics are incredible, but to His power easy, since it is He who

has given to stones and all other things their virtue, and to men

their skill to use them in wonderful ways; He who has given to the

angels a nature more mighty than that of all that lives on earth;

He whose power surpasses all marvels, and whose wisdom in working,

ordaining, and permitting is no less marvellous in its governance of

all things than in its creation of all!

7. \_That the ultimate reason for believing miracles is the

omnipotence of the Creator.\_

Why, then, cannot God effect both that the bodies of the dead

shall rise, and that the bodies of the damned shall be tormented

in everlasting fire,--God, who made the world full of countless

miracles in sky, earth, air, and waters, while itself is a miracle

unquestionably greater and more admirable than all the marvels it is

filled with? But those with whom or against whom we are arguing,

who believe both that there is a God who made the world, and that

there are gods created by Him who administer the world's laws as

His vicegerents,--our adversaries, I say, who, so far from denying

emphatically, assert that there are powers in the world which effect

marvellous results (whether of their own accord, or because they

are invoked by some rite or prayer, or in some magical way), when

we lay before them the wonderful properties of other things which

are neither rational animals nor rational spirits, but such material

objects as those we have just cited, are in the habit of replying,

This is their natural property, their nature; these are the powers

naturally belonging to them. Thus the whole reason why Agrigentine

salt dissolves in fire and crackles in water is that this is its

nature. Yet this seems rather contrary to nature, which has given

not to fire but to water the power of melting salt, and the power

of scorching it not to water but to fire. But this, they say, is

the natural property of \_this\_ salt, to show effects contrary to

these. The same reason, therefore, is assigned to account for that

Garamantian fountain, of which one and the same runlet is chill by

day and boiling by night, so that in either extreme it cannot be

touched. So also of that other fountain which, though it is cold

to the touch, and though it, like other fountains, extinguishes a

lighted torch, yet, unlike other fountains, and in a surprising

manner, kindles an extinguished torch. So of the asbestos stone,

which, though it has no heat of its own, yet when kindled by fire

applied to it, cannot be extinguished. And so of the rest, which

I am weary of reciting, and in which, though there seems to be an

extraordinary property contrary to nature, yet no other reason is

given for them than this, that this is their nature,--a brief reason

truly, and, I own, a satisfactory reply. But since God is the author

of all natures, how is it that our adversaries, when they refuse to

believe what we affirm, on the ground that it is impossible, are

unwilling to accept from us a better explanation than their own,

viz. that this is the will of Almighty God,--for certainly He is

called Almighty only because He is mighty to do all He will,--He who

was able to create so many marvels, not only unknown, but very well

ascertained, as I have been showing, and which, were they not under

our own observation, or reported by recent and credible witnesses,

would certainly be pronounced impossible? For as for those marvels

which have no other testimony than the writers in whose books we

read them, and who wrote without being divinely instructed, and are

therefore liable to human error, we cannot justly blame any one who

declines to believe them.

For my own part, I do not wish all the marvels I have cited to be

rashly accepted, for I do not myself believe them implicitly, save

those which have either come under my own observation, or which

any one can readily verify,--such as the lime which is heated by

water and cooled by oil; the magnet which by its mysterious and

insensible suction attracts the iron, but has no effect on a straw;

the peacock's flesh which triumphs over the corruption from which

not the flesh of Plato is exempt; the chaff so chilling that it

prevents snow from melting, so heating that it forces apples to

ripen; the glowing fire, which, in accordance with its glowing

appearance, whitens the stones it bakes, while, contrary to its

glowing appearance, it begrimes most things it burns (just as dirty

stains are made by oil, however pure it be, and as the lines drawn

by white silver are black); the charcoal, too, which by the action

of fire is so completely changed from its original, that a finely

marked piece of wood becomes hideous, the tough becomes brittle, the

decaying incorruptible. Some of these things I know in common with

many other persons, some of them in common with all men; and there

are many others which I have not room to insert in this book. But of

those which I have cited, though I have not myself seen, but only

read about them, I have been unable to find trustworthy witnesses

from whom I could ascertain whether they are facts, except in the

case of that fountain in which burning torches are extinguished and

extinguished torches lit, and of the apples of Sodom, which are

ripe to appearance, but are filled with dust. And indeed I have not

met with any who said they had seen that fountain in Epirus, but

with some who knew there was a similar fountain in Gaul not far

from Grenoble. The fruit of the trees of Sodom, however, is not

only spoken of in books worthy of credit, but so many persons say

that they have seen it that I cannot doubt the fact. But the rest

of the prodigies I receive without definitely affirming or denying

them; and I have cited them because I read them in the authors of

our adversaries, and that I might prove how many things many among

themselves believe, because they are written in the works of their

own literary men, though no rational explanation of them is given,

and yet they scorn to believe us when we assert that Almighty God

will do what is beyond their experience and observation; and this

they do even though we assign a reason for His work. For what better

and stronger reason for such things can be given than to say that the

Almighty is able to bring them to pass, and will bring them to pass,

having predicted them in those books in which many other marvels

which have already come to pass were predicted? Those things which

are regarded as impossible will be accomplished according to the

word, and by the power of that God who predicted and effected that

the incredulous nations should believe incredible wonders.

8. \_That it is not contrary to nature that, in an object whose

nature is known, there should be discovered an alteration of

the properties which have been known as its natural properties.\_

But if they reply that their reason for not believing us when we say

that human bodies will always burn and yet never die, is that the

nature of human bodies is known to be quite otherwise constituted; if

they say that for this miracle we cannot give the reason which was

valid in the case of those natural miracles, viz. that this is the

natural property, the nature of the thing,--for we know that this

is not the nature of human flesh,--we find our answer in the sacred

writings, that even this human flesh was constituted in one fashion

before there was sin,--was constituted, in fact, so that it could not

die,--and in another fashion after sin, being made such as we see it in

this miserable state of mortality, unable to retain enduring life. And

so in the resurrection of the dead shall it be constituted differently

from its present well-known condition. But as they do not believe these

writings of ours, in which we read what nature man had in paradise, and

how remote he was from the necessity of death,--and indeed, if they did

believe them, we should of course have little trouble in debating with

them the future punishment of the damned,--we must produce from the

writings of their own most learned authorities some instances to show

that it is possible for a thing to become different from what it was

formerly known characteristically to be.

From the book of Marcus Varro, entitled, \_Of the Race Of the Roman

People\_, I cite word for word the following instance: "There

occurred a remarkable celestial portent; for Castor records that,

in the brilliant star Venus, called Vesperugo by Plautus, and the

lovely Hesperus by Homer, there occurred so strange a prodigy, that

it changed its colour, size, form, course, which never happened

before nor since. Adrastus of Cyzicus, and Dion of Naples, famous

mathematicians, said that this occurred in the reign of Ogyges."

So great an author as Varro would certainly not have called this a

portent had it not seemed to be contrary to nature. For we say that

all portents are contrary to nature; but they are not so. For how is

that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the

will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created

thing? A portent, therefore, happens not contrary to nature, but

contrary to what we know as nature. But who can number the multitude

of portents recorded in profane histories? Let us then at present fix

our attention on this one only which concerns the matter in hand.

What is there so arranged by the Author of the nature of heaven and

earth as the exactly ordered course of the stars? What is there

established by laws so sure and inflexible? And yet, when it pleased

Him who with sovereignty and supreme power regulates all He has

created, a star conspicuous among the rest by its size and splendour

changed its colour, size, form, and, most wonderful of all, the order

and law of its course! Certainly that phenomenon disturbed the canons

of the astronomers, if there were any then, by which they tabulate,

as by unerring computation, the past and future movements of the

stars, so as to take upon them to affirm that this which happened to

the morning star (Venus) never happened before nor since. But we read

in the divine books that even the sun itself stood still when a holy

man, Joshua the son of Nun, had begged this from God until victory

should finish the battle he had begun; and that it even went back,

that the promise of fifteen years added to the life of king Hezekiah

might be sealed by this additional prodigy. But these miracles, which

were vouchsafed to the merits of holy men, even when our adversaries

believe them, they attribute to magical arts; so Virgil, in the lines

I quoted above, ascribes to magic the power to

"Turn rivers backward to their source,

And make the stars forget their course."

For in our sacred books we read that this also happened, that a river

"turned backward," was stayed above while the lower part flowed

on, when the people passed over under the above-mentioned leader,

Joshua the son of Nun; and also when Elias the prophet crossed; and

afterwards, when his disciple Elisha passed through it: and we have

just mentioned how, in the case of king Hezekiah, the greatest of the

"stars forgot its course." But what happened to Venus, according to

Varro, was not said by him to have happened in answer to any man's

prayer.

Let not the sceptics then benight themselves in this knowledge of

the nature of things, as if divine power cannot bring to pass in an

object anything else than what their own experience has shown them

to be in its nature. Even the very things which are most commonly

known as natural would not be less wonderful nor less effectual to

excite surprise in all who beheld them, if men were not accustomed to

admire nothing but what is rare. For who that thoughtfully observes

the countless multitude of men, and their similarity of nature, can

fail to remark with surprise and admiration the individuality of each

man's appearance, suggesting to us, as it does, that unless men were

like one another, they would not be distinguished from the rest of the

animals; while unless, on the other hand, they were unlike, they could

not be distinguished from one another, so that those whom we declare

to be like, we also find to be unlike? And the unlikeness is the more

wonderful consideration of the two; for a common nature seems rather

to require similarity. And yet, because the very rarity of things is

that which makes them wonderful, we are filled with much greater wonder

when we are introduced to two men so like, that we either always or

frequently mistake in endeavouring to distinguish between them.

But possibly, though Varro is a heathen historian, and a very learned

one, they may disbelieve that what I have cited from him truly

occurred; or they may say the example is invalid, because the star

did not for any length of time continue to follow its new course, but

returned to its ordinary orbit. There is, then, another phenomenon at

present open to their observation, and which, in my opinion, ought

to be sufficient to convince them that, though they have observed

and ascertained some natural law, they ought not on that account to

prescribe to God, as if He could not change and turn it into something

very different from what they have observed. The land of Sodom was not

always as it now is; but once it had the appearance of other lands, and

enjoyed equal if not richer fertility; for, in the divine narrative, it

was compared to the paradise of God. But after it was touched [by fire]

from heaven, as even pagan history testifies, and as is now witnessed

by those who visit the spot, it became unnaturally and horribly

sooty in appearance; and its apples, under a deceitful appearance

of ripeness, contain ashes within. Here is a thing which was of one

kind, and is of another. You see how its nature was converted by the

wonderful transmutation wrought by the Creator of all natures into so

very disgusting a diversity,--an alteration which after so long a time

took place, and after so long a time still continues.

As therefore it was not impossible to God to create such natures as

He pleased, so it is not impossible to Him to change these natures

of His own creation into whatever He pleases, and thus spread abroad

a multitude of those marvels which are called monsters, portents,

prodigies, phenomena,[862] and which if I were minded to cite and

record, what end would there be to this work? They say that they are

called "monsters," because they \_demonstrate\_ or signify something;

"portents," because they \_portend\_ something; and so forth.[863]

But let their diviners see how they are either deceived, or even

when they do predict true things, it is because they are inspired by

spirits, who are intent upon entangling the minds of men (worthy,

indeed, of such a fate) in the meshes of a hurtful curiosity, or how

they light now and then upon some truth, because they make so many

predictions. Yet, for our part, these things which happen contrary

to nature, and are said to be contrary to nature (as the apostle,

speaking after the manner of men, says, that to graff the wild olive

into the good olive, and to partake of its fatness, is contrary to

nature), and are called monsters, phenomena, portents, prodigies,

ought to demonstrate, portend, predict that God will bring to pass

what He has foretold regarding the bodies of men, no difficulty

preventing Him, no law of nature prescribing to Him His limit. How He

has foretold what He is to do, I think I have sufficiently shown in

the preceding book, culling from the sacred Scriptures, both of the

New and Old Testaments, not, indeed, all the passages that relate to

this, but as many as I judged to suffice for this work.

9. \_Of hell, and the nature of eternal punishments.\_

So then what God by His prophet has said of the everlasting

punishment of the damned shall come to pass--shall without fail

come to pass,--"their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire

be quenched."[864] In order to impress this upon us most forcibly,

the Lord Jesus Himself, when ordering us to cut off our members,

meaning thereby those persons whom a man loves as the most useful

members of his body, says, "It is better for thee to enter into life

maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that

never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and their fire

is not quenched." Similarly of the foot: "It is better for thee to

enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into

the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not,

and the fire is not quenched." So, too, of the eye: "It is better

for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having

two eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and

the fire is not quenched."[865] He did not shrink from using the

same words three times over in one passage. And who is not terrified

by this repetition, and by the threat of that punishment uttered so

vehemently by the lips of the Lord Himself?

Now they who would refer both the fire and the worm to the spirit,

and not to the body, affirm that the wicked, who are separated from

the kingdom of God, shall be burned, as it were, by the anguish of

a spirit repenting too late and fruitlessly; and they contend that

fire is therefore not inappropriately used to express this burning

torment, as when the apostle exclaims, "Who is offended, and I burn

not?"[866] The worm, too, they think, is to be similarly understood.

For it is written, they say, "As the moth consumes the garment, and

the worm the wood, so does grief consume the heart of a man."[867]

But they who make no doubt that in that future punishment both

body and soul shall suffer, affirm that the body shall be burned

with fire, while the soul shall be, as it were, gnawed by a worm

of anguish. Though this view is more reasonable,--for it is absurd

to suppose that either body or soul will escape pain in the future

punishment,--yet, for my own part, I find it easier to understand

both as referring to the body than to suppose that neither does;

and I think that Scripture is silent regarding the spiritual pain

of the damned, because, though not expressed, it is necessarily

understood that in a body thus tormented the soul also is tortured

with a fruitless repentance. For we read in the ancient Scriptures,

"The vengeance of the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms."[868]

It might have been more briefly said, "The vengeance of the ungodly."

Why, then, was it said, "The flesh of the ungodly," unless because

both the fire and the worm are to be the punishment of the flesh? Or

if the object of the writer in saying, "The vengeance of the flesh,"

was to indicate that this shall be the punishment of those who live

after the flesh (for this leads to the second death, as the apostle

intimated when he said, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall

die"[869]), let each one make his own choice, either assigning the

fire to the body and the worm to the soul,--the one figuratively,

the other really,--or assigning both really to the body. For I have

already sufficiently made out that animals can live in the fire, in

burning without being consumed, in pain without dying, by a miracle

of the most omnipotent Creator, to whom no one can deny that this

is possible, if he be not ignorant by whom has been made all that

is wonderful in all nature. For it is God Himself who has wrought

all these miracles, great and small, in this world which I have

mentioned, and incomparably more which I have omitted, and who has

enclosed these marvels in this world, itself the greatest miracle of

all. Let each man, then, choose which he will, whether he thinks that

the worm is real and pertains to the body, or that spiritual things

are meant by bodily representations, and that it belongs to the soul.

But which of these is true will be more readily discovered by the

facts themselves, when there shall be in the saints such knowledge as

shall not require that their own experience teach them the nature of

these punishments, but as shall, by its own fulness and perfection,

suffice to instruct them in this matter. For "now we know in part,

until that which is perfect is come;"[870] only, this we believe

about those future bodies, that they shall be such as shall certainly

be pained by the fire.

10. \_Whether the fire of hell, if it be material fire, can burn the

wicked spirits, that is to say, devils, who are immaterial.\_

Here arises the question: If the fire is not to be immaterial,

analogous to the pain of the soul, but material, burning by contact,

so that bodies may be tormented in it, how can evil spirits be

punished in it? For it is undoubtedly the same fire which is to serve

for the punishment of men and of devils, according to the words of

Christ: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared

for the devil and his angels;"[871] unless, perhaps, as learned men

have thought, the devils have a kind of body made of that dense and

humid air which we feel strikes us when the wind is blowing. And

if this kind of substance could not be affected by fire, it could

not burn when heated in the baths. For in order to burn, it is

first burned, and affects other things as itself is affected. But

if any one maintains that the devils have no bodies, this is not

a matter either to be laboriously investigated, or to be debated

with keenness. For why may we not assert that even immaterial

spirits may, in some extraordinary way, yet really be pained by the

punishment of material fire, if the spirits of men, which also are

certainly immaterial, are both now contained in material members

of the body, and in the world to come shall be indissolubly united

to their own bodies? Therefore, though the devils have no bodies,

yet their spirits, that is, the devils themselves, shall be brought

into thorough contact with the material fires, to be tormented by

them; not that the fires themselves with which they are brought into

contact shall be animated by their connection with these spirits,

and become animals composed of body and spirit, but, as I said, this

junction will be effected in a wonderful and ineffable way, so that

they shall receive pain from the fires, but give no life to them.

And, in truth, this other mode of union, by which bodies and spirits

are bound together and become animals, is thoroughly marvellous, and

beyond the comprehension of man, though this it is which is man.

I would indeed say that these spirits will burn without any body of

their own, as that rich man was burning in hell when he exclaimed, "I

am tormented in this flame,"[872] were I not aware that it is aptly

said in reply, that that flame was of the same nature as the eyes he

raised and fixed on Lazarus, as the tongue on which he entreated that

a little cooling water might be dropped, or as the finger of Lazarus,

with which he asked that this might be done,--all of which took place

where souls exist without bodies. Thus, therefore, both that flame in

which he burned and that drop he begged were immaterial, and resembled

the visions of sleepers or persons in an ecstasy, to whom immaterial

objects appear in a bodily form. For the man himself who is in such a

state, though it be in spirit only, not in body, yet sees himself so

like to his own body that he cannot discern any difference whatever.

But that hell, which also is called a lake of fire and brimstone,[873]

will be material fire, and will torment the bodies of the damned,

whether men or devils,--the solid bodies of the one, aerial bodies of

the others; or if only men have bodies as well as souls, yet the evil

spirits, though without bodies, shall be so connected with the bodily

fires as to receive pain without imparting life. One fire certainly

shall be the lot of both, for thus the truth has declared.

11. \_Whether it is just that the punishments of sins last longer

than the sins themselves lasted.\_

Some, however, of those against whom we are defending the city of

God, think it unjust that any man be doomed to an eternal punishment

for sins which, no matter how great they were, were perpetrated in

a brief space of time; as if any law ever regulated the duration

of the punishment by the duration of the offence punished! Cicero

tells us that the laws recognise eight kinds of penalty,--damages,

imprisonment, scourging, reparation,[874] disgrace, exile, death,

slavery. Is there any one of these which may be compressed into a

brevity proportioned to the rapid commission of the offence, so

that no longer time may be spent in its punishment than in its

perpetration, unless, perhaps, reparation? For this requires that

the offender suffer what he did, as that clause of the law says,

"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth."[875] For certainly it is possible

for an offender to lose his eye by the severity of legal retaliation

in as brief a time as he deprived another of his eye by the cruelty

of his own lawlessness. But if scourging be a reasonable penalty for

kissing another man's wife, is not the fault of an instant visited

with long hours of atonement, and the momentary delight punished with

lasting pain? What shall we say of imprisonment? Must the criminal

be confined only for so long a time as he spent on the offence for

which he is committed? or is not a penalty of many years' confinement

imposed on the slave who has provoked his master with a word, or has

struck him a blow that is quickly over? And as to damages, disgrace,

exile, slavery, which are commonly inflicted so as to admit of no

relaxation or pardon, do not these resemble eternal punishments in so

far as this short life allows a resemblance? For they are not eternal

only because the life in which they are endured is not eternal;

and yet the crimes which are punished with these most protracted

sufferings are perpetrated in a very brief space of time. Nor is

there any one who would suppose that the pains of punishment should

occupy as short a time as the offence; or that murder, adultery,

sacrilege, or any other crime, should be measured, not by the

enormity of the injury or wickedness, but by the length of time spent

in its perpetration. Then as to the award of death for any great

crime, do the laws reckon the punishment to consist in the brief

moment in which death is inflicted, or in this, that the offender is

eternally banished from the society of the living? And just as the

punishment of the first death cuts men off from this present mortal

city, so does the punishment of the second death cut men off from

that future immortal city. For as the laws of this present city do

not provide for the executed criminal's return to it, so neither

is he who is condemned to the second death recalled again to life

everlasting. But if temporal sin is visited with eternal punishment,

how, then, they say, is that true which your Christ says, "With

the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you

again?"[876] and they do not observe that "the same measure" refers,

not to an equal space of time, but to the retribution of evil, or, in

other words, to the law by which he who has done evil suffers evil.

Besides, these words could be appropriately understood as referring

to the matter of which our Lord was speaking when He used them, viz.

judgments and condemnation. Thus, if he who unjustly judges and

condemns is himself justly judged and condemned, he receives "with

the same measure" though not the same thing as he gave. For judgment

he gave, and judgment he receives, though the judgment he gave was

unjust, the judgment he receives just.

12. \_Of the greatness of the first transgression, on account of

which eternal punishment is due to all who are not within the

pale of the Saviour's grace.\_

But eternal punishment seems hard and unjust to human perceptions,

because in the weakness of our mortal condition there is wanting

that highest and purest wisdom by which it can be perceived how

great a wickedness was committed in that first transgression. The

more enjoyment man found in God, the greater was his wickedness

in abandoning Him; and he who destroyed in himself a good which

might have been eternal, became worthy of eternal evil. Hence the

whole mass of the human race is condemned; for he who at first gave

entrance to sin has been punished with all his posterity who were in

him as in a root, so that no one is exempt from this just and due

punishment, unless delivered by mercy and undeserved grace; and the

human race is so apportioned that in some is displayed the efficacy

of merciful grace, in the rest the efficacy of just retribution. For

both could not be displayed in all; for if all had remained[877]

under the punishment of just condemnation, there would have been

seen in no one the mercy of redeeming grace. And, on the other hand,

if all had been transferred from darkness to light, the severity of

retribution would have been manifested in none. But many more are

left under punishment than are delivered from it, in order that it

may thus be shown what was due to all. And had it been inflicted on

all, no one could justly have found fault with the justice of Him who

taketh vengeance; whereas, in the deliverance of so many from that

just award, there is cause to render the most cordial thanks to the

gratuitous bounty of Him who delivers.

13. \_Against the opinion of those who think that the punishments

of the wicked after death are purgatorial.\_

The Platonists, indeed, while they maintain that no sins are

unpunished, suppose that all punishment is administered for remedial

purposes,[878] be it inflicted by human or divine law, in this life

or after death; for a man may be scathless here, or, though punished,

may yet not amend. Hence that passage of Virgil, where, when he had

said of our earthly bodies and mortal members, that our souls derive--

"Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears;

Immured in dungeon-seeming night,

They look abroad, yet see no light,"

goes on to say:

"Nay, when at last the life has fled,

And left the body cold and dead,

E'en then there passes not away

The painful heritage of clay;

Full many a long-contracted stain

Perforce must linger deep in grain.

So penal sufferings they endure

For ancient crime, to make them pure;

Some hang aloft in open view,

For winds to pierce them through and through,

While others purge their guilt deep-dyed

In burning fire or whelming tide."[879]

They who are of this opinion would have all punishments after death

to be purgatorial; and as the elements of air, fire, and water are

superior to earth, one or other of these may be the instrument of

expiating and purging away the stain contracted by the contagion of

earth. So Virgil hints at the air in the words, "Some hang aloft for

winds to pierce;" at the water in "whelming tide;" and at fire in the

expression "in burning fire." For our part, we recognise that even in

this life some punishments are purgatorial,--not, indeed, to those

whose life is none the better, but rather the worse for them, but

to those who are constrained by them to amend their life. All other

punishments, whether temporal or eternal, inflicted as they are on

every one by divine providence, are sent either on account of past

sins, or of sins presently allowed in the life, or to exercise and

reveal a man's graces. They may be inflicted by the instrumentality

of bad men and angels as well as of the good. For even if any one

suffers some hurt through another's wickedness or mistake, the man

indeed sins whose ignorance or injustice does the harm; but God,

who by His just though hidden judgment permits it to be done, sins

not. But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life

only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all

of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who

suffer temporary punishments after death, all are not doomed to

those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment; for to

some, as we have already said, what is not remitted in this world is

remitted in the next, that is, they are not punished with the eternal

punishment of the world to come.

14. \_Of the temporary punishments of this life to which the

human condition is subject.\_

Quite exceptional are those who are not punished in this life, but

only afterwards. Yet that there have been some who have reached the

decrepitude of age without experiencing even the slightest sickness,

and who have had uninterrupted enjoyment of life, I know both from

report and from my own observation. However, the very life we mortals

lead is itself all punishment, for it is all temptation, as the

Scriptures declare, where it is written, "Is not the life of man

upon earth a temptation?"[880] For ignorance is itself no slight

punishment, or want of culture, which it is with justice thought so

necessary to escape, that boys are compelled, under pain of severe

punishment, to learn trades or letters; and the learning to which

they are driven by punishment is itself so much of a punishment

to them, that they sometimes prefer the pain that drives them to

the pain to which they are driven by it. And who would not shrink

from the alternative, and elect to die, if it were proposed to

him either to suffer death or to be again an infant? Our infancy,

indeed, introducing us to this life not with laughter but with tears,

seems unconsciously to predict the ills we are to encounter.[881]

Zoroaster alone is said to have laughed when he was born, and that

unnatural omen portended no good to him. For he is said to have been

the inventor of magical arts, though indeed they were unable to

secure to him even the poor felicity of this present life against

the assaults of his enemies. For, himself king of the Bactrians, he

was conquered by Ninus king of the Assyrians. In short, the words

of Scripture, "An heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the

day that they go out of their mother's womb till the day that they

return to the mother of all things,"[882]--these words so infallibly

find fulfilment, that even the little ones, who by the laver of

regeneration have been freed from the bond of original sin in which

alone they were held, yet suffer many ills, and in some instances

are even exposed to the assaults of evil spirits. But let us not for

a moment suppose that this suffering is prejudicial to their future

happiness, even though it has so increased as to sever soul from

body, and to terminate their life in that early age.

15. \_That everything which the grace of God does in the way of

rescuing us from the inveterate evils in which we are sunk,

pertains to the future world, in which all things are made new.\_

Nevertheless, in the "heavy yoke that is laid upon the sons of Adam,

from the day that they go out of their mother's womb to the day that

they return to the mother of all things," there is found an admirable

though painful monitor teaching us to be sober-minded, and convincing

us that this life has become penal in consequence of that outrageous

wickedness which was perpetrated in Paradise, and that all to which

the New Testament invites belongs to that future inheritance which

awaits us in the world to come, and is offered for our acceptance, as

the earnest that we may, in its own due time, obtain that of which it

is the pledge. Now, therefore, let us walk in hope, and let us by the

spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, and so make progress from day

to day. For "the Lord knoweth them that are His;"[883] and "as many

as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God,"[884] but by

grace, not by nature. For there is but one Son of God by nature, who

in His compassion became Son of man for our sakes, that we, by nature

sons of men, might by grace become through Him sons of God. For He,

abiding unchangeable, took upon Him our nature, that thereby He might

take us to Himself; and, holding fast His own divinity, He became

partaker of our infirmity, that we, being changed into some better

thing, might, by participating in His righteousness and immortality,

lose our own properties of sin and mortality, and preserve whatever

good quality He had implanted in our nature, perfected now by sharing

in the goodness of His nature. For as by the sin of one man we have

fallen into a misery so deplorable, so by the righteousness of one

Man, who also is God, shall we come to a blessedness inconceivably

exalted. Nor ought any one to trust that he has passed from the one

man to the other until he shall have reached that place where there

is no temptation, and have entered into the peace which he seeks

in the many and various conflicts of this war, in which "the flesh

lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."[885]

Now, such a war as this would have had no existence, if human

nature had, in the exercise of free will, continued stedfast in the

uprightness in which it was created. But now in its misery it makes

war upon itself, because in its blessedness it would not continue

at peace with God; and this, though it be a miserable calamity, is

better than the earlier stages of this life, which do not recognise

that a war is to be maintained. For better is it to contend with

vices than without conflict to be subdued by them. Better, I say, is

war with the hope of peace everlasting than captivity without any

thought of deliverance. We long, indeed, for the cessation of this

war, and, kindled by the flame of divine love, we burn for entrance

on that well-ordered peace in which whatever is inferior is for ever

subordinated to what is above it. But if (which God forbid) there

had been no hope of so blessed a consummation, we should still have

preferred to endure the hardness of this conflict, rather than, by

our non-resistance, to yield ourselves to the dominion of vice.

16. \_The laws of grace, which extend to all the epochs of the life

of the regenerate.\_

But such is God's mercy towards the vessels of mercy which He has

prepared for glory, that even the first age of man, that is, infancy,

which submits without any resistance to the flesh, and the second

age, which is called boyhood, and which has not yet understanding

enough to undertake this warfare, and therefore yields to almost

every vicious pleasure (because though this age has the power of

speech,[886] and may therefore seem to have passed infancy, the mind

is still too weak to comprehend the commandment), yet if either of

these ages has received the sacraments of the Mediator, then, although

the present life be immediately brought to an end, the child, having

been translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of Christ,

shall not only be saved from eternal punishments, but shall not even

suffer purgatorial torments after death. For spiritual regeneration of

itself suffices to prevent any evil consequences resulting after death

from the connection with death which carnal generation forms.[887] But

when we reach that age which can now comprehend the commandment, and

submit to the dominion of law, we must declare war upon vices, and

wage this war keenly, lest we be landed in damnable sins. And if vices

have not gathered strength, by habitual victory they are more easily

overcome and subdued; but if they have been used to conquer and rule,

it is only with difficulty and labour they are mastered. And indeed

this victory cannot be sincerely and truly gained but by delighting

in true righteousness, and it is faith in Christ that gives this. For

if the law be present with its command, and the Spirit be absent with

His help, the presence of the prohibition serves only to increase

the desire to sin, and adds the guilt of transgression. Sometimes,

indeed, patent vices are overcome by other and hidden vices, which are

reckoned virtues, though pride and a kind of ruinous self-sufficiency

are their informing principles. Accordingly vices are then only to be

considered overcome when they are conquered by the love of God, which

God Himself alone gives, and which He gives only through the Mediator

between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who became a partaker of

our mortality that He might make us partakers of His divinity. But few

indeed are they who are so happy as to have passed their youth without

committing any damnable sins, either by dissolute or violent conduct,

or by following some godless and unlawful opinions, but have subdued by

their greatness of soul everything in them which could make them the

slaves of carnal pleasures. The greater number having first become

transgressors of the law that they have received, and having allowed

vice to have the ascendency in them, then flee to grace for help, and

so, by a penitence more bitter, and a struggle more violent than it

would otherwise have been, they subdue the soul to God, and thus give

it its lawful authority over the flesh, and become victors. Whoever,

therefore, desires to escape eternal punishment, let him not only be

baptized, but also justified in Christ, and so let him in truth pass

from the devil to Christ. And let him not fancy that there are any

purgatorial pains except before that final and dreadful judgment. We

must not, however, deny that even the eternal fire will be proportioned

to the deserts of the wicked, so that to some it will be more, and to

others less painful, whether this result be accomplished by a variation

in the temperature of the fire itself, graduated according to every

one's merit, or whether it be that the heat remains the same, but that

all do not feel it with equal intensity of torment.

17. \_Of those who fancy that no men shall be punished eternally.\_

I must now, I see, enter the lists of amicable controversy with those

tender-hearted Christians who decline to believe that any, or that all

of those whom the infallibly just Judge may pronounce worthy of the

punishment of hell, shall suffer eternally, and who suppose that they

shall be delivered after a fixed term of punishment, longer or shorter

according to the amount of each man's sin. In respect of this matter,

Origen was even more indulgent; for he believed that even the devil

himself and his angels, after suffering those more severe and prolonged

pains which their sins deserved, should be delivered from their

torments, and associated with the holy angels. But the Church, not

without reason, condemned him for this and other errors, especially for

his theory of the ceaseless alternation of happiness and misery, and

the interminable transitions from the one state to the other at fixed

periods of ages; for in this theory he lost even the credit of being

merciful, by allotting to the saints real miseries for the expiation

of their sins, and false happiness, which brought them no true and

secure joy, that is, no fearless assurance of eternal blessedness. Very

different, however, is the error we speak of, which is dictated by

the tenderness of these Christians who suppose that the sufferings of

those who are condemned in the judgment will be temporary, while the

blessedness of all who are sooner or later set free will be eternal.

Which opinion, if it is good and true because it is merciful, will be

so much the better and truer in proportion as it becomes more merciful.

Let, then, this fountain of mercy be extended, and flow forth even to

the lost angels, and let them also be set free, at least after as many

and long ages as seem fit! Why does this stream of mercy flow to all

the human race, and dry up as soon as it reaches the angelic? And yet

they dare not extend their pity further, and propose the deliverance

of the devil himself. Or if any one is bold enough to do so, he does

indeed put to shame their charity, but is himself convicted of error

that is more unsightly, and a wresting of God's truth that is more

perverse, in proportion as his clemency of sentiment seems to be

greater.[888]

18. \_Of those who fancy that, on account of the saints' intercession,

no man shall be damned in the last judgment.\_

There are others, again, with whose opinions I have become acquainted

in conversation, who, though they seem to reverence the holy

Scriptures, are yet of reprehensible life, and who accordingly, in

their own interest, attribute to God a still greater compassion towards

men. For they acknowledge that it is truly predicted in the divine word

that the wicked and unbelieving are worthy of punishment, but they

assert that, when the judgment comes, mercy will prevail. For, say

they, God, having compassion on them, will give them up to the prayers

and intercessions of His saints. For if the saints used to pray for

them when they suffered from their cruel hatred, how much more will

they do so when they see them prostrate and humble suppliants? For

we cannot, they say, believe that the saints shall lose their bowels

of compassion when they have attained the most perfect and complete

holiness; so that they who, when still sinners, prayed for their

enemies, should now, when they are freed from sin, withhold from

interceding for their suppliants. Or shall God refuse to listen to so

many of His beloved children, when their holiness has purged their

prayers of all hindrance to His answering them? And the passage of the

psalm which is cited by those who admit that wicked men and infidels

shall be punished for a long time, though in the end delivered from

all sufferings, is claimed also by the persons we are now speaking of

as making much more for them. The verse runs: "Shall God forget to

be gracious? Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies?"[889] His

anger, they say, would condemn all that are unworthy of everlasting

happiness to endless punishment. But if He suffer them to be punished

for a long time, or even at all, must He not shut up His tender

mercies, which the Psalmist implies He will not do? For he does not

say, Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies for a long period?

but he implies that He will not shut them up at all.

And they deny that thus God's threat of judgment is proved to be

false even though He condemn no man, any more than we can say that

His threat to overthrow Nineveh was false, though the destruction

which was absolutely predicted was not accomplished. For He did

not say, "Nineveh shall be overthrown if they do not repent and

amend their ways," but without any such condition He foretold that

the city should be overthrown. And this prediction, they maintain,

was true because God predicted the punishment which they deserved,

although He was not to inflict it. For though He spared them on

their repentance, yet He was certainly aware that they would repent,

and, notwithstanding, absolutely and definitely predicted that the

city should be overthrown. This was true, they say, in the truth

of severity, because they were worthy of it; but in respect of the

compassion which checked His anger, so that He spared the suppliants

from the punishment with which He had threatened the rebellious, it

was not true. If, then, He spared those whom His own holy prophet

was provoked at His sparing, how much more shall He spare those

more wretched suppliants for whom all His saints shall intercede?

And they suppose that this conjecture of theirs is not hinted at

in Scripture, for the sake of stimulating many to reformation of

life through fear of very protracted or eternal sufferings, and of

stimulating others to pray for those who have not reformed. However,

they think that the divine oracles are not altogether silent on this

point; for they ask to what purpose is it said, "How great is Thy

goodness which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee,"[890] if it

be not to teach us that the great and hidden sweetness of God's mercy

is concealed in order that men may fear? To the same purpose they

think the apostle said, "For God hath concluded all men in unbelief,

that He may have mercy upon all,"[891] signifying that no one should

be condemned by God. And yet they who hold this opinion do not extend

it to the acquittal or liberation of the devil and his angels. Their

human tenderness is moved only towards men, and they plead chiefly

their own cause, holding out false hopes of impunity to their own

depraved lives by means of this quasi compassion of God to the whole

race. Consequently they who promise this impunity even to the prince

of the devils and his satellites make a still fuller exhibition of

the mercy of God.

19. \_Of those who promise impunity from all sins even to heretics,

through virtue of their participation of the body of Christ.\_

So, too, there are others who promise this deliverance from eternal

punishment, not, indeed, to all men, but only to those who have been

washed in Christian baptism, and who become partakers of the body of

Christ, no matter how they have lived, or what heresy or impiety they

have fallen into. They ground this opinion on the saying of Jesus,

"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat

thereof, he shall not die. I am the living bread which came down from

heaven. If a man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever."[892]

Therefore, say they, it follows that these persons must be delivered

from death eternal, and at one time or other be introduced to

everlasting life.

20. \_Of those who promise this indulgence not to all, but only to

those who have been baptized as catholics, though afterwards

they have broken out into many crimes and heresies.\_

There are others still who make this promise not even to all who

have received the sacraments of the baptism of Christ and of His

body, but only to the catholics, however badly they have lived. For

these have eaten the body of Christ, not only sacramentally but

really, being incorporated in His body, as the apostle says, "We,

being many, are one bread, one body;"[893] so that, though they have

afterwards lapsed into some heresy, or even into heathenism and

idolatry, yet by virtue of this one thing, that they have received

the baptism of Christ, and eaten the body of Christ, in the body of

Christ, that is to say, in the catholic Church, they shall not die

eternally, but at one time or other obtain eternal life; and all

that wickedness of theirs shall not avail to make their punishment

eternal, but only proportionately long and severe.

21. \_Of those who assert that all catholics who continue in the

faith, even though by the depravity of their lives they

have merited hell fire, shall be saved on account of the

"foundation" of their faith.\_

There are some, too, who found upon the expression of Scripture,

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved,"[894] and who promise

salvation only to those who continue in the Church catholic; and

though such persons have lived badly, yet, say they, they shall

be saved as by fire through virtue of the foundation of which the

apostle says, "For other foundation hath no man laid than that which

is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this

foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every

man's work shall be made manifest: for the day of the Lord shall

declare it, for it shall be revealed by fire; and each man's work

shall be proved of what sort it is. If any man's work shall endure

which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. But if any

man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself

shall be saved; yet so as through fire."[895] They say, accordingly,

that the catholic Christian, no matter what his life be, has Christ

as his foundation, while this foundation is not possessed by any

heresy which is separated from the unity of His body. And therefore,

through virtue of this foundation, even though the catholic Christian

by the inconsistency of his life has been as one building up wood,

hay, stubble, upon it, they believe that he shall be saved by fire,

in other words, that he shall be delivered after tasting the pain of

that fire to which the wicked shall be condemned at the last judgment.

22. \_Of those who fancy that the sins which are intermingled with

alms-deeds shall not be charged at the day of judgment.\_

I have also met with some who are of opinion that such only as

neglect to cover their sins with alms-deeds shall be punished in

everlasting fire; and they cite the words of the Apostle James, "He

shall have judgment without mercy who hath shown no mercy."[896]

Therefore, say they, he who has not amended his ways, but yet has

intermingled his profligate and wicked actions with works of mercy,

shall receive mercy in the judgment, so that he shall either quite

escape condemnation, or shall be liberated from his doom after some

time shorter or longer. They suppose that this was the reason why

the Judge Himself of quick and dead declined to mention anything

else than works of mercy done or omitted, when awarding to those on

His right hand life eternal, and to those on His left everlasting

punishment.[897] To the same purpose, they say, is the daily petition

we make in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive

our debtors."[898] For, no doubt, whoever pardons the person who has

wronged him does a charitable action. And this has been so highly

commended by the Lord Himself, that He says, "For if ye forgive men

their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if

ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive

your trespasses."[899] And so it is to this kind of alms-deeds that

the saying of the Apostle James refers, "He shall have judgment

without mercy that hath shown no mercy." And our Lord, they say, made

no distinction of great and small sins, but "Your Father will forgive

your sins, if ye forgive men theirs." Consequently they conclude

that, though a man has led an abandoned life up to the last day of

it, yet whatsoever his sins have been, they are all remitted by

virtue of this daily prayer, if only he has been mindful to attend to

this one thing, that when they who have done him any injury ask his

pardon, he forgive them from his heart.

When, by God's help, I have replied to all these errors, I shall

conclude this (twenty-first) book.

23. \_Against those who are of opinion that the punishment neither

of the devil nor of wicked men shall be eternal.\_

First of all, it behoves us to inquire and to recognise why the

Church has not been able to tolerate the idea that promises cleansing

or indulgence to the devil even after the most severe and protracted

punishment. For so many holy men, imbued with the spirit of the Old

and New Testament, did not grudge to angels of any rank or character

that they should enjoy the blessedness of the heavenly kingdom

after being cleansed by suffering, but rather they perceived that

they could not invalidate nor evacuate the divine sentence which

the Lord predicted that He would pronounce in the judgment, saying,

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the

devil and his angels."[900] For here it is evident that the devil

and his angels shall burn in everlasting fire. And there is also

that declaration in the Apocalypse, "The devil their deceiver was

cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also are the beast

and the false prophet. And they shall be tormented day and night

for ever."[901] In the former passage "everlasting" is used, in the

latter "for ever;" and by these words Scripture is wont to mean

nothing else than endless duration. And therefore no other reason,

no reason more obvious and just, can be found for holding it as the

fixed and immovable belief of the truest piety, that the devil and

his angels shall never return to the justice and life of the saints,

than that Scripture, which deceives no man, says that God spared them

not, and that they were condemned beforehand by Him, and cast into

prisons of darkness in hell,[902] being reserved to the judgment of

the last day, when eternal fire shall receive them, in which they

shall be tormented world without end. And if this be so, how can it

be believed that all men, or even some, shall be withdrawn from the

endurance of punishment after some time has been spent in it? how

can this be believed without enervating our faith in the eternal

punishment of the devils? For if all or some of those to whom it

shall be said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,

prepared for the devil and his angels,"[903] are not to be always in

that fire, then what reason is there for believing that the devil

and his angels shall always be there? Or is perhaps the sentence of

God, which is to be pronounced on wicked men and angels alike, to

be true in the case of the angels, false in that of men? Plainly

it will be so if the conjectures of men are to weigh more than the

word of God. But because this is absurd, they who desire to be rid

of eternal punishment ought to abstain from arguing against God, and

rather, while yet there is opportunity, obey the divine commands.

Then what a fond fancy is it to suppose that eternal punishment

means long-continued punishment, while eternal life means life

without end, since Christ in the very same passage spoke of both in

similar terms in one and the same sentence, "These shall go away

into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal!"[904]

If both destinies are "eternal," then we must either understand both

as long-continued but at last terminating, or both as endless. For

they are correlative,--on the one hand, punishment eternal, on the

other hand, life eternal. And to say in one and the same sense, life

eternal shall be endless, punishment eternal shall come to an end, is

the height of absurdity. Wherefore, as the eternal life of the saints

shall be endless, so too the eternal punishment of those who are

doomed to it shall have no end.

24. \_Against those who fancy that in the judgment of God all the

accused will be spared in virtue of the prayers of the saints.\_

And this reasoning is equally conclusive against those who, in their

own interest, but under the guise of a greater tenderness of spirit,

attempt to invalidate the words of God, and who assert that these

words are true, not because men shall suffer those things which are

threatened by God, but because they deserve to suffer them. For God,

they say, will yield them to the prayers of His saints, who will then

the more earnestly pray for their enemies, as they shall be more

perfect in holiness, and whose prayers will be the more efficacious

and the more worthy of God's ear, because now purged from all sin

whatsoever. Why, then, if in that perfected holiness their prayers be

so pure and all-availing, will they not use them in behalf of the

angels for whom eternal fire is prepared, that God may mitigate His

sentence and alter it, and extricate them from that fire? Or will

there, perhaps, be some one hardy enough to affirm that even the holy

angels will make common cause with holy men (then become the equals of

God's angels), and will intercede for the guilty, both men and angels,

that mercy may spare them the punishment which truth has pronounced

them to deserve? But this has been asserted by no one sound in the

faith, nor will be. Otherwise there is no reason why the Church should

not even now pray for the devil and his angels, since God her Master

has ordered her to pray for her enemies. The reason, then, which

prevents the Church from now praying for the wicked angels, whom she

knows to be her enemies, is the identical reason which shall prevent

her, however perfected in holiness, from praying at the last judgment

for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire. At present she

prays for her enemies among men, because they have yet opportunity for

fruitful repentance. For what does she especially beg for them but that

"God would grant them repentance," as the apostle says, "that they

may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, by whom they

are held captive according to his will?"[905] But if the Church were

certified who those are, who, though they are still abiding in this

life, are yet predestinated to go with the devil into eternal fire,

then for them she could no more pray than for him. But since she has

this certainty regarding no man, she prays for all her enemies who yet

live in this world; and yet she is not heard in behalf of all. But she

is heard in the case of those only who, though they oppose the Church,

are yet predestinated to become her sons through her intercession. But

if any retain an impenitent heart until death, and are not converted

from enemies into sons, does the Church continue to pray for them,

for the spirits, \_i.e.\_, of such persons deceased? And why does she

cease to pray for them, unless because the man who was not translated

into Christ's kingdom while he was in the body, is now judged to be of

Satan's following?

It is then, I say, the same reason which prevents the Church at any

time from praying for the wicked angels, which prevents her from

praying hereafter for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire;

and this also is the reason why, though she prays even for the wicked

so long as they live, she yet does not even in this world pray for the

unbelieving and godless who are dead. For some of the dead, indeed, the

prayer of the Church or of pious individuals is heard; but it is for

those who, having been regenerated in Christ, did not spend their life

so wickedly that they can be judged unworthy of such compassion, nor so

well that they can be considered to have no need of it. As also, after

the resurrection, there will be some of the dead to whom, after they

have endured the pains proper to the spirits of the dead, mercy shall

be accorded, and acquittal from the punishment of eternal fire. For

were there not some whose sins, though not remitted in this life, shall

be remitted in that which is to come, it could not be truly said, "They

shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in that which is

to come."[906] But when the Judge of quick and dead has said, "Come,

ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the

foundation of the world," and to those on the other side, "Depart from

me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil

and his angels," and "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but

the righteous into eternal life,"[907] it were excessively presumptuous

to say that the punishment of any of those whom God has said shall go

away into eternal punishment shall not be eternal, and so bring either

despair or doubt upon the corresponding promise of life eternal.

Let no man then so understand the words of the Psalmist, "Shall God

forget to be gracious? shall He shut up in His anger His tender

mercies?"[908] as if the sentence of God were true of good men, false

of bad men, or true of good men and wicked angels, but false of bad

men. For the Psalmist's words refer to the vessels of mercy and the

children of the promise, of whom the prophet himself was one; for

when he had said, "Shall God forget to be gracious? shall He shut up

in His anger His tender mercies?" and then immediately subjoins, "And

I said, Now I begin: this is the change wrought by the right hand

of the Most High,"[909] he manifestly explained what he meant by the

words, "Shall He shut up in His anger His tender mercies?" For God's

anger is this mortal life, in which man is made like to vanity, and

his days pass as a shadow.[910] Yet in this anger God does not forget

to be gracious, causing His sun to shine and His rain to descend

on the just and the unjust;[911] and thus He does not in His anger

cut short His tender mercies, and especially in what the Psalmist

speaks of in the words, "Now I begin: this change is from the right

hand of the Most High;" for He changes for the better the vessels of

mercy, even while they are still in this most wretched life, which

is God's anger, and even while His anger is manifesting itself in

this miserable corruption; for "in His anger He does not shut up His

tender mercies." And since the truth of this divine canticle is quite

satisfied by this application of it, there is no need to give it a

reference to that place in which those who do not belong to the city

of God are punished in eternal fire. But if any persist in extending

its application to the torments of the wicked, let them at least

understand it so that the anger of God, which has threatened the

wicked with eternal punishment, shall abide, but shall be mixed with

mercy to the extent of alleviating the torments which might justly

be inflicted; so that the wicked shall neither wholly escape, nor

only for a time endure these threatened pains, but that they shall be

less severe and more endurable than they deserve. Thus the anger of

God shall continue, and at the same time He will not in this anger

shut up His tender mercies. But even this hypothesis I am not to be

supposed to affirm because I do not positively oppose it.[912]

As for those who find an empty threat rather than a truth in such

passages as these: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting

fire;" and "These shall go away into eternal punishment;"[913] and

"They shall be tormented for ever and ever;"[914] and "Their worm

shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched,"[915]--such

persons, I say, are most emphatically and abundantly refuted, not by

me so much as by the divine Scripture itself. For the men of Nineveh

repented in this life, and therefore their repentance was fruitful,

inasmuch as they sowed in that field which the Lord meant to be sown

in tears that it might afterwards be reaped in joy. And yet who

will deny that God's prediction was fulfilled in their case, if at

least he observes that God destroys sinners not only in anger but

also in compassion? For sinners are destroyed in two ways,--either,

like the Sodomites, the men themselves are punished for their sins,

or, like the Ninevites, the men's sins are destroyed by repentance.

God's prediction, therefore, was fulfilled,--the wicked Nineveh was

overthrown, and a good Nineveh built up. For its walls and houses

remained standing; the city was overthrown in its depraved manners.

And thus, though the prophet was provoked that the destruction which

the inhabitants dreaded, because of his prediction, did not take

place, yet that which God's foreknowledge had predicted did take

place, for He who foretold the destruction knew how it should be

fulfilled in a less calamitous sense.

But that these perversely compassionate persons may see what is the

purport of these words, "How great is the abundance of Thy sweetness,

Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee,"[916] let them

read what follows: "And Thou hast perfected it for them that hope

in Thee." For what means, "Thou hast hidden it for them that fear

Thee," "Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee," unless

this, that to those who through fear of punishment seek to establish

their own righteousness by the law, the righteousness of God is not

sweet, because they are ignorant of it? They have not tasted it. For

they hope in themselves, not in Him; and therefore God's abundant

sweetness is hidden from them. They fear God, indeed, but it is with

that servile fear "which is not in love; for perfect love casteth

out fear."[917] Therefore to them that hope in Him He perfecteth His

sweetness, inspiring them with His own love, so that with a holy fear,

which love does not cast out, but which endureth for ever, they may,

when they glory, glory in the Lord. For the righteousness of God is

Christ, "who is of God made unto us," as the apostle says, "wisdom,

and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: as it is

written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."[918] This

righteousness of God, which is the gift of grace without merits, is

not known by those who go about to establish their own righteousness,

and are therefore not subject to the righteousness of God, which is

Christ.[919] But it is in this righteousness that we find the great

abundance of God's sweetness, of which the psalm says, "Taste and see

how sweet the Lord is."[920] And this we rather taste than partake of

to satiety in this our pilgrimage. We hunger and thirst for it now,

that hereafter we may be satisfied with it when we see Him as He is,

and that is fulfilled which is written, "I shall be satisfied when

Thy glory shall be manifested."[921] It is thus that Christ perfects

the great abundance of His sweetness to them that hope in Him. But if

God conceals His sweetness from them that fear Him in the sense that

these our objectors fancy, so that men's ignorance of His purpose of

mercy towards the wicked may lead them to fear Him and live better,

and so that there may be prayer made for those who are not living as

they ought, how then does He perfect His sweetness to them that hope in

Him, since, if their dreams be true, it is this very sweetness which

will prevent Him from punishing those who do not hope in Him? Let us

then seek that sweetness of His, which He perfects to them that hope in

Him, not that which He is supposed to perfect to those who despise and

blaspheme Him; for in vain, after this life, does a man seek for what

he has neglected to provide while in this life.

Then, as to that saying of the apostle, "For God hath concluded all in

unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all,"[922] it does not mean that

He will condemn no one; but the foregoing context shows what is meant.

The apostle composed the epistle for the Gentiles who were already

believers; and when he was speaking to them of the Jews who were yet

to believe, he says, "For as ye in times past believed not God, yet

have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also

now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy."

Then he added the words in question with which these persons beguile

themselves: "For God concluded all in unbelief, that He might have

mercy upon all." All whom, if not all those of whom he was speaking,

just as if he had said, "Both you and them?" God then concluded all

those in unbelief, both Jews and Gentiles, whom He foreknew and

predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that

they might be confounded by the bitterness of unbelief, and might

repent and believingly turn to the sweetness of God's mercy, and might

take up that exclamation of the psalm, "How great is the abundance

of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear

Thee, but hast perfected to them that hope," not in themselves, but

"in Thee." He has mercy, then, on all the vessels of mercy. And what

means "all?" Both those of the Gentiles and those of the Jews whom He

predestinated, called, justified, glorified: none of these will be

condemned by Him; but we cannot say none of all men whatever.

25. \_Whether those who received heretical baptism, and have

afterwards fallen away to wickedness of life; or those who have

received catholic baptism, but have afterwards passed over to

heresy and schism; or those who have remained in the catholic

Church in which they were baptized, but have continued to live

immorally,--may hope through the virtue of the sacraments for

the remission of eternal punishment.\_

But let us now reply to those who promise deliverance from eternal

fire, not to the devil and his angels (as neither do they of whom

we have been speaking), nor even to all men whatever, but only to

those who have been washed by the baptism of Christ, and have become

partakers of His body and blood, no matter how they have lived,

no matter what heresy or impiety they have fallen into. But they

are contradicted by the apostle, where he says, "Now the works of

the flesh are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness,

lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variances, emulations,

wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and the

like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time

past, for they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom

of God."[923] Certainly this sentence of the apostle is false, if

such persons shall be delivered after any lapse of time, and shall

then inherit the kingdom of God. But as it is not false, they shall

certainly never inherit the kingdom of God. And if they shall never

enter that kingdom, then they shall always be retained in eternal

punishment; for there is no middle place where he may live unpunished

who has not been admitted into that kingdom.

And therefore we may reasonably inquire how we are to understand

these words of the Lord Jesus: "This is the bread which cometh down

from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living

bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread,

he shall live for ever."[924] And those, indeed, whom we are now

answering, are refuted in their interpretation of this passage by

those whom we are shortly to answer, and who do not promise this

deliverance to all who have received the sacraments of baptism and

the Lord's body, but only to the catholics, however wickedly they

live; for these, say they, have eaten the Lord's body not only

sacramentally, but really, being constituted members of His body, of

which the apostle says, "We being many are one bread, one body."[925]

He then who is in the unity of Christ's body (that is to say, in the

Christian membership), of which body the faithful have been wont to

receive the sacrament at the altar, that man is truly said to eat the

body and drink the blood of Christ. And consequently heretics and

schismatics being separate from the unity of this body, are able to

receive the same sacrament, but with no profit to themselves,--nay,

rather to their own hurt, so that they are rather more severely

judged than liberated after some time. For they are not in that bond

of peace which is symbolized by that sacrament.

But again, even those who sufficiently understand that he who is

not in the body of Christ cannot be said to eat the body of Christ,

are in error when they promise liberation from the fire of eternal

punishment to persons who fall away from the unity of that body

into heresy, or even into heathenish superstition. For, in the

first place, they ought to consider how intolerable it is, and

how discordant with sound doctrine, to suppose that many, indeed,

or almost all, who have forsaken the Church catholic, and have

originated impious heresies and become heresiarchs, should enjoy a

destiny superior to those who never were catholics, but have fallen

into the snares of these others; that is to say, if the fact of their

catholic baptism and original reception of the sacrament of the body

of Christ in the true body of Christ is sufficient to deliver these

heresiarchs from eternal punishment. For certainly he who deserts

the faith, and from a deserter becomes an assailant, is worse than

he who has not deserted the faith he never held. And, in the second

place, they are contradicted by the apostle, who, after enumerating

the works of the flesh, says with reference to heresies, "They who do

such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

And therefore neither ought such persons as lead an abandoned and

damnable life to be confident of salvation, though they persevere

to the end in the communion of the Church catholic, and comfort

themselves with the words, "He that endureth to the end shall

be saved." By the iniquity of their life they abandon that very

righteousness of life which Christ is to them, whether it be by

fornication, or by perpetrating in their body the other uncleannesses

which the apostle would not so much as mention, or by a dissolute

luxury, or by doing any one of those things of which he says,

"They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Consequently, they who do such things shall not exist anywhere but

in eternal punishment, since they cannot be in the kingdom of God.

For, while they continue in such things to the very end of life, they

cannot be said to abide in Christ to the end; for to abide in Him is

to abide in the faith of Christ. And this faith, according to the

apostle's definition of it, "worketh by love."[926] And "love," as

he elsewhere says, "worketh no evil."[927] Neither can these persons

be said to eat the body of Christ, for they cannot even be reckoned

among His members. For, not to mention other reasons, they cannot be

at once the members of Christ and the members of a harlot. In fine,

He Himself, when He says, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh

my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him,"[928] shows what it is in

reality, and not sacramentally, to eat His body and drink His blood;

for this is to dwell in Christ, that He also may dwell in us. So

that it is as if He said, He that dwelleth not in me, and in whom

I do not dwell, let him not say or think that he eateth my body or

drinketh my blood. Accordingly, they who are not Christ's members do

not dwell in Him. And they who make themselves members of a harlot,

are not members of Christ unless they have penitently abandoned that

evil, and have returned to this good to be reconciled to it.

26. \_What it is to have Christ for a foundation, and who they are

to whom salvation as by fire is promised.\_

But, say they, the catholic Christians have Christ for a foundation,

and they have not fallen away from union with Him, no matter how

depraved a life they have built on this foundation, as wood, hay,

stubble; and accordingly the well-directed faith by which Christ is

their foundation will suffice to deliver them some time from the

continuance of that fire, though it be with loss, since those things

they have built on it shall be burned. Let the Apostle James summarily

reply to them: "If any man say he has faith, and have not works, can

faith save him?"[929] And who then is it, they ask, of whom the Apostle

Paul says, "But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire?"[930] Let

us join them in their inquiry; and one thing is very certain, that it

is not he of whom James speaks, else we should make the two apostles

contradict one another, if the one says, "Though a man's works be evil,

his faith will save him as by fire," while the other says, "If he have

not good works, can his faith save him?"

We shall then ascertain who it is who can be saved by fire, if we

first discover what it is to have Christ for a foundation. And this

we may very readily learn from the image itself. In a building the

foundation is first. Whoever, then, has Christ in his heart, so that

no earthly or temporal things--not even those that are legitimate

and allowed--are preferred to Him, has Christ as a foundation. But

if these things be preferred, then even though a man seem to have

faith in Christ, yet Christ is not the foundation to that man; and

much more if he, in contempt of wholesome precepts, seek forbidden

gratifications, is he clearly convicted of putting Christ not first

but last, since he has despised Him as his ruler, and has preferred

to fulfil his own wicked lusts, in contempt of Christ's commands and

allowances. Accordingly, if any Christian man loves a harlot, and,

attaching himself to her, becomes one body, he has not now Christ for

a foundation. But if any one loves his own wife, and loves her as

Christ would have him love her, who can doubt that he has Christ for

a foundation? But if he loves her in the world's fashion, carnally,

as the disease of lust prompts him, and as the Gentiles love who know

not God, even this the apostle, or rather Christ by the apostle,

allows as a venial fault. And therefore even such a man may have

Christ for a foundation. For so long as he does not prefer such an

affection or pleasure to Christ, Christ is his foundation, though

on it he builds wood, hay, stubble; and therefore he shall be saved

as by fire. For the fire of affliction shall burn such luxurious

pleasures and earthly loves, though they be not damnable, because

enjoyed in lawful wedlock. And of this fire the fuel is bereavement,

and all those calamities which consume these joys. Consequently the

superstructure will be loss to him who has built it, for he shall

not retain it, but shall be agonized by the loss of those things

in the enjoyment of which he found pleasure. But by this fire he

shall be saved through virtue of the foundation, because even if a

persecutor demanded whether he would retain Christ or these things,

he would prefer Christ. Would you hear, in the apostle's own words,

who he is who builds on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones?

"He that is unmarried," he says, "careth for the things that belong

to the Lord, how he may please the Lord."[931] Would you hear who

he is that buildeth wood, hay, stubble? "But he that is married

careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his

wife."[932] "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day

shall declare it,"--the day, no doubt, of tribulation--"because,"

says he, "it shall be revealed by fire."[933] He calls tribulation

fire, just as it is elsewhere said, "The furnace proves the vessels

of the potter, and the trial of affliction righteous men."[934] And

"The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any

man's work abide"--for a man's care for the things of the Lord, how

he may please the Lord, abides--"which he hath built thereupon,

he shall receive a reward,"--that is, he shall reap the fruit of

his care. "But if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer

loss,"--for what he loved he shall not retain:--"but he himself shall

be saved,"--for no tribulation shall have moved him from that stable

foundation,--"yet so as by fire;"[935] for that which he possessed

with the sweetness of love he does not lose without the sharp sting

of pain. Here, then, as seems to me, we have a fire which destroys

neither, but enriches the one, brings loss to the other, proves both.

But if this passage [of Corinthians] is to interpret that fire of

which the Lord shall say to those on His left hand, "Depart from me,

ye cursed, into everlasting fire,"[936] so that among these we are

to believe there are those who build on the foundation wood, hay,

stubble, and that they, through virtue of the good foundation, shall

after a time be liberated from the fire that is the award of their

evil deserts, what then shall we think of those on the right hand,

to whom it shall be said, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit

the kingdom prepared for you,"[937] unless that they are those who

have built on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones? But if

the fire of which our Lord speaks is the same as that of which the

apostle says, "Yet so as by fire," then both--that is to say, both

those on the right as well as those on the left--are to be cast into

it. For that fire is to try both, since it is said, "For the day of

the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and

the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."[938] If,

therefore, the fire shall try both, in order that if any man's work

abide--\_i.e.\_ if the superstructure be not consumed by the fire--he

may receive a reward, and that if his work is burned he may suffer

loss, certainly that fire is not the eternal fire itself. For into

this latter fire only those on the left hand shall be cast, and that

with final and everlasting doom; but that former fire proves those

on the right hand. But some of them it so proves that it does not

burn and consume the structure which is found to have been built

by them on Christ as the foundation; while others of them it proves

in another fashion, so as to burn what they have built up, and thus

cause them to suffer loss, while they themselves are saved because

they have retained Christ, who was laid as their sure foundation,

and have loved Him above all. But if they are saved, then certainly

they shall stand at the right hand, and shall with the rest hear

the sentence, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom

prepared for you;" and not at the left hand, where those shall be

who shall not be saved, and shall therefore hear the doom, "Depart

from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." For from that fire no

man shall be saved, because they all shall go away into eternal

punishment, where their worms shall not die, nor their fire be

quenched, in which they shall be tormented day and night for ever.

But if it be said that in the interval of time between the death of

this body and that last day of judgment and retribution which shall

follow the resurrection, the bodies of the dead shall be exposed

to a fire of such a nature that it shall not affect those who have

not in this life indulged in such pleasures and pursuits as shall

be consumed like wood, hay, stubble, but shall affect those others

who have carried with them structures of that kind; if it be said

that such worldliness, being venial, shall be consumed in the fire

of tribulation either here only, or here and hereafter both, or here

that it may not be hereafter,--this I do not contradict, because

possibly it is true. For perhaps even the death of the body is

itself a part of this tribulation, for it results from the first

transgression, so that the time which follows death takes its colour

in each case from the nature of the man's building. The persecutions,

too, which have crowned the martyrs, and which Christians of all

kinds suffer, try both buildings like a fire, consuming some, along

with the builders themselves, if Christ is not found in them as their

foundation, while others they consume without the builders, because

Christ is found in them, and they are saved, though with loss; and

other buildings still they do not consume, because such materials as

abide for ever are found in them. In the end of the world there shall

be in the time of Antichrist tribulation such as has never before

been. How many edifices there shall then be, of gold or of hay, built

on the best foundation, Christ Jesus, which that fire shall prove,

bringing joy to some, loss to others, but without destroying either

sort, because of this stable foundation! But whosoever prefers, I do

not say his wife, with whom he lives for carnal pleasure, but any of

those relatives who afford no delight of such a kind, and whom it is

right to love,--whosoever prefers these to Christ, and loves them

after a human and carnal fashion, has not Christ as a foundation,

and will therefore not be saved by fire, nor indeed at all; for he

shall not possibly dwell with the Saviour, who says very explicitly

concerning this very matter, "He that loveth father or mother more

than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more

than me is not worthy of me."[939] But he who loves his relations

carnally, and yet so that he does not prefer them to Christ, but

would rather want them than Christ if he were put to the proof,

shall be saved by fire, because it is necessary that by the loss of

these relations he suffer pain in proportion to his love. And he who

loves father, mother, sons, daughters, according to Christ, so that

he aids them in obtaining His kingdom and cleaving to Him, or loves

them because they are members of Christ, God forbid that this love

should be consumed as wood, hay, stubble, and not rather be reckoned

a structure of gold, silver, precious stones. For how can a man love

those more than Christ whom he loves only for Christ's sake?

27. \_Against the belief of those who think that the sins which

have been accompanied with almsgiving will do them no harm.\_

It remains to reply to those who maintain that those only shall

burn in eternal fire who neglect alms-deeds proportioned to their

sins, resting this opinion on the words of the Apostle James, "He

shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy."[940]

Therefore, they say, he that hath showed mercy, though he has

not reformed his dissolute conduct, but has lived wickedly and

iniquitously even while abounding in alms, shall have a merciful

judgment, so that he shall either be not condemned at all, or shall

be delivered from final judgment after a time. And for the same

reason they suppose that Christ will discriminate between those

on the right hand and those on the left, and will send the one

party into His kingdom, the other into eternal punishment, on the

sole ground of their attention to or neglect of works of charity.

Moreover, they endeavour to use the prayer which the Lord Himself

taught as a proof and bulwark of their opinion, that daily sins which

are never abandoned can be expiated through alms-deeds, no matter

how offensive or of what sort they be. For, say they, as there is no

day on which Christians ought not to use this prayer, so there is no

sin of any kind which, though committed every day, is not remitted

when we say, "Forgive us our debts," if we take care to fulfil what

follows, "as we forgive our debtors."[941] For, they go on to say,

the Lord does not say, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your

heavenly Father will forgive you your little daily sins," but "will

forgive you your sins." Therefore, be they of any kind or magnitude

whatever, be they perpetrated daily and never abandoned or subdued in

this life, they can be pardoned, they presume, through alms-deeds.

But they are right to inculcate the giving of alms proportioned

to past sins; for if they said that any kind of alms could obtain

the divine pardon of great sins committed daily and with habitual

enormity, if they said that such sins could thus be daily remitted,

they would see that their doctrine was absurd and ridiculous. For

they would thus be driven to acknowledge that it were possible for a

very wealthy man to buy absolution from murders, adulteries, and all

manner of wickedness, by paying a daily alms of ten paltry coins.

And if it be most absurd and insane to make such an acknowledgment,

and if we still ask what are those fitting alms of which even the

forerunner of Christ said, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for

repentance,"[942] undoubtedly it will be found that they are not such

as are done by men who undermine their life by daily enormities even

to the very end. For they suppose that by giving to the poor a small

fraction of the wealth they acquire by extortion and spoliation they

can propitiate Christ, so that they may with impunity commit the most

damnable sins, in the persuasion that they have bought from Him a

licence to transgress, or rather do buy a daily indulgence. And if

they for one crime have distributed all their goods to Christ's needy

members, that could profit them nothing unless they desisted from

all similar actions, and attained charity which worketh no evil. He

therefore who does alms-deeds proportioned to his sins must first

begin with himself. For it is not reasonable that a man who exercises

charity towards his neighbour should not do so towards himself,

since he hears the Lord saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

thyself,"[943] and again, "Have compassion on thy soul, and please

God."[944] He then who has not compassion on his own soul that he may

please God, how can he be said to do alms-deeds proportioned to his

sins? To the same purpose is that written, "He who is bad to himself,

to whom can he be good?"[945] We ought therefore to do alms that we

may be heard when we pray that our past sins may be forgiven, not

that while we continue in them we may think to provide ourselves with

a licence for wickedness by alms-deeds.

The reason, therefore, of our predicting that He will impute to those

on His right hand the alms-deeds they have done, and charge those

on His left with omitting the same, is that He may thus show the

efficacy of charity for the deletion of past sins, not for impunity

in their perpetual commission. And such persons, indeed, as decline

to abandon their evil habits of life for a better course cannot be

said to do charitable deeds. For this is the purport of the saying,

"Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it

not to me."[946] He shows them that they do not perform charitable

actions even when they think they are doing so. For if they gave

bread to a hungering Christian because he is a Christian, assuredly

they would not deny to themselves the bread of righteousness, that

is, Christ Himself; for God considers not the person to whom the

gift is made, but the spirit in which it is made. He therefore who

loves Christ in a Christian extends alms to him in the same spirit

in which he draws near to Christ, not in that spirit which would

abandon Christ if it could do so with impunity. For in proportion as

a man loves what Christ disapproves does he himself abandon Christ.

For what does it profit a man that he is baptized, if he is not

justified? Did not He who said, "Except a man be born of water and

of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God,"[947] say

also, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of

the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of

heaven?"[948] Why do many through fear of the first saying run to

baptism, while few through fear of the second seek to be justified?

As therefore it is not to his brother a man says, "Thou fool," if

when he says it he is indignant not at the brotherhood, but at

the sin of the offender,--for otherwise he were guilty of hell

fire,--so he who extends charity to a Christian does not extend it

to a Christian if he does not love Christ in him. Now he does not

love Christ who refuses to be justified in Him. Or, again, if a man

has been guilty of this sin of calling his brother Fool, unjustly

reviling him without any desire to remove his sin, his alms-deeds

go a small way towards expiating this fault, unless he adds to this

the remedy of reconciliation which the same passage enjoins. For it

is there said, "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and

there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave

there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled

to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."[949] Just so it is

a small matter to do alms-deeds, no matter how great they be, for any

sin, so long as the offender continues in the practice of sin.

Then as to the daily prayer which the Lord Himself taught, and which

is therefore called the Lord's prayer, it obliterates indeed the

sins of the day, when day by day we say, "Forgive us our debts," and

when we not only say but act out that which follows, "as we forgive

our debtors;"[950] but we utter this petition because sins have been

committed, and not that they may be. For by it our Saviour designed to

teach us that, however righteously we live in this life of infirmity

and darkness, we still commit sins for the remission of which we

ought to pray, while we must pardon those who sin against us that we

ourselves also may be pardoned. The Lord then did not utter the words,

"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Father will also forgive

you your trespasses,"[951] in order that we might contract from this

petition such confidence as should enable us to sin securely from day

to day, either putting ourselves above the fear of human laws, or

craftily deceiving men concerning our conduct, but in order that we

might thus learn not to suppose that we are without sins, even though

we should be free from crimes; as also God admonished the priests of

the old law to this same effect regarding their sacrifices, which He

commanded them to offer first for their own sins, and then for the sins

of the people. For even the very words of so great a Master and Lord

are to be intently considered. For He does not say, If ye forgive men

their sins, your Father will also forgive you your sins, no matter of

what sort they be, but He says, your sins; for it was a daily prayer

He was teaching, and it was certainly to disciples already justified

He was speaking. What, then, does He mean by "your sins," but those

sins from which not even you who are justified and sanctified can

be free? While, then, those who seek occasion from this petition to

indulge in habitual sin maintain that the Lord meant to include great

sins, because He did not say, He will forgive you your small sins, but

"your sins," we, on the other hand, taking into account the character

of the persons He was addressing, cannot see our way to interpret the

expression "your sins" of anything but small sins, because such persons

are no longer guilty of great sins. Nevertheless not even great sins

themselves--sins from which we must flee with a total reformation of

life--are forgiven to those who pray, unless they observe the appended

precept, "as ye also forgive your debtors." For if the very small sins

which attach even to the life of the righteous be not remitted without

that condition, how much further from obtaining indulgence shall those

be who are involved in many great crimes, if, while they cease from

perpetrating such enormities, they still inexorably refuse to remit

any debt incurred to themselves, since the Lord says, "But if ye

forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your

trespasses?"[952] For this is the purport of the saying of the Apostle

James also, "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no

mercy."[953] For we should remember that servant whose debt of ten

thousand talents his lord cancelled, but afterwards ordered him to pay

up, because the servant himself had no pity for his fellow-servant

who owed him an hundred pence.[954] The words which the Apostle James

subjoins, "And mercy rejoiceth against judgment,"[955] find their

application among those who are the children of the promise and vessels

of mercy. For even those righteous men, who have lived with such

holiness that they receive into the eternal habitations others also

who have won their friendship with the mammon of unrighteousness,[956]

became such only through the merciful deliverance of Him who justifies

the ungodly, imputing to him a reward according to grace, not according

to debt. For among this number is the apostle, who says, "I obtained

mercy to be faithful."[957]

But it must be admitted, that those who are thus received into the

eternal habitations are not of such a character that their own life

would suffice to rescue them without the aid of the saints, and

consequently in their case especially does mercy rejoice against

judgment. And yet we are not on this account to suppose that every

abandoned profligate, who has made no amendment of his life, is to

be received into the eternal habitations if only he has assisted the

saints with the mammon of unrighteousness,--that is to say, with

money or wealth which has been unjustly acquired, or, if rightfully

acquired, is yet not the true riches, but only what iniquity counts

riches, because it knows not the true riches in which those persons

abound, who even receive others also into eternal habitations. There

is then a certain kind of life, which is neither, on the one hand,

so bad that those who adopt it are not helped towards the kingdom

of heaven by any bountiful almsgiving by which they may relieve the

wants of the saints, and make friends who could receive them into

eternal habitations, nor, on the other hand, so good that it of

itself suffices to win for them that great blessedness, if they do

not obtain mercy through the merits of those whom they have made

their friends. And I frequently wonder that even Virgil should give

expression to this sentence of the Lord, in which He says, "Make to

yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may

receive you into everlasting habitations;"[958] and this very similar

saying, "He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet,

shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous

man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's

reward."[959] For when that poet described the Elysian fields, in

which they suppose that the souls of the blessed dwell, he placed

there not only those who had been able by their own merit to reach

that abode, but added,--

"And they who grateful memory won

By services to others done;"[960]

that is, they who had served others, and thereby merited to be

remembered by them. Just as if they used the expression so common

in Christian lips, where some humble person commends himself to one

of the saints, and says, Remember me, and secures that he do so

by deserving well at his hand. But what that kind of life we have

been speaking of is, and what those sins are which prevent a man

from winning the kingdom of God by himself, but yet permit him to

avail himself of the merits of the saints, it is very difficult to

ascertain, very perilous to define. For my own part, in spite of all

investigation, I have been up to the present hour unable to discover

this. And possibly it is hidden from us, lest we should become

careless in avoiding such sins, and so cease to make progress. For

if it were known what these sins are, which, though they continue,

and be not abandoned for a higher life, do yet not prevent us from

seeking and hoping for the intercession of the saints, human sloth

would presumptuously wrap itself in these sins, and would take no

steps to be disentangled from such wrappings by the deft energy of

any virtue, but would only desire to be rescued by the merits of

other people, whose friendship had been won by a bountiful use of the

mammon of unrighteousness. But now that we are left in ignorance of

the precise nature of that iniquity which is venial, even though it

be persevered in, certainly we are both more vigilant in our prayers

and efforts for progress, and more careful to secure with the mammon

of unrighteousness friends for ourselves among the saints.

But this deliverance, which is effected by one's own prayers, or the

intercession of holy men, secures that a man be not cast into eternal

fire, but not that, when once he has been cast into it, he should after

a time be rescued from it. For even those who fancy that what is said

of the good ground bringing forth abundant fruit, some thirty, some

sixty, some an hundred fold, is to be referred to the saints, so that

in proportion to their merits some of them shall deliver thirty men,

some sixty, some an hundred,--even those who maintain this are yet

commonly inclined to suppose that this deliverance will take place

at, and not after the day of judgment. Under this impression, some

one who observed the unseemly folly with which men promise themselves

impunity on the ground that all will be included in this method of

deliverance, is reported to have very happily remarked, that we should

rather endeavour to live so well that we shall be all found among the

number of those who are to intercede for the liberation of others, lest

these should be so few in number, that, after they have delivered, one

thirty, another sixty, another a hundred, there should still remain

many who could not be delivered from punishment by their intercessions,

and among them every one who has vainly and rashly promised himself

the fruit of another's labour. But enough has been said in reply to

those who acknowledge the authority of the same sacred Scriptures as

ourselves, but who, by a mistaken interpretation of them, conceive

of the future rather as they themselves wish, than as the Scriptures

teach. And having given this reply, I now, according to promise, close

this book.

FOOTNOTES:

[852] John v. 29.

[853] Matt. xiii. 41-43.

[854] Matt. xxv. 46.

[855] Luke xvi. 24.

[856] \_Æneid\_, vi. 733.

[857] Ch. 3, 5, 6.

[858] Aristotle does not affirm it as a fact observed by himself,

but as a popular tradition (\_Hist. anim.\_ v. 19). Pliny is equally

cautious (\_Hist. nat.\_ xxix. 23). Dioscorides declared the thing

impossible (ii. 68).--SAISSET.

[859] So Lucretius, ii. 1025:

"Sed neque tam facilis res ulla 'st, quin ea primum

Difficilis magis ad credendum constet: itemque

Nil adeo magnum, nec tam mirabile quicquam

Principis, quod non minuant mirarier omnes

Paulatim."

[860] Alluded to by Moore in his \_Melodies\_:

"The fount that played

In times of old through Ammon's shade,

Though icy cold by day it ran,

Yet still, like souls of mirth, began

To burn when night was near."

[861] \_Æneid\_, iv. 487-491.

[862] See the same collocation of words in Cic. \_Nat. deor.\_ ii. 3.

[863] The etymologies given here by Augustine are, "monstra," a

monstrando; "ostenta," ab ostendendo; "portenta," a portendendo,

\_i.e.\_ præostendendo; "prodigia," quod porro dicant, \_i.e.\_ futura

prædicant.

[864] Isa. lxvi. 24.

[865] Mark ix. 43-48.

[866] 2 Cor. xi. 29.

[867] Isa. li. 8.

[868] Ecclus. vii. 17.

[869] Rom. viii. 13.

[870] 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.

[871] Matt. xxv. 41.

[872] Luke xvi. 24.

[873] Rev. xx. 10.

[874] "Talio," \_i.e.\_ the rendering of like for like, the punishment

being exactly similar to the injury sustained.

[875] Ex. xxi. 24.

[876] Luke vi. 38.

[877] Remanerent. But Augustine constantly uses the imp. for the

plup. subjunctive.

[878] Plato's own theory was that punishment had a twofold purpose,

to reform and to deter. "No one punishes an offender on account

of the past offence, and simply because he has done wrong, but

for the sake of the future, that the offence may not be again

committed, either by the same person or by any one who has seen him

punished."--See the \_Protagoras\_, 324, b, and Grote's \_Plato\_, ii. 41.

[879] \_Æneid\_, vi. 733.

[880] Job vii. 1.

[881] Compare Goldsmith's saying, "We begin life in tears, and every

day tells us why."

[882] Ecclus. xl. 1.

[883] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[884] Rom. viii. 14.

[885] Gal. v. 17.

[886] "Fari."

[887] See Aug. \_Ep.\_ 98, \_ad Bonifacium\_.

[888] On the heresy of Origen, see Epiphanius (\_Epistola ad

Joannem Hierosol.\_); Jerome (\_Epistola\_ 61, \_ad Pammachium\_); and

Augustine (\_De Hæres.\_ 43). Origen's opinion was condemned by

Anastasius (Jerome, \_Apologia adv. Ruffinum\_, and \_Epistola\_ 78, \_ad

Pammachium\_), and after Augustine's death by Vigilius and the Emperor

Justinian, in the Fifth Œcumenical Council (Nicephorus Callistus,

xvii. 27, and the \_Acts of the Council\_, iv. 11).--COQUÆUS.

[889] Ps. lxxvii. 9.

[890] Ps. xxxi. 19.

[891] Rom. xi. 32.

[892] John vi. 50, 51.

[893] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[894] Matt. xxiv. 13.

[895] 1 Cor. iii. 11-15.

[896] Jas. ii. 13.

[897] Matt. xxv. 33.

[898] Matt. vi. 12.

[899] Matt. vi. 14, 15.

[900] Matt. xxv. 41.

[901] Rev. xx. 10.

[902] 2 Pet. ii. 4.

[903] Matt. xxv. 41.

[904] Matt. xxv. 46.

[905] 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.

[906] Matt. xii. 32.

[907] Matt. xxv. 34, 41, 46.

[908] Ps. lxxvii. 9.

[909] Ps. lxxvii. 10.

[910] Ps. cxliv. 4.

[911] Matt. v. 45.

[912] It is the theory which Chrysostom adopts.

[913] Matt. xxv. 41, 46.

[914] Rev. xx. 10.

[915] Isa. lxvi. 24.

[916] Ps. xxxi. 19.

[917] 1 John iv. 18.

[918] 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

[919] Rom. x. 3.

[920] Ps. xxxiv. 8.

[921] Ps. xvii. 15.

[922] Rom. xi. 32.

[923] Gal. v. 19-21.

[924] John vi. 50, 51.

[925] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[926] Gal. v. 6.

[927] Rom. xiii. 10.

[928] John vi. 56.

[929] Jas. ii. 14.

[930] 1 Cor. iii. 15.

[931] 1 Cor. vii. 32.

[932] 1 Cor. vii. 33.

[933] 1 Cor. iii. 13.

[934] Ecclus. xxvii. 5.

[935] 1 Cor. iii. 14, 15.

[936] Matt. xxv. 41.

[937] Matt. xxv. 34.

[938] 1 Cor. iii. 13.

[939] Matt. x. 37.

[940] Jas. ii. 13.

[941] Matt. vi. 12.

[942] Matt. iii. 8.

[943] Matt. xxii. 39.

[944] Ecclus. xxx. 24.

[945] Ecclus. xxi. 1.

[946] Matt. xxv. 45.

[947] John iii. 5.

[948] Matt. v. 20.

[949] Matt. v. 23, 24.

[950] Matt. vi. 12.

[951] Matt. vi. 14.

[952] Matt. vi. 15.

[953] Jas. ii. 13.

[954] Matt. xviii. 23.

[955] Jas. ii. 13.

[956] Luke xvi. 9.

[957] 1 Cor. vii. 25.

[958] Luke xvi. 9.

[959] Matt. x. 41.

[960] \_Æn.\_ vi. 664.

BOOK TWENTY-SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

THIS BOOK TREATS OF THE END OF THE CITY OF GOD, THAT IS TO SAY,

OF THE ETERNAL HAPPINESS OF THE SAINTS; THE FAITH OF THE

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY IS ESTABLISHED AND EXPLAINED; AND THE

WORK CONCLUDES BY SHOWING HOW THE SAINTS, CLOTHED IN IMMORTAL

AND SPIRITUAL BODIES, SHALL BE EMPLOYED.

1. \_Of the creation of angels and men.\_

As we promised in the immediately preceding book, this, the last of

the whole work, shall contain a discussion of the eternal blessedness

of the city of God. This blessedness is named eternal, not because

it shall endure for many ages, though at last it shall come to an

end, but because, according to the words of the gospel, "of His

kingdom there shall be no end."[961] Neither shall it enjoy the mere

appearance of perpetuity which is maintained by the rise of fresh

generations to occupy the place of those that have died out, as in an

evergreen the same freshness seems to continue permanently, and the

same appearance of dense foliage is preserved by the growth of fresh

leaves in the room of those that have withered and fallen; but in

that city all the citizens shall be immortal, men now for the first

time enjoying what the holy angels have never lost. And this shall be

accomplished by God, the most almighty Founder of the city. For He

has promised it, and cannot lie, and has already performed many of

His promises, and has done many unpromised kindnesses to those whom

He now asks to believe that He will do this also.

For it is He who in the beginning created the world full of all

visible and intelligible beings, among which He created nothing

better than those spirits whom He endowed with intelligence, and

made capable of contemplating and enjoying Him, and united in our

society, which we call the holy and heavenly city, and in which the

material of their sustenance and blessedness is God Himself, as it

were their common food and nourishment. It is He who gave to this

intellectual nature free-will of such a kind, that if he wished to

forsake God his blessedness, misery should forthwith result. It is

He who, when He foreknew that certain angels would in their pride

desire to suffice for their own blessedness, and would forsake their

great good, did not deprive them of this power, deeming it to be

more befitting His power and goodness to bring good out of evil than

to prevent the evil from coming into existence. And indeed evil had

never been, had not the mutable nature--mutable, though good, and

created by the most high God and immutable Good, who created all

things good--brought evil upon itself by sin. And this its sin is

itself proof that its nature was originally good. For had it not

been very good, though not equal to its Creator, the desertion of

God as its light could not have been an evil to it. For as blindness

is a vice of the eye, and this very fact indicates that the eye was

created to see the light, and as, consequently, vice itself proves

that the eye is more excellent than the other members, because it

is capable of light (for on no other supposition would it be a vice

of the eye to want light), so the nature which once enjoyed God

teaches, even by its very vice, that it was created the best of

all, since it is now miserable because it does not enjoy God. It is

He who with very just punishment doomed the angels who voluntarily

fell to everlasting misery, and rewarded those who continued in

their attachment to the supreme good with the assurance of endless

stability as the meed of their fidelity. It is He who made also man

himself upright, with the same freedom of will,--an earthly animal,

indeed, but fit for heaven if he remained faithful to his Creator,

but destined to the misery appropriate to such a nature if he forsook

Him. It is He who, when He foreknew that man would in his turn sin

by abandoning God and breaking His law, did not deprive him of the

power of free-will, because He at the same time foresaw what good He

Himself would bring out of the evil, and how from this mortal race,

deservedly and justly condemned, He would by His grace collect, as

now He does, a people so numerous, that He thus fills up and repairs

the blank made by the fallen angels, and that thus that beloved and

heavenly city is not defrauded of the full number of its citizens,

but perhaps may even rejoice in a still more overflowing population.

2. \_Of the eternal and unchangeable will of God.\_

It is true that wicked men do many things contrary to God's will; but

so great is His wisdom and power, that all things which seem adverse

to His purpose do still tend towards those just and good ends and

issues which He Himself has foreknown. And consequently, when God is

said to change His will, as when, \_e.g.\_, He becomes angry with those

to whom He was gentle, it is rather they than He who are changed, and

they find Him changed in so far as their experience of suffering at

His hand is new, as the sun is changed to injured eyes, and becomes

as it were fierce from being mild, and hurtful from being delightful,

though in itself it remains the same as it was. That also is called

the will of God which He does in the hearts of those who obey His

commandments; and of this the apostle says, "For it is God that

worketh in you both to will."[962] As God's "righteousness" is used

not only of the righteousness wherewith He Himself is righteous, but

also of that which He produces in the man whom He justifies, so also

that is called His law, which, though given by God, is rather the

law of men. For certainly they were men to whom Jesus said, "It is

written in your law,"[963] though in another place we read, "The law

of his God is in his heart."[964] According to this will which God

works in men, He is said also to will what He Himself does not will,

but causes His people to will; as He is said to know what He has

caused those to know who were ignorant of it. For when the apostle

says, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of

God,"[965] we cannot suppose that God there for the first time knew

those who were foreknown by Him before the foundation of the world;

but He is said to have known them then, because then He caused them

to know. But I remember that I discussed these modes of expression

in the preceding books. According to this will, then, by which we say

that God wills what He causes to be willed by others, from whom the

future is hidden, He wills many things which He does not perform.

Thus His saints, inspired by His holy will, desire many things which

never happen. They pray, \_e.g.\_, for certain individuals--they

pray in a pious and holy manner--but what they request He does not

perform, though He Himself by His own Holy Spirit has wrought in them

this will to pray. And consequently, when the saints, in conformity

with God's mind, will and pray that all men be saved, we can use this

mode of expression: God wills and does not perform,--meaning that

He who causes them to will these things Himself wills them. But if

we speak of that will of His which is eternal as His foreknowledge,

certainly He has already done all things in heaven and on earth that

He has willed,--not only past and present things, but even things

still future. But before the arrival of that time in which He has

willed the occurrence of what He foreknew and arranged before all

time, we say, It will happen when God wills. But if we are ignorant

not only of the time in which it is to be, but even whether it shall

be at all, we say, It will happen if God wills,--not because God will

then have a new will which He had not before, but because that event,

which from eternity has been prepared in His unchangeable will, shall

then come to pass.

3. \_Of the promise of eternal blessedness to the saints, and

everlasting punishment to the wicked.\_

Wherefore, not to mention many other instances besides, as we now see

in Christ the fulfilment of that which God promised to Abraham when

He said, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed,"[966] so this

also shall be fulfilled which He promised to the same race, when He

said by the prophet, "They that are in their sepulchres shall rise

again;"[967] and also, "There shall be a new heaven and a new earth:

and the former shall not be mentioned, nor come into mind; but they

shall find joy and rejoicing in it: for I will make Jerusalem a

rejoicing, and my people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and

joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard

in her."[968] And by another prophet He uttered the same prediction:

"At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall

be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the

dust" (or, as some interpret it, "in the mound") "of the earth shall

awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting

contempt."[969] And in another place by the same prophet: "The saints

of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and shall possess the

kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."[970] And a little after he

says, "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom."[971] Other prophecies

referring to the same subject I have advanced in the twentieth book,

and others still which I have not advanced are found written in the

same Scriptures; and these predictions shall be fulfilled, as those

also have been which unbelieving men supposed would be frustrate. For

it is the same God who promised both, and predicted that both would

come to pass,--the God whom the pagan deities tremble before, as even

Porphyry, the noblest of pagan philosophers, testifies.

4. \_Against the wise men of the world, who fancy that the earthly

bodies of men cannot be transferred to a heavenly habitation.\_

But men who use their learning and intellectual ability to resist the

force of that great authority which, in fulfilment of what was so

long before predicted, has converted all races of men to faith and

hope in its promises, seem to themselves to argue acutely against

the resurrection of the body while they cite what Cicero mentions

in the third book \_De Republica\_. For when he was asserting the

apotheosis of Hercules and Romulus, he says: "Whose bodies were

not taken up into heaven; for nature would not permit a body of

earth to exist anywhere except upon earth." This, forsooth, is the

profound reasoning of the wise men, whose thoughts God knows that

they are vain. For if we were only souls, that is, spirits without

any body, and if we dwelt in heaven and had no knowledge of earthly

animals, and were told that we should be bound to earthly bodies by

some wonderful bond of union, and should animate them, should we

not much more vigorously refuse to believe this, and maintain that

nature would not permit an incorporeal substance to be held by a

corporeal bond? And yet the earth is full of living spirits, to which

terrestrial bodies are bound, and with which they are in a wonderful

way implicated. If, then, the same God who has created such beings

wills this also, what is to hinder the earthly body from being raised

to a heavenly body, since a spirit, which is more excellent than all

bodies, and consequently than even a heavenly body, has been tied to

an earthly body? If so small an earthly particle has been able to

hold in union with itself something better than a heavenly body, so

as to receive sensation and life, will heaven disdain to receive, or

at least to retain, this sentient and living particle, which derives

its life and sensation from a substance more excellent than any

heavenly body? If this does not happen now, it is because the time

is not yet come which has been determined by Him who has already

done a much more marvellous thing than that which these men refuse

to believe. For why do we not more intensely wonder that incorporeal

souls, which are of higher rank than heavenly bodies, are bound

to earthly bodies, rather than that bodies, although earthly, are

exalted to an abode which, though heavenly, is yet corporeal, except

because we have been accustomed to see this, and indeed are this,

while we are not as yet that other marvel, nor have as yet ever seen

it? Certainly, if we consult sober reason, the more wonderful of the

two divine works is found to be to attach somehow corporeal things to

incorporeal, and not to connect earthly things with heavenly, which,

though diverse, are yet both of them corporeal.

5. \_Of the resurrection of the flesh, which some refuse to believe,

though the world at large believes it.\_

But granting that this was once incredible, behold, now, the world

has come to the belief that the earthly body of Christ was received

up into heaven. Already both the learned and unlearned have believed

in the resurrection of the flesh and its ascension to the heavenly

places, while only a very few either of the educated or uneducated

are still staggered by it. If this is a credible thing which is

believed, then let those who do not believe see how stolid they are;

and if it is incredible, then this also is an incredible thing,

that what is incredible should have received such credit. Here then

we have two incredibles,--to wit, the resurrection of our body to

eternity, and that the world should believe so incredible a thing;

and both these incredibles the same God predicted should come to

pass before either had as yet occurred. We see that already one

of the two has come to pass, for the world has believed what was

incredible; why should we despair that the remaining one shall also

come to pass, and that this which the world believed, though it was

incredible, shall itself occur? For already that which was equally

incredible has come to pass, in the world's believing an incredible

thing. Both were incredible: the one we see accomplished, the other

we believe shall be; for both were predicted in those same Scriptures

by means of which the world believed. And the very manner in which

the world's faith was won is found to be even more incredible, if we

consider it. Men uninstructed in any branch of a liberal education,

without any of the refinement of heathen learning, unskilled in

grammar, not armed with dialectic, not adorned with rhetoric, but

plain fishermen, and very few in number,--these were the men whom

Christ sent with the nets of faith to the sea of this world, and thus

took out of every race so many fishes, and even the philosophers

themselves, wonderful as they are rare. Let us add, if you please, or

because you ought to be pleased, this third incredible thing to the

two former. And now we have three incredibles, all of which have yet

come to pass. It is incredible that Jesus Christ should have risen

in the flesh and ascended with flesh into heaven; it is incredible

that the world should have believed so incredible a thing; it is

incredible that a very few men, of mean birth and the lowest rank,

and no education, should have been able so effectually to persuade

the world, and even its learned men, of so incredible a thing. Of

these three incredibles, the parties with whom we are debating refuse

to believe the first; they cannot refuse to see the second, which

they are unable to account for if they do not believe the third. It

is indubitable that the resurrection of Christ, and His ascension

into heaven with the flesh in which He rose, is already preached and

believed in the whole world. If it is not credible, how is it that

it has already received credence in the whole world? If a number of

noble, exalted, and learned men had said that they had witnessed

it, and had been at pains to publish what they had witnessed, it

were not wonderful that the world should have believed it, but it

were very stubborn to refuse credence; but if, as is true, the world

has believed a few obscure, inconsiderable, uneducated persons, who

state and write that they witnessed it, is it not unreasonable that

a handful of wrong-headed men should oppose themselves to the creed

of the whole world, and refuse their belief? And if the world has put

faith in a small number of men, of mean birth and the lowest rank,

and no education, it is because the divinity of the thing itself

appeared all the more manifestly in such contemptible witnesses. The

eloquence, indeed, which lent persuasion to their message, consisted

of wonderful works, not words. For they who had not seen Christ

risen in the flesh, nor ascending into heaven with His risen body,

believed those who related how they had seen these things, and who

testified not only with words but wonderful signs. For men whom they

knew to be acquainted with only one, or at most two languages, they

marvelled to hear speaking in the tongues of all nations. They saw a

man, lame from his mother's womb, after forty years stand up sound

at their word in the name of Christ; that handkerchiefs taken from

their bodies had virtue to heal the sick; that countless persons,

sick of various diseases, were laid in a row in the road where they

were to pass, that their shadow might fall on them as they walked,

and that they forthwith received health; that many other stupendous

miracles were wrought by them in the name of Christ; and, finally,

that they even raised the dead. If it be admitted that these things

occurred as they are related, then we have a multitude of incredible

things to add to those three incredibles. That the one incredibility

of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ may be believed,

we accumulate the testimonies of countless incredible miracles, but

even so we do not bend the frightful obstinacy of these sceptics. But

if they do not believe that these miracles were wrought by Christ's

apostles to gain credence to their preaching of His resurrection and

ascension, this one grand miracle suffices for us, that the whole

world has believed without any miracles.

6. \_That Rome made its founder Romulus a god because it loved him;

but the Church loved Christ because it believed Him to be God.\_

Let us here recite the passage in which Tully expresses his

astonishment that the apotheosis of Romulus should have been

credited. I shall insert his words as they stand: "It is most worthy

of remark in Romulus, that other men who are said to have become gods

lived in less educated ages, when there was a greater propensity to

the fabulous, and when the uninstructed were easily persuaded to

believe anything. But the age of Romulus was barely six hundred years

ago, and already literature and science had dispelled the errors that

attach to an uncultured age." And a little after he says of the same

Romulus words to this effect: "From this we may perceive that Homer

had flourished long before Romulus, and that there was now so much

learning in individuals, and so generally diffused an enlightenment,

that scarcely any room was left for fable. For antiquity admitted

fables, and sometimes even very clumsy ones; but this age [of

Romulus] was sufficiently enlightened to reject whatever had not

the air of truth." Thus one of the most learned men, and certainly

the most eloquent, M. Tullius Cicero, says that it is surprising

that the divinity of Romulus was believed in, because the times

were already so enlightened that they would not accept a fabulous

fiction. But who believed that Romulus was a god except Rome, which

was itself small and in its infancy? Then afterwards it was necessary

that succeeding generations should preserve the tradition of their

ancestors; that, drinking in this superstition with their mother's

milk, the state might grow and come to such power that it might

dictate this belief, as from a point of vantage, to all the nations

over whom its sway extended. And these nations, though they might not

believe that Romulus was a god, at least said so, that they might

not give offence to their sovereign state by refusing to give its

founder that title which was given him by Rome, which had adopted

this belief, not by a love of error, but an error of love. But though

Christ is the founder of the heavenly and eternal city, yet it did

not believe Him to be God because it was founded by Him, but rather

it is founded by Him, in virtue of its belief. Rome, after it had

been built and dedicated, worshipped its founder in a temple as a

god; but this Jerusalem laid Christ, its God, as its foundation, that

the building and dedication might proceed. The former city loved its

founder, and therefore believed him to be a god; the latter believed

Christ to be God, and therefore loved Him. There was an antecedent

cause for the love of the former city, and for its believing that

even a false dignity attached to the object of its love; so there

was an antecedent cause for the belief of the latter, and for its

loving the true dignity which a proper faith, not a rash surmise,

ascribed to its object. For, not to mention the multitude of very

striking miracles which proved that Christ is God, there were also

divine prophecies heralding Him, prophecies most worthy of belief,

which being already accomplished, we have not, like the fathers, to

wait for their verification. Of Romulus, on the other hand, and of

his building Rome and reigning in it, we read or hear the narrative

of what did take place, not prediction which beforehand said that

such things should be. And so far as his reception among the gods

is concerned, history only records that this was believed, and does

not state it as a fact; for no miraculous signs testified to the

truth of this. For as to that wolf which is said to have nursed the

twin-brothers, and which is considered a great marvel, how does this

prove him to have been divine? For even supposing that this nurse was

a real wolf and not a mere courtezan, yet she nursed both brothers,

and Remus is not reckoned a god. Besides, what was there to hinder

any one from asserting that Romulus or Hercules, or any such man, was

a god? Or who would rather choose to die than profess belief in his

divinity? And did a single nation worship Romulus among its gods,

unless it were forced through fear of the Roman name? But who can

number the multitudes who have chosen death in the most cruel shapes

rather than deny the divinity of Christ? And thus the dread of some

slight indignation, which it was supposed, perhaps groundlessly,

might exist in the minds of the Romans, constrained some states who

were subject to Rome to worship Romulus as a god; whereas the dread,

not of a slight mental shock, but of severe and various punishments,

and of death itself, the most formidable of all, could not prevent

an immense multitude of martyrs throughout the world from not merely

worshipping but also confessing Christ as God. The city of Christ,

which, although as yet a stranger upon earth, had countless hosts

of citizens, did not make war upon its godless persecutors for the

sake of temporal security, but preferred to win eternal salvation by

abstaining from war. They were bound, imprisoned, beaten, tortured,

burned, torn in pieces, massacred, and yet they multiplied. It was

not given to them to fight for their eternal salvation except by

despising their temporal salvation for their Saviour's sake.

I am aware that Cicero, in the third book of his \_De Republica\_, if

I mistake not, argues that a first-rate power will not engage in war

except either for honour or for safety. What he has to say about

the question of safety, and what he means by safety, he explains in

another place, saying, "Private persons frequently evade, by a speedy

death, destitution, exile, bonds, the scourge, and the other pains

which even the most insensible feel. But to states, death, which

seems to emancipate individuals from all punishments, is itself a

punishment; for a state should be so constituted as to be eternal. And

thus death is not natural to a republic as to a man, to whom death

is not only necessary, but often even desirable. But when a state is

destroyed, obliterated, annihilated, it is as if (to compare great

things with small) this whole world perished and collapsed." Cicero

said this because he, with the Platonists, believed that the world

would not perish. It is therefore agreed that, according to Cicero, a

state should engage in war for the safety which preserves the state

permanently in existence, though its citizens change; as the foliage

of an olive or laurel, or any tree of this kind, is perennial, the

old leaves being replaced by fresh ones. For death, as he says, is no

punishment to individuals, but rather delivers them from all other

punishments, but it is a punishment to the state. And therefore it is

reasonably asked whether the Saguntines did right when they chose that

their whole state should perish rather than that they should break

faith with the Roman republic; for this deed of theirs is applauded

by the citizens of the earthly republic. But I do not see how they

could follow the advice of Cicero, who tells us that no war is to be

undertaken save for safety or for honour; neither does he say which of

these two is to be preferred, if a case should occur in which the one

could not be preserved without the loss of the other. For manifestly,

if the Saguntines chose safety, they must break faith; if they kept

faith, they must reject safety; as also it fell out. But the safety of

the city of God is such that it can be retained, or rather acquired, by

faith and with faith; but if faith be abandoned, no one can attain it.

It is this thought of a most stedfast and patient spirit that has made

so many noble martyrs, while Romulus has not had, and could not have,

so much as one to die for his divinity.

7. \_That the world's belief in Christ is the result of divine

power, not of human persuasion.\_

But it is thoroughly ridiculous to make mention of the false divinity

of Romulus as any way comparable to that of Christ. Nevertheless, if

Romulus lived about six hundred years before Cicero, in an age which

already was so enlightened that it rejected all impossibilities, how

much more, in an age which certainly was more enlightened, being six

hundred years later, the age of Cicero himself, and of the emperors

Augustus and Tiberius, would the human mind have refused to listen to

or believe in the resurrection of Christ's body and its ascension into

heaven, and have scouted it as an impossibility, had not the divinity

of the truth itself, or the truth of the divinity, and corroborating

miraculous signs, proved that it could happen and had happened? Through

virtue of these testimonies, and notwithstanding the opposition and

terror of so many cruel persecutions, the resurrection and immortality

of the flesh, first in Christ, and subsequently in all in the new

world, was believed, was intrepidly proclaimed, and was sown over the

whole world, to be fertilized richly with the blood of the martyrs.

For the predictions of the prophets that had preceded the events were

read, they were corroborated by powerful signs, and the truth was seen

to be not contradictory to reason, but only different from customary

ideas, so that at length the world embraced the faith it had furiously

persecuted.

8. \_Of miracles which were wrought that the world might believe

in Christ, and which have not ceased since the world believed.\_

Why, they say, are those miracles, which you affirm were wrought

formerly, wrought no longer? I might, indeed, reply that miracles

were necessary before the world believed, in order that it might

believe. And whoever now-a-days demands to see prodigies that he may

believe, is himself a great prodigy, because he does not believe,

though the whole world does. But they make these objections for the

sole purpose of insinuating that even those former miracles were

never wrought. How, then, is it that everywhere Christ is celebrated

with such firm belief in His resurrection and ascension? How is it

that in enlightened times, in which every impossibility is rejected,

the world has, without any miracles, believed things marvellously

incredible? Or will they say that these things were credible, and

therefore were credited? Why then do they themselves not believe?

Our argument, therefore, is a summary one--either incredible things

which were not witnessed have caused the world to believe other

incredible things which both occurred and were witnessed, or this

matter was so credible that it needed no miracles in proof of it, and

therefore convicts these unbelievers of unpardonable scepticism. This

I might say for the sake of refuting these most frivolous objectors.

But we cannot deny that many miracles were wrought to confirm that

one grand and health-giving miracle of Christ's ascension to heaven

with the flesh in which He rose. For these most trustworthy books of

ours contain in one narrative both the miracles that were wrought

and the creed which they were wrought to confirm. The miracles were

published that they might produce faith, and the faith which they

produced brought them into greater prominence. For they are read in

congregations that they may be believed, and yet they would not be so

read unless they were believed. For even now miracles are wrought in

the name of Christ, whether by His sacraments or by the prayers or

relics of His saints; but they are not so brilliant and conspicuous

as to cause them to be published with such glory as accompanied the

former miracles. For the canon of the sacred writings, which behoved

to be closed,[972] causes those to be everywhere recited, and to sink

into the memory of all the congregations; but these modern miracles

are scarcely known even to the whole population in the midst of

which they are wrought, and at the best are confined to one spot.

For frequently they are known only to a very few persons, while all

the rest are ignorant of them, especially if the state is a large

one; and when they are reported to other persons in other localities,

there is no sufficient authority to give them prompt and unwavering

credence, although they are reported to the faithful by the faithful.

The miracle which was wrought at Milan when I was there, and by which

a blind man was restored to sight, could come to the knowledge of

many; for not only is the city a large one, but also the emperor was

there at the time, and the occurrence was witnessed by an immense

concourse of people that had gathered to the bodies of the martyrs

Protasius and Gervasius, which had long lain concealed and unknown,

but were now made known to the bishop Ambrose in a dream, and

discovered by him. By virtue of these remains the darkness of that

blind man was scattered, and he saw the light of day.[973]

But who but a very small number are aware of the cure which was wrought

upon Innocentius, ex-advocate of the deputy prefecture, a cure wrought

at Carthage, in my presence, and under my own eyes? For when I and my

brother Alypius,[974] who were not yet clergymen,[975] though already

servants of God, came from abroad, this man received us, and made us

live with him, for he and all his household were devotedly pious. He

was being treated by medical men for fistulæ, of which he had a large

number intricately seated in the rectum. He had already undergone an

operation, and the surgeons were using every means at their command

for his relief. In that operation he had suffered long-continued and

acute pain; yet, among the many folds of the gut, one had escaped the

operators so entirely, that, though they ought to have laid it open

with the knife, they never touched it. And thus, though all those that

had been opened were cured, this one remained as it was, and frustrated

all their labour. The patient, having his suspicions awakened by the

delay thus occasioned, and fearing greatly a second operation, which

another medical man--one of his own domestics--had told him he must

undergo, though this man had not even been allowed to witness the first

operation, and had been banished from the house, and with difficulty

allowed to come back to his enraged master's presence,--the patient,

I say, broke out to the surgeons, saying, "Are you going to cut me

again? Are you, after all, to fulfil the prediction of that man whom

you would not allow even to be present?" The surgeons laughed at the

unskilful doctor, and soothed their patient's fears with fair words

and promises. So several days passed, and yet nothing they tried did

him good. Still they persisted in promising that they would cure that

fistula by drugs, without the knife. They called in also another old

practitioner of great repute in that department, Ammonius (for he was

still alive at that time); and he, after examining the part, promised

the same result as themselves from their care and skill. On this great

authority, the patient became confident, and, as if already well,

vented his good spirits in facetious remarks at the expense of his

domestic physician, who had predicted a second operation. To make a

long story short, after a number of days had thus uselessly elapsed,

the surgeons, wearied and confused, had at last to confess that he

could only be cured by the knife. Agitated with excessive fear, he was

terrified, and grew pale with dread; and when he collected himself and

was able to speak, he ordered them to go away and never to return. Worn

out with weeping, and driven by necessity, it occurred to him to call

in an Alexandrian, who was at that time esteemed a wonderfully skilful

operator, that he might perform the operation his rage would not suffer

them to do. But when he had come, and examined with a professional eye

the traces of their careful work, he acted the part of a good man, and

persuaded his patient to allow those same hands the satisfaction of

finishing his cure which had begun it with a skill that excited his

admiration, adding that there was no doubt his only hope of a cure

was by an operation, but that it was thoroughly inconsistent with his

nature to win the credit of the cure by doing the little that remained

to be done, and rob of their reward men whose consummate skill, care,

and diligence he could not but admire when he saw the traces of their

work. They were therefore again received to favour; and it was agreed

that, in the presence of the Alexandrian, they should operate on the

fistula, which, by the consent of all, could now only be cured by the

knife. The operation was deferred till the following day. But when

they had left, there arose in the house such a wailing, in sympathy

with the excessive despondency of the master, that it seemed to us

like the mourning at a funeral, and we could scarcely repress it. Holy

men were in the habit of visiting him daily; Saturninus of blessed

memory, at that time bishop of Uzali, and the presbyter Gelosus, and

the deacons of the church of Carthage; and among these was the bishop

Aurelius, who alone of them all survives,--a man to be named by us with

due reverence,--and with him I have often spoken of this affair, as we

conversed together about the wonderful works of God, and I have found

that he distinctly remembers what I am now relating. When these persons

visited him that evening according to their custom, he besought them,

with pitiable tears, that they would do him the honour of being present

next day at what he judged his funeral rather than his suffering. For

such was the terror his former pains had produced, that he made no

doubt he would die in the hands of the surgeons. They comforted him,

and exhorted him to put his trust in God, and nerve his will like a

man. Then we went to prayer; but while we, in the usual way, were

kneeling and bending to the ground, he cast himself down, as if some

one were hurling him violently to the earth, and began to pray; but

in what a manner, with what earnestness and emotion, with what a flood

of tears, with what groans and sobs, that shook his whole body, and

almost prevented him speaking, who can describe! Whether the others

prayed, and had not their attention wholly diverted by this conduct, I

do not know. For myself, I could not pray at all. This only I briefly

said in my heart: "O Lord, what prayers of Thy people dost Thou hear

if Thou hearest not these?" For it seemed to me that nothing could be

added to this prayer, unless he expired in praying. We rose from our

knees, and, receiving the blessing of the bishop, departed, the patient

beseeching his visitors to be present next morning, they exhorting

him to keep up his heart. The dreaded day dawned. The servants of God

were present, as they had promised to be; the surgeons arrived; all

that the circumstances required was ready; the frightful instruments

are produced; all look on in wonder and suspense. While those who have

most influence with the patient are cheering his fainting spirit, his

limbs are arranged on the couch so as to suit the hand of the operator;

the knots of the bandages are untied; the part is bared; the surgeon

examines it, and, with knife in hand, eagerly looks for the sinus that

is to be cut. He searches for it with his eyes; he feels for it with

his finger; he applies every kind of scrutiny: he finds a perfectly

firm cicatrix! No words of mine can describe the joy, and praise, and

thanksgiving to the merciful and almighty God which was poured from the

lips of all, with tears of gladness. Let the scene be imagined rather

than described!

In the same city of Carthage lived Innocentia, a very devout woman of

the highest rank in the state. She had cancer in one of her breasts,

a disease which, as physicians say, is incurable. Ordinarily,

therefore, they either amputate, and so separate from the body the

member on which the disease has seized, or, that the patient's

life may be prolonged a little, though death is inevitable even if

somewhat delayed, they abandon all remedies, following, as they

say, the advice of Hippocrates. This the lady we speak of had been

advised to by a skilful physician, who was intimate with her family;

and she betook herself to God alone by prayer. On the approach of

Easter, she was instructed in a dream to wait for the first woman

that came out from the baptistery[976] after being baptized, and to

ask her to make the sign of Christ upon her sore. She did so, and

was immediately cured. The physician who had advised her to apply no

remedy if she wished to live a little longer, when he had examined

her after this, and found that she who, on his former examination,

was afflicted with that disease was now perfectly cured, eagerly

asked her what remedy she had used, anxious, as we may well believe,

to discover the drug which should defeat the decision of Hippocrates.

But when she told him what had happened, he is said to have replied,

with religious politeness, though with a contemptuous tone, and an

expression which made her fear he would utter some blasphemy against

Christ, "I thought you would make some great discovery to me." She,

shuddering at his indifference, quickly replied, "What great thing

was it for Christ to heal a cancer, who raised one who had been

four days dead?" When, therefore, I had heard this, I was extremely

indignant that so great a miracle, wrought in that well-known

city, and on a person who was certainly not obscure, should not be

divulged, and I considered that she should be spoken to, if not

reprimanded on this score. And when she replied to me that she had

not kept silence on the subject, I asked the women with whom she was

best acquainted whether they had ever heard of this before. They told

me they knew nothing of it. "See," I said, "what your not keeping

silence amounts to, since not even those who are so familiar with you

know of it." And as I had only briefly heard the story, I made her

tell how the whole thing happened, from beginning to end, while the

other women listened in great astonishment, and glorified God.

A gouty doctor of the same city, when he had given in his name for

baptism, and had been prohibited the day before his baptism from

being baptized that year, by black woolly-haired boys who appeared to

him in his dreams, and whom he understood to be devils, and when,

though they trod on his feet, and inflicted the acutest pain he had

ever yet experienced, he refused to obey them, but overcame them,

and would not defer being washed in the laver of regeneration, was

relieved in the very act of baptism, not only of the extraordinary

pain he was tortured with, but also of the disease itself, so that,

though he lived a long time afterwards, he never suffered from gout;

and yet who knows of this miracle? We, however, do know it, and so,

too, do the small number of brethren who were in the neighbourhood,

and to whose ears it might come.

An old comedian of Curubis[977] was cured at baptism not only of

paralysis, but also of hernia, and, being delivered from both

afflictions, came up out of the font of regeneration as if he had had

nothing wrong with his body. Who outside of Curubis knows of this,

or who but a very few who might hear it elsewhere? But we, when we

heard of it, made the man come to Carthage, by order of the holy

bishop Aurelius, although we had already ascertained the fact on the

information of persons whose word we could not doubt.

Hesperius, of a tribunitian family, and a neighbour of our own,[978]

has a farm called Zubedi in the Fussalian district;[979] and, finding

that his family, his cattle, and his servants were suffering from

the malice of evil spirits, he asked our presbyters, during my

absence, that one of them would go with him and banish the spirits

by his prayers. One went, offered there the sacrifice of the body of

Christ, praying with all his might that that vexation might cease.

It did cease forthwith, through God's mercy. Now he had received

from a friend of his own some holy earth brought from Jerusalem,

where Christ, having been buried, rose again the third day. This

earth he had hung up in his bedroom to preserve himself from harm.

But when his house was purged of that demoniacal invasion, he began

to consider what should be done with the earth; for his reverence

for it made him unwilling to have it any longer in his bedroom. It

so happened that I and Maximinus bishop of Synita, and then my

colleague, were in the neighbourhood. Hesperius asked us to visit

him, and we did so. When he had related all the circumstances, he

begged that the earth might be buried somewhere, and that the spot

should be made a place of prayer where Christians might assemble for

the worship of God. We made no objection: it was done as he desired.

There was in that neighbourhood a young countryman who was paralytic,

who, when he heard of this, begged his parents to take him without

delay to that holy place. When he had been brought there, he prayed,

and forthwith went away on his own feet perfectly cured.

There is a country-seat called Victoriana, less than thirty miles

from Hippo-regius. At it there is a monument to the Milanese martyrs,

Protasius and Gervasius. Thither a young man was carried, who, when

he was watering his horse one summer day at noon in a pool of a

river, had been taken possession of by a devil. As he lay at the

monument, near death, or even quite like a dead person, the lady of

the manor, with her maids and religious attendants, entered the place

for evening prayer and praise, as her custom was, and they began

to sing hymns. At this sound the young man, as if electrified, was

thoroughly aroused, and with frightful screaming seized the altar,

and held it as if he did not dare or were not able to let it go, and

as if he were fixed or tied to it; and the devil in him, with loud

lamentation, besought that he might be spared, and confessed where

and when and how he took possession of the youth. At last, declaring

that he would go out of him, he named one by one the parts of his

body which he threatened to mutilate as he went out; and with these

words he departed from the man. But his eye, falling out on his

cheek, hung by a slender vein as by a root, and the whole of the

pupil which had been black became white. When this was witnessed by

those present (others too had now gathered to his cries, and had

all joined in prayer for him), although they were delighted that he

had recovered his sanity of mind, yet, on the other hand, they were

grieved about his eye, and said he should seek medical advice. But

his sister's husband, who had brought him there, said, "God, who has

banished the devil, is able to restore his eye at the prayers of

His saints." Therewith he replaced the eye that was fallen out and

hanging, and bound it in its place with his handkerchief as well as

he could, and advised him not to loose the bandage for seven days.

When he did so, he found it quite healthy. Others also were cured

there, but of them it were tedious to speak.

I know that a young woman of Hippo was immediately dispossessed of

a devil, on anointing herself with oil mixed with the tears of the

presbyter who had been praying for her. I know also that a bishop

once prayed for a demoniac young man whom he never saw, and that he

was cured on the spot.

There was a fellow-townsman of ours at Hippo, Florentius, an old man,

religious and poor, who supported himself as a tailor. Having lost his

coat, and not having means to buy another, he prayed to the Twenty

Martyrs,[980] who have a very celebrated memorial shrine in our town,

begging in a distinct voice that he might be clothed. Some scoffing

young men, who happened to be present, heard him, and followed him with

their sarcasm as he went away, as if he had asked the martyrs for fifty

pence to buy a coat. But he, walking on in silence, saw on the shore a

great fish, gasping as if just cast up, and having secured it with the

good-natured assistance of the youths, he sold it for curing to a cook

of the name of Catosus, a good Christian man, telling him how he had

come by it, and receiving for it three hundred pence, which he laid out

in wool, that his wife might exercise her skill upon, and make into a

coat for him. But, on cutting up the fish, the cook found a gold ring

in its belly; and forthwith, moved with compassion, and influenced,

too, by religious fear, gave it up to the man, saying, "See how the

Twenty Martyrs have clothed you."

When the bishop Projectus was bringing the relics of the most

glorious martyr Stephen to the waters of Tibilis, a great concourse

of people came to meet him at the shrine. There a blind woman

entreated that she might be led to the bishop who was carrying the

relics. He gave her the flowers he was carrying. She took them,

applied them to her eyes, and forthwith saw. Those who were present

were astounded, while she, with every expression of joy, preceded

them, pursuing her way without further need of a guide.

Lucillus bishop of Sinita, in the neighbourhood of the colonial

town of Hippo, was carrying in procession some relics of the same

martyr, which had been deposited in the castle of Sinita. A fistula

under which he had long laboured, and which his private physician

was watching an opportunity to cut, was suddenly cured by the mere

carrying of that sacred fardel,[981]--at least, afterwards there was

no trace of it in his body.

Eucharius, a Spanish priest, residing at Calama, was for a long

time a sufferer from stone. By the relics of the same martyr, which

the bishop Possidius brought him, he was cured. Afterwards the same

priest, sinking under another disease, was lying dead, and already

they were binding his hands. By the succour of the same martyr he

was raised to life, the priest's cloak having been brought from the

oratory and laid upon the corpse.

There was there an old nobleman named Martial, who had a great

aversion to the Christian religion, but whose daughter was a

Christian, while her husband had been baptized that same year. When

he was ill, they besought him with tears and prayers to become a

Christian, but he positively refused, and dismissed them from his

presence in a storm of indignation. It occurred to the son-in-law to

go to the oratory of St. Stephen, and there pray for him with all

earnestness that God might give him a right mind, so that he should

not delay believing in Christ. This he did with great groaning and

tears, and the burning fervour of sincere piety; then, as he left the

place, he took some of the flowers that were lying there, and, as it

was already night, laid them by his father's head, who so slept. And

lo! before dawn, he cries out for some one to run for the bishop; but

he happened at that time to be with me at Hippo. So when he had heard

that he was from home, he asked the presbyters to come. They came. To

the joy and amazement of all, he declared that he believed, and he

was baptized. As long as he remained in life, these words were ever

on his lips: "Christ, receive my spirit," though he was not aware

that these were the last words of the most blessed Stephen when he

was stoned by the Jews. They were his last words also, for not long

after he himself also gave up the ghost.

There, too, by the same martyr, two men, one a citizen, the other a

stranger, were cured of gout; but while the citizen was absolutely

cured, the stranger was only informed what he should apply when the

pain returned; and when he followed this advice, the pain was at once

relieved.

Audurus is the name of an estate, where there is a church that contains

a memorial shrine of the martyr Stephen. It happened that, as a little

boy was playing in the court, the oxen drawing a waggon went out of the

track and crushed him with the wheel, so that immediately he seemed at

his last gasp. His mother snatched him up, and laid him at the shrine,

and not only did he revive, but also appeared uninjured.

A religious female, who lived at Caspalium, a neighbouring estate,

when she was so ill as to be despaired of, had her dress brought to

this shrine, but before it was brought back she was gone. However,

her parents wrapped her corpse in the dress, and, her breath

returning, she became quite well.

At Hippo a Syrian called Bassus was praying at the relics of the same

martyr for his daughter, who was dangerously ill. He too had brought

her dress with him to the shrine. But as he prayed, behold, his

servants ran from the house to tell him she was dead. His friends,

however, intercepted them, and forbade them to tell him, lest he should

bewail her in public. And when he had returned to his house, which was

already ringing with the lamentations of his family, and had thrown on

his daughter's body the dress he was carrying, she was restored to life.

There, too, the son of a man, Irenæus, one of our tax-gatherers, took

ill and died. And while his body was lying lifeless, and the last rites

were being prepared, amidst the weeping and mourning of all, one of the

friends who were consoling the father suggested that the body should be

anointed with the oil of the same martyr. It was done, and he revived.

Likewise Eleusinus, a man of tribunitian rank among us, laid his

infant son, who had died, on the shrine of the martyr, which is in

the suburb where he lived, and, after prayer, which he poured out

there with many tears, he took up his child alive.

What am I to do? I am so pressed by the promise of finishing this work,

that I cannot record all the miracles I know; and doubtless several of

our adherents, when they read what I have narrated, will regret that

I have omitted so many which they, as well as I, certainly know. Even

now I beg these persons to excuse me, and to consider how long it would

take me to relate all those miracles, which the necessity of finishing

the work I have undertaken forces me to omit. For were I to be silent

of all others, and to record exclusively the miracles of healing which

were wrought in the district of Calama and of Hippo by means of this

martyr--I mean the most glorious Stephen--they would fill many volumes;

and yet all even of these could not be collected, but only those of

which narratives have been written for public recital. For when I saw,

in our own times, frequent signs of the presence of divine powers

similar to those which had been given of old, I desired that narratives

might be written, judging that the multitude should not remain ignorant

of these things. It is not yet two years since these relics were

first brought to Hippo-regius, and though many of the miracles which

have been wrought by it have not, as I have the most certain means

of knowing, been recorded, those which have been published amount to

almost seventy at the hour at which I write. But at Calama, where these

relics have been for a longer time, and where more of the miracles were

narrated for public information, there are incomparably more.

At Uzali, too, a colony near Utica, many signal miracles were, to my

knowledge, wrought by the same martyr, whose relics had found a place

there by direction of the bishop Evodius, long before we had them at

Hippo. But there the custom of publishing narratives does not obtain,

or, I should say, did not obtain, for possibly it may now have been

begun. For, when I was there recently, a woman of rank, Petronia,

had been miraculously cured of a serious illness of long standing,

in which all medical appliances had failed, and, with the consent of

the above-named bishop of the place, I exhorted her to publish an

account of it that might be read to the people. She most promptly

obeyed, and inserted in her narrative a circumstance which I cannot

omit to mention, though I am compelled to hasten on to the subjects

which this work requires me to treat. She said that she had been

persuaded by a Jew to wear next her skin, under all her clothes, a

hair girdle, and on this girdle a ring, which, instead of a gem, had

a stone which had been found in the kidneys of an ox. Girt with this

charm, she was making her way to the threshold of the holy martyr.

But, after leaving Carthage, and when she had been lodging in her

own demesne on the river Bagrada, and was now rising to continue her

journey, she saw her ring lying before her feet. In great surprise

she examined the hair girdle, and when she found it bound, as it had

been, quite firmly with knots, she conjectured that the ring had been

worn through and dropped off; but when she found that the ring was

itself also perfectly whole, she presumed that by this great miracle

she had received somehow a pledge of her cure, whereupon she untied

the girdle, and cast it into the river, and the ring along with it.

This is not credited by those who do not believe either that the Lord

Jesus Christ came forth from His mother's womb without destroying her

virginity, and entered among His disciples when the doors were shut;

but let them make strict inquiry into this miracle, and if they find

it true, let them believe those others. The lady is of distinction,

nobly born, married to a nobleman. She resides at Carthage. The city

is distinguished, the person is distinguished, so that they who make

inquiries cannot fail to find satisfaction. Certainly the martyr

himself, by whose prayers she was healed, believed on the Son of her

who remained a virgin; on Him who came in among the disciples when

the doors were shut; in fine,--and to this tends all that we have

been retailing,--on Him who ascended into heaven with the flesh in

which He had risen; and it is because he laid down his life for this

faith that such miracles were done by his means.

Even now, therefore, many miracles are wrought, the same God who

wrought those we read of still performing them, by whom He will and as

He will; but they are not as well known, nor are they beaten into the

memory, like gravel, by frequent reading, so that they cannot fall out

of mind. For even where, as is now done among ourselves, care is taken

that the pamphlets of those who receive benefit be read publicly, yet

those who are present hear the narrative but once, and many are absent;

and so it comes to pass that even those who are present forget in a few

days what they heard, and scarcely one of them can be found who will

tell what he heard to one who he knows was not present.

One miracle was wrought among ourselves, which, though no greater

than those I have mentioned, was yet so signal and conspicuous, that

I suppose there is no inhabitant of Hippo who did not either see

or hear of it, none who could possibly forget it. There were seven

brothers and three sisters of a noble family of the Cappadocian

Cæsarea, who were cursed by their mother, a new-made widow, on

account of some wrong they had done her, and which she bitterly

resented, and who were visited with so severe a punishment from

Heaven, that all of them were seized with a hideous shaking in all

their limbs. Unable, while presenting this loathsome appearance, to

endure the eyes of their fellow-citizens, they wandered over almost

the whole Roman world, each following his own direction. Two of them

came to Hippo, a brother and a sister, Paulus and Palladia, already

known in many other places by the fame of their wretched lot. Now it

was about fifteen days before Easter when they came, and they came

daily to church, and specially to the relics of the most glorious

Stephen, praying that God might now be appeased, and restore their

former health. There, and wherever they went, they attracted the

attention of every one. Some who had seen them elsewhere, and knew

the cause of their trembling, told others as occasion offered. Easter

arrived, and on the Lord's day, in the morning, when there was now

a large crowd present, and the young man was holding the bars of

the holy place where the relics were, and praying, suddenly he fell

down, and lay precisely as if asleep, but not trembling as he was

wont to do even in sleep. All present were astonished. Some were

alarmed, some were moved with pity; and while some were for lifting

him up, others prevented them, and said they should rather wait

and see what would result. And behold! he rose up, and trembled no

more, for he was healed, and stood quite well, scanning those who

were scanning him. Who then refrained himself from praising God? The

whole church was filled with the voices of those who were shouting

and congratulating him. Then they came running to me, where I was

sitting ready to come into the church. One after another they throng

in, the last comer telling me as news what the first had told me

already; and while I rejoiced and inwardly gave God thanks, the young

man himself also enters, with a number of others, falls at my knees,

is raised up to receive my kiss. We go in to the congregation: the

church was full, and ringing with the shouts of joy, "Thanks to God!

Praised be God!" every one joining and shouting on all sides, "I

have healed the people," and then with still louder voice shouting

again. Silence being at last obtained, the customary lessons of the

divine Scriptures were read. And when I came to my sermon, I made

a few remarks suitable to the occasion and the happy and joyful

feeling, not desiring them to listen to me, but rather to consider

the eloquence of God in this divine work. The man dined with us, and

gave us a careful account of his own, his mother's, and his family's

calamity. Accordingly, on the following day, after delivering my

sermon, I promised that next day I would read his narrative to the

people.[982] And when I did so, the third day after Easter Sunday,

I made the brother and sister both stand on the steps of the raised

place from which I used to speak; and while they stood there their

pamphlet was read.[983] The whole congregation, men and women alike,

saw the one standing without any unnatural movement, the other

trembling in all her limbs; so that those who had not before seen the

man himself saw in his sister what the divine compassion had removed

from him. In him they saw matter of congratulation, in her subject

for prayer. Meanwhile, their pamphlet being finished, I instructed

them to withdraw from the gaze of the people; and I had begun to

discuss the whole matter somewhat more carefully, when lo! as I

was proceeding, other voices are heard from the tomb of the martyr,

shouting new congratulations. My audience turned round, and began to

run to the tomb. The young woman, when she had come down from the

steps where she had been standing, went to pray at the holy relics,

and no sooner had she touched the bars than she, in the same way as

her brother, collapsed, as if falling asleep, and rose up cured.

While, then, we were asking what had happened, and what occasioned

this noise of joy, they came into the basilica where we were,

leading her from the martyr's tomb in perfect health. Then, indeed,

such a shout of wonder rose from men and women together, that the

exclamations and the tears seemed like never to come to an end. She

was led to the place where she had a little before stood trembling.

They now rejoiced that she was like her brother, as before they had

mourned that she remained unlike him; and as they had not yet uttered

their prayers in her behalf, they perceived that their intention of

doing so had been speedily heard. They shouted God's praises without

words, but with such a noise that our ears could scarcely bear it.

What was there in the hearts of these exultant people but the faith

of Christ, for which Stephen had shed his blood?

9. \_That all the miracles which are done by means of the martyrs

in the name of Christ testify to that faith which the martyrs

had in Christ.\_

To what do these miracles witness, but to this faith which preaches

Christ risen in the flesh, and ascended with the same into heaven? For

the martyrs themselves were martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of this

faith, drawing upon themselves by their testimony the hatred of the

world, and conquering the world not by resisting it, but by dying. For

this faith they died, and can now ask these benefits from the Lord in

whose name they were slain. For this faith their marvellous constancy

was exercised, so that in these miracles great power was manifested

as the result. For if the resurrection of the flesh to eternal life

had not taken place in Christ, and were not to be accomplished in His

people, as predicted by Christ, or by the prophets who foretold that

Christ was to come, why do the martyrs who were slain for this faith

which proclaims the resurrection possess such power? For whether God

Himself wrought these miracles by that wonderful manner of working

by which, though Himself eternal, He produces effects in time; or

whether He wrought them by servants, and if so, whether He made use

of the spirits of martyrs as He uses men who are still in the body,

or effects all these marvels by means of angels, over whom He exerts

an invisible, immutable, incorporeal sway, so that what is said to

be done by the martyrs is done not by their operation, but only by

their prayer and request; or whether, finally, some things are done in

one way, others in another, and so that man cannot at all comprehend

them,--nevertheless these miracles attest this faith which preaches the

resurrection of the flesh to eternal life.

10. \_That the martyrs who obtain many miracles in order that the

true God may be worshipped, are worthy of much greater honour

than the demons, who do some marvels that they themselves may

be supposed to be God.\_

Here perhaps our adversaries will say that their gods also have done

some wonderful things, if now they begin to compare their gods to

our dead men. Or will they also say that they have gods taken from

among dead men, such as Hercules, Romulus, and many others whom

they fancy to have been received into the number of the gods? But

our martyrs are not our gods; for we know that the martyrs and we

have both but one God, and that the same. Nor yet are the miracles

which they maintain to have been done by means of their temples at

all comparable to those which are done by the tombs of our martyrs.

If they seem similar, their gods have been defeated by our martyrs

as Pharaoh's magi were by Moses. In reality, the demons wrought

these marvels with the same impure pride with which they aspired to

be the gods of the nations; but the martyrs do these wonders, or

rather God does them while they pray and assist, in order that an

impulse may be given to the faith by which we believe that they are

not our gods, but have, together with ourselves, one God. In fine,

they built temples to these gods of theirs, and set up altars, and

ordained priests, and appointed sacrifices; but to our martyrs we

build, not temples as if they were gods, but monuments as to dead

men whose spirits live with God. Neither do we erect altars at these

monuments that we may sacrifice to the martyrs, but to the one God

of the martyrs and of ourselves; and in this sacrifice they are

named in their own place and rank as men of God who conquered the

world by confessing Him, but they are not invoked by the sacrificing

priest. For it is to God, not to them, he sacrifices, though he

sacrifices at their monument; for he is God's priest, not theirs. The

sacrifice itself, too, is the body of Christ, which is not offered

to them, because they themselves are this body. Which then can more

readily be believed to work miracles? They who wish themselves to be

reckoned gods by those on whom they work miracles, or those whose

sole object in working any miracle is to induce faith in God, and in

Christ also as God? They who wished to turn even their crimes into

sacred rites, or those who are unwilling that even their own praises

be consecrated, and seek that everything for which they are justly

praised be ascribed to the glory of Him in whom they are praised?

For in the Lord their souls are praised. Let us therefore believe

those who both speak the truth and work wonders. For by speaking the

truth they suffered, and so won the power of working wonders. And the

leading truth they professed is that Christ rose from the dead, and

first showed in His own flesh the immortality of the resurrection

which He promised should be ours, either in the beginning of the

world to come, or in the end of this world.

11. \_Against the Platonists, who argue from the physical weight of

the elements that an earthly body cannot inhabit heaven.\_

But against this great gift of God, these reasoners, "whose thoughts

the Lord knows that they are vain,"[984] bring arguments from

the weights of the elements; for they have been taught by their

master Plato that the two greatest elements of the world, and the

furthest removed from one another, are coupled and united by the

two intermediate, air and water. And consequently they say, since

the earth is the first of the elements, beginning from the base of

the series, the second the water above the earth, the third the air

above the water, the fourth the heaven above the air, it follows

that a body of earth cannot live in the heaven; for each element is

poised by its own weight so as to preserve its own place and rank.

Behold with what arguments human infirmity, possessed with vanity,

contradicts the omnipotence of God! What, then, do so many earthly

bodies do in the air, since the air is the third element from the

earth? Unless perhaps He who has granted to the earthly bodies of

birds that they be carried through the air by the lightness of

feathers and wings, has not been able to confer upon the bodies of

men made immortal the power to abide in the highest heaven. The

earthly animals, too, which cannot fly, among which are men, ought on

these terms to live under the earth, as fishes, which are the animals

of the water, live under the water. Why, then, can an animal of earth

not live in the second element, that is, in water, while it can in

the third? Why, though it belongs to the earth, is it forthwith

suffocated if it is forced to live in the second element next above

earth, while it lives in the third, and cannot live out of it? Is

there a mistake here in the order of the elements, or is not the

mistake rather in their reasonings, and not in the nature of things?

I will not repeat what I said in the thirteenth book,[985] that many

earthly bodies, though heavy like lead, receive from the workman's

hand a form which enables them to swim in water; and yet it is denied

that the omnipotent Worker can confer on the human body a property

which shall enable it to pass into heaven and dwell there.

But against what I have formerly said they can find nothing to say,

even though they introduce and make the most of this order of the

elements in which they confide. For if the order be that the earth

is first, the water second, the air third, the heaven fourth, then

the soul is above all. For Aristotle said that the soul was a fifth

body, while Plato denied that it was a body at all. If it were a

fifth body, then certainly it would be above the rest; and if it is

not a body at all, so much the more does it rise above all. What,

then, does it do in an earthly body? What does this soul, which is

finer than all else, do in such a mass of matter as this? What does

the lightest of substances do in this ponderosity? this swiftest

substance in such sluggishness? Will not the body be raised to

heaven by virtue of so excellent a nature as this? and if now earthly

bodies can retain the souls below, shall not the souls be one day

able to raise the earthly bodies above?

If we pass now to their miracles which they oppose to our martyrs as

wrought by their gods, shall not even these be found to make for us,

and help out our argument? For if any of the miracles of their gods

are great, certainly that is a great one which Varro mentions of a

vestal virgin, who, when she was endangered by a false accusation of

unchastity, filled a sieve with water from the Tiber, and carried it

to her judges without any part of it leaking. Who kept the weight

of water in the sieve? Who prevented any drop from falling from it

through so many open holes? They will answer, Some god or some demon.

If a god, is he greater than the God who made the world? If a demon,

is he mightier than an angel who serves the God by whom the world

was made? If, then, a lesser god, angel, or demon could so sustain

the weight of this liquid element that the water might seem to have

changed its nature, shall not Almighty God, who Himself created

all the elements, be able to eliminate from the earthly body its

heaviness, so that the quickened body shall dwell in whatever element

the quickening spirit pleases?

Then, again, since they give the air a middle place between the fire

above and the water beneath, how is it that we often find it between

water and water, and between the water and the earth? For what do

they make of those watery clouds, between which and the seas air is

constantly found intervening? I should like to know by what weight

and order of the elements it comes to pass that very violent and

stormy torrents are suspended in the clouds above the earth before

they rush along upon the earth under the air? In fine, why is it that

throughout the whole globe the air is between the highest heaven and

the earth, if its place is between the sky and the water, as the

place of the water is between the sky and the earth?

Finally, if the order of the elements is so disposed that, as Plato

thinks, the two extremes, fire and earth, are united by the two

means, air and water, and that the fire occupies the highest part of

the sky, and the earth the lowest part, or as it were the foundation

of the world, and that therefore earth cannot be in the heavens, how

is fire in the earth? For, according to this reasoning, these two

elements, earth and fire, ought to be so restricted to their own

places, the highest and the lowest, that neither the lowest can rise

to the place of the highest, nor the highest sink to that of the

lowest. Thus, as they think that no particle of earth is or shall

ever be in the sky, so we ought to see no particle of fire on the

earth. But the fact is that it exists to such an extent, not only on

but even under the earth, that the tops of mountains vomit it forth;

besides that we see it to exist on earth for human uses, and even to

be produced from the earth, since it is kindled from wood and stones,

which are without doubt earthly bodies. But that [upper] fire, they

say, is tranquil, pure, harmless, eternal; but this [earthly] fire is

turbid, smoky, corruptible, and corrupting. But it does not corrupt

the mountains and caverns of the earth in which it rages continually.

But grant that the earthly fire is so unlike the other as to suit its

earthly position, why then do they object to our believing that the

nature of earthly bodies shall some day be made incorruptible and fit

for the sky, even as now fire is corruptible and suited to the earth?

They therefore adduce from their weights and order of the elements

nothing from which they can prove that it is impossible for Almighty

God to make our bodies such that they can dwell in the skies.

12. \_Against the calumnies with which unbelievers throw ridicule

upon the Christian faith in the resurrection of the flesh.\_

But their way is to feign a scrupulous anxiety in investigating this

question, and to cast ridicule on our faith in the resurrection of the

body, by asking, Whether abortions shall rise? And as the Lord says,

"Verily I say unto you, not a hair of your head shall perish,"[986]

shall all bodies have an equal stature and strength, or shall there be

differences in size? For if there is to be equality, where shall those

abortions, supposing that they rise again, get that bulk which they

had not here? Or if they shall not rise because they were not born but

cast out, they raise the same question about children who have died

in childhood, asking us whence they get the stature which we see they

had not here; for we will not say that those who have been not only

born, but born again, shall not rise again. Then, further, they ask of

what size these equal bodies shall be. For if all shall be as tall and

large as were the tallest and largest in this world, they ask us how

it is that not only children but many full-grown persons shall receive

what they here did not possess, if each one is to receive what he had

here. And if the saying of the apostle, that we are all to come to

the "measure of the age of the fulness of Christ,"[987] or that other

saying, "Whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His

Son,"[988] is to be understood to mean that the stature and size of

Christ's body shall be the measure of the bodies of all those who shall

be in His kingdom, then, say they, the size and height of many must be

diminished; and if so much of the bodily frame itself be lost, what

becomes of the saying, "Not a hair of your head shall perish?" Besides,

it might be asked regarding the hair itself, whether all that the

barber has cut off shall be restored? And if it is to be restored, who

would not shrink from such deformity? For as the same restoration will

be made of what has been pared off the nails, much will be replaced

on the body which a regard for its appearance had cut off. And where,

then, will be its beauty, which assuredly ought to be much greater in

that immortal condition than it could be in this corruptible state?

On the other hand, if such things are not restored to the body, they

must perish; how, then, they say, shall not a hair of the head perish?

In like manner they reason about fatness and leanness; for if all are

to be equal, then certainly there shall not be some fat, others lean.

Some, therefore, shall gain, others lose something. Consequently there

will not be a simple restoration of what formerly existed, but, on the

one hand, an addition of what had no existence, and, on the other, a

loss of what did before exist.

The difficulties, too, about the corruption and dissolution of dead

bodies,--that one is turned into dust, while another evaporates into

the air; that some are devoured by beasts, some by fire, while some

perish by shipwreck or by drowning in one shape or other, so that their

bodies decay into liquid,--these difficulties give them immoderate

alarm, and they believe that all those dissolved elements cannot be

gathered again and reconstructed into a body. They also make eager

use of all the deformities and blemishes which either accident or

birth has produced, and accordingly, with horror and derision, cite

monstrous births, and ask if every deformity will be preserved in the

resurrection. For if we say that no such thing shall be reproduced

in the body of a man, they suppose that they confute us by citing

the marks of the wounds which we assert were found in the risen body

of the Lord Christ. But of all these, the most difficult question

is, into whose body that flesh shall return which has been eaten and

assimilated by another man constrained by hunger to use it so; for

it has been converted into the flesh of the man who used it as his

nutriment, and it filled up those losses of flesh which famine had

produced. For the sake, then, of ridiculing the resurrection, they ask,

Shall this return to the man whose flesh it first was, or to him whose

flesh it afterwards became? And thus, too, they seek to give promise

to the human soul of alternations of true misery and false happiness,

in accordance with Plato's theory; or, in accordance with Porphyry's,

that, after many transmigrations into different bodies, it ends its

miseries, and never more returns to them, not, however, by obtaining an

immortal body, but by escaping from every kind of body.

13. \_Whether abortions, if they are numbered among the dead,

shall not also have a part in the resurrection.\_

To these objections, then, of our adversaries which I have thus

detailed, I will now reply, trusting that God will mercifully assist

my endeavours. That abortions, which, even supposing they were alive

in the womb, did also die there, shall rise again, I make bold

neither to affirm nor to deny, although I fail to see why, if they

are not excluded from the number of the dead, they should not attain

to the resurrection of the dead. For either all the dead shall not

rise, and there will be to all eternity some souls without bodies,

though they once had them,--only in their mother's womb, indeed; or,

if all human souls shall receive again the bodies which they had

wherever they lived, and which they left when they died, then I do

not see how I can say that even those who died in their mother's womb

shall have no resurrection. But whichever of these opinions any one

may adopt concerning them, we must at least apply to them, if they

rise again, all that we have to say of infants who have been born.

14. \_Whether infants shall rise in that body which they would

have had had they grown up.\_

What, then, are we to say of infants, if not that they will not

rise in that diminutive body in which they died, but shall receive

by the marvellous and rapid operation of God that body which time

by a slower process would have given them? For in the Lord's words,

where He says, "Not a hair of your head shall perish,"[989] it is

asserted that nothing which was possessed shall be wanting; but it

is not said that nothing which was not possessed shall be given. To

the dead infant there was wanting the perfect stature of its body;

for even the perfect infant lacks the perfection of bodily size,

being capable of further growth. This perfect stature is, in a sense,

so possessed by all that they are conceived and born with it,--that

is, they have it potentially, though not yet in actual bulk; just

as all the members of the body are potentially in the seed, though,

even after the child is born, some of them, the teeth for example,

may be wanting. In this seminal principle of every substance, there

seems to be, as it were, the beginning of everything which does not

yet exist, or rather does not appear, but which in process of time

will come into being, or rather into sight. In this, therefore, the

child who is to be tall or short is already tall or short. And in

the resurrection of the body, we need, for the same reason, fear

no bodily loss; for though all should be of equal size, and reach

gigantic proportions, lest the men who were largest here should lose

anything of their bulk and it should perish, in contradiction to

the words of Christ, who said that not a hair of their head should

perish, yet why should there lack the means by which that wonderful

Worker should make such additions, seeing that He is the Creator, who

Himself created all things out of nothing?

15. \_Whether the bodies of all the dead shall rise the same size

as the Lord's body.\_

It is certain that Christ rose in the same bodily stature in which He

died, and that it is wrong to say that, when the general resurrection

shall have arrived, His body shall, for the sake of equalling the

tallest, assume proportions which it had not when He appeared to the

disciples in the figure with which they were familiar. But if we say

that even the bodies of taller men are to be reduced to the size of

the Lord's body, there will be a great loss in many bodies, though

He promised that not a hair of their head should perish. It remains,

therefore, that we conclude that every man shall receive his own size

which he had in youth, though he died an old man, or which he would

have had, supposing he died before his prime. As for what the apostle

said of the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ, we must

either understand him to refer to something else, viz. to the fact

that the measure of Christ will be completed when all the members

among the Christian communities are added to the Head; or if we are

to refer it to the resurrection of the body, the meaning is that all

shall rise neither beyond nor under youth, but in that vigour and age

to which we know that Christ had arrived. For even the world's wisest

men have fixed the bloom of youth at about the age of thirty; and

when this period has been passed, the man begins to decline towards

the defective and duller period of old age. And therefore the apostle

did not speak of the measure of the body, nor of the measure of the

stature, but of "the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."

16. \_What is meant by the conforming of the saints to the image

of the Son of God.\_

Then, again, these words, "Predestinate to be conformed to the image

of the Son of God,"[990] may be understood of the inner man. So in

another place He says to us, "Be not conformed to this world, but

be ye transformed in the renewing of your mind."[991] In so far,

then, as we are transformed so as not to be conformed to the world,

we are conformed to the Son of God. It may also be understood thus,

that as He was conformed to us by assuming mortality, we shall be

conformed to Him by immortality; and this indeed is connected with

the resurrection of the body. But if we are also taught in these

words what form our bodies shall rise in, as the measure we spoke

of before, so also this conformity is to be understood not of size,

but of age. Accordingly all shall rise in the stature they either

had attained or would have attained had they lived to their prime,

although it will be no great disadvantage even if the form of the

body be infantine or aged, while no infirmity shall remain in the

mind nor in the body itself. So that even if any one contends that

every person will rise again in the same bodily form in which he

died, we need not spend much labour in disputing with him.

17. \_Whether the bodies of women shall retain their own sex in

the resurrection.\_

From the words, "Till we all come to a perfect man, to the measure of

the age of the fulness of Christ,"[992] and from the words, "Conformed

to the image of the Son of God,"[993] some conclude that women shall

not rise women, but that all shall be men, because God made man only

of earth, and woman of the man. For my part, they seem to be wiser who

make no doubt that both sexes shall rise. For there shall be no lust,

which is now the cause of confusion. For before they sinned, the man

and the woman were naked, and were not ashamed. From those bodies,

then, vice shall be withdrawn, while nature shall be preserved. And

the sex of woman is not a vice, but nature. It shall then indeed be

superior to carnal intercourse and child-bearing; nevertheless the

female members shall remain adapted not to the old uses, but to a new

beauty, which, so far from provoking lust, now extinct, shall excite

praise to the wisdom and clemency of God, who both made what was not

and delivered from corruption what He made. For at the beginning of

the human race the woman was made of a rib taken from the side of the

man while he slept; for it seemed fit that even then Christ and His

Church should be foreshadowed in this event. For that sleep of the

man was the death of Christ, whose side, as He hung lifeless upon the

cross, was pierced with a spear, and there flowed from it blood and

water, and these we know to be the sacraments by which the Church is

"built up." For Scripture used this very word, not saying "He formed"

or "framed," but "built her up into a woman;"[994] whence also the

apostle speaks of the \_edification\_ of the body of Christ,[995] which

is the Church. The woman, therefore, is a creature of God even as the

man; but by her creation from man unity is commended; and the manner

of her creation prefigured, as has been said, Christ and the Church.

He, then, who created both sexes will restore both. Jesus Himself also,

when asked by the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, which of the

seven brothers should have to wife the woman whom all in succession had

taken to raise up seed to their brother, as the law enjoined, says,

"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."[996] And

though it was a fit opportunity for His saying, She about whom you make

inquiries shall herself be a man, and not a woman, He said nothing of

the kind; but "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in

marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."[997] They shall be

equal to the angels in immortality and happiness, not in flesh, nor in

resurrection, which the angels did not need, because they could not

die. The Lord then denied that there would be in the resurrection,

not women, but marriages; and He uttered this denial in circumstances

in which the question mooted would have been more easily and speedily

solved by denying that the female sex would exist, if this had in truth

been foreknown by Him. But, indeed, He even affirmed that the sex

should exist by saying, "They shall not be given in marriage," which

can only apply to females; "Neither shall they marry," which applies to

males. There shall therefore be those who are in this world accustomed

to marry and be given in marriage, only they shall there make no such

marriages.

18. \_Of the perfect Man, that is, Christ; and of His body, that is,

the Church, which is His fulness.\_

To understand what the apostle means when he says that we shall all

come to a perfect man, we must consider the connection of the whole

passage, which runs thus: "He that descended is the same also that

ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And

He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;

and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for

the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

till we all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son

of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fulness of

Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed and carried

about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning

craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the

truth in love, may grow up in Him in all things, which is the Head,

even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and

compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the

effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of

the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."[998] Behold what

the perfect man is--the head and the body, which is made up of all

the members, which in their own time shall be perfected. But new

additions are daily being made to this body while the Church is being

built up, to which it is said, "Ye are the body of Christ and His

members;"[999] and again, "For His body's sake," he says, "which

is the Church;"[1000] and again, "We being many are one head, one

body."[1001] It is of the edification of this body that it is here,

too, said, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the

ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ;" and then that

passage of which we are now speaking is added, "Till we all come to

the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect

man, to the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ," and so

on. And he shows of what body we are to understand this to be the

measure, when he says, "That we may grow up into Him in all things,

which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly

joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth,

according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." As,

therefore, there is a measure of every part, so there is a measure of

the fulness of the whole body which is made up of all its parts, and

it is of this measure it is said, "To the measure of the age of the

fulness of Christ." This fulness he spoke of also in the place where

he says of Christ, "And gave Him to be the Head over all things to

the Church,[1002] which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth

all in all."[1003] But even if this should be referred to the form

in which each one shall rise, what should hinder us from applying to

the woman what is expressly said of the man, understanding both sexes

to be included under the general term "man?" For certainly in the

saying, "Blessed is he who feareth the Lord,"[1004] women also who

fear the Lord are included.

19. \_That all bodily blemishes which mar human beauty in this life

shall be removed in the resurrection, the natural substance of

the body remaining, but the quality and quantity of it being

altered so as to produce beauty.\_

What am I to say now about the hair and nails? Once it is understood

that no part of the body shall so perish as to produce deformity in

the body, it is at the same time understood that such things as would

have produced a deformity by their excessive proportions shall be

added to the total bulk of the body, not to parts in which the beauty

of the proportion would thus be marred. Just as if, after making a

vessel of clay, one wished to make it over again of the same clay, it

would not be necessary that the same portion of the clay which had

formed the handle should again form the new handle, or that what had

formed the bottom should again do so, but only that the whole clay

should go to make up the whole new vessel, and that no part of it

should be left unused. Wherefore, if the hair that has been cropped

and the nails that have been cut would cause a deformity were they

to be restored to their places, they shall not be restored; and yet

no one will lose these parts at the resurrection, for they shall be

changed into the same flesh, their substance being so altered as to

preserve the proportion of the various parts of the body. However,

what our Lord said, "Not a hair of your head shall perish," might

more suitably be interpreted of the number, and not of the length

of the hairs, as He elsewhere says, "The hairs of your head are all

numbered."[1005] Nor would I say this because I suppose that any

part naturally belonging to the body can perish, but that whatever

deformity was in it, and served to exhibit the penal condition in

which we mortals are, should be restored in such a way that, while

the substance is entirely preserved, the deformity shall perish.

For if even a human workman, who has, for some reason, made a

deformed statue, can recast it and make it very beautiful, and this

without suffering any part of the substance, but only the deformity

to be lost,--if he can, for example, remove some unbecoming or

disproportionate part, not by cutting off and separating this part

from the whole, but by so breaking down and mixing up the whole as

to get rid of the blemish without diminishing the quantity of his

material,--shall we not think as highly of the almighty Worker? Shall

He not be able to remove and abolish all deformities of the human

body, whether common ones or rare and monstrous, which, though in

keeping with this miserable life, are yet not to be thought of in

connection with that future blessedness; and shall He not be able so

to remove them that, while the natural but unseemly blemishes are put

an end to, the natural substance shall suffer no diminution?

And consequently overgrown and emaciated persons need not fear that

they shall be in heaven of such a figure as they would not be even in

this world if they could help it. For all bodily beauty consists in

the proportion of the parts, together with a certain agreeableness

of colour. Where there is no proportion, the eye is offended, either

because there is something awanting, or too small, or too large. And

thus there shall be no deformity resulting from want of proportion

in that state in which all that is wrong is corrected, and all that

is defective supplied from resources the Creator wots of, and all

that is excessive removed without destroying the integrity of the

substance. And as for the pleasant colour, how conspicuous shall it

be where "the just shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of

their Father!"[1006] This brightness we must rather believe to have

been concealed from the eyes of the disciples when Christ rose, than

to have been awanting. For weak human eyesight could not bear it,

and it was necessary that they should so look upon Him as to be able

to recognise Him. For this purpose also He allowed them to touch the

marks of His wounds, and also ate and drank,--not because He needed

nourishment, but because He could take it if He wished. Now, when an

object, though present, is invisible to persons who see other things

which are present, as we say that that brightness was present but

invisible by those who saw other things, this is called in Greek

ἀορασία; and our Latin translators, for want of a better word, have

rendered this \_cæcitas\_ (blindness) in the book of Genesis. This

blindness the men of Sodom suffered when they sought the just Lot's

gate and could not find it. But if it had been blindness, that is

to say, if they could see nothing, then they would not have asked

for the gate by which they might enter the house, but for guides who

might lead them away.

But the love we bear to the blessed martyrs causes us, I know not

how, to desire to see in the heavenly kingdom the marks of the wounds

which they received for the name of Christ, and possibly we shall

see them. For this will not be a deformity, but a mark of honour,

and will add lustre to their appearance, and a spiritual, if not a

bodily beauty. And yet we need not believe that they to whom it has

been said, "Not a hair of your head shall perish," shall, in the

resurrection, want such of their members as they have been deprived

of in their martyrdom. But if it will be seemly in that new kingdom

to have some marks of these wounds still visible in that immortal

flesh, the places where they have been wounded or mutilated shall

retain the scars without any of the members being lost. While,

therefore, it is quite true that no blemishes which the body has

sustained shall appear in the resurrection, yet we are not to reckon

or name these marks of virtue blemishes.

20. \_That, in the resurrection, the substance of our bodies,

however disintegrated, shall be entirely reunited.\_

Far be it from us to fear that the omnipotence of the Creator cannot,

for the resuscitation and reanimation of our bodies, recall all the

portions which have been consumed by beasts or fire, or have been

dissolved into dust or ashes, or have decomposed into water, or

evaporated into the air. Far from us be the thought, that anything

which escapes our observation in any most hidden recess of nature

either evades the knowledge or transcends the power of the Creator of

all things. Cicero, the great authority of our adversaries, wishing

to define God as accurately as possible, says, "God is a mind free

and independent, without materiality, perceiving and moving all

things, and itself endowed with eternal movement."[1007] This he

found in the systems of the greatest philosophers. Let me ask, then,

in their own language, how anything can either lie hid from Him who

perceives all things, or irrevocably escape Him who moves all things?

This leads me to reply to that question which seems the most difficult

of all,--To whom, in the resurrection, will belong the flesh of a

dead man which has become the flesh of a living man? For if some

one, famishing for want and pressed with hunger, use human flesh

as food,--an extremity not unknown, as both ancient history and

the unhappy experience of our own days have taught us,--can it be

contended, with any show of reason, that all the flesh eaten has been

evacuated, and that none of it has been assimilated to the substance

of the eater, though the very emaciation which existed before, and has

now disappeared, sufficiently indicates what large deficiencies have

been filled up with this food? But I have already made some remarks

which will suffice for the solution of this difficulty also. For all

the flesh which hunger has consumed finds its way into the air by

evaporation, whence, as we have said, God Almighty can recall it.

That flesh, therefore, shall be restored to the man in whom it first

became human flesh. For it must be looked upon as borrowed by the other

person, and, like a pecuniary loan, must be returned to the lender. His

own flesh, however, which he lost by famine, shall be restored to him

by Him who can recover even what has evaporated. And though it had been

absolutely annihilated, so that no part of its substance remained in

any secret spot of nature, the Almighty could restore it by such means

as He saw fit. For this sentence, uttered by the Truth, "Not a hair of

your head shall perish," forbids us to suppose that, though no hair of

a man's head can perish, yet the large portions of his flesh eaten and

consumed by the famishing can perish.

From all that we have thus considered, and discussed with such

poor ability as we can command, we gather this conclusion, that in

the resurrection of the flesh the body shall be of that size which

it either had attained or should have attained in the flower of

its youth, and shall enjoy the beauty that arises from preserving

symmetry and proportion in all its members. And it is reasonable

to suppose that, for the preservation of this beauty, any part of

the body's substance, which, if placed in one spot, would produce

a deformity, shall be distributed through the whole of it, so that

neither any part, nor the symmetry of the whole, may be lost, but

only the general stature of the body somewhat increased by the

distribution in all the parts of that which, in one place, would have

been unsightly. Or if it is contended that each will rise with the

same stature as that of the body he died in, we shall not obstinately

dispute this, provided only there be no deformity, no infirmity, no

languor, no corruption,--nothing of any kind which would ill become

that kingdom in which the children of the resurrection and of the

promise shall be equal to the angels of God, if not in body and age,

at least in happiness.

21. \_Of the new spiritual body into which the flesh of the saints

shall be transformed.\_

Whatever, therefore, has been taken from the body, either during life

or after death, shall be restored to it, and, in conjunction with what

has remained in the grave, shall rise again, transformed from the

oldness of the animal body into the newness of the spiritual body, and

clothed in incorruption and immortality. But even though the body has

been all quite ground to powder by some severe accident, or by the

ruthlessness of enemies, and though it has been so diligently scattered

to the winds, or into the water, that there is no trace of it left,

yet it shall not be beyond the omnipotence of the Creator,--no, not

a hair of its head shall perish. The flesh shall then be spiritual,

and subject to the spirit, but still flesh, not spirit, as the spirit

itself, when subject to the flesh, was fleshly, but still spirit and

not flesh. And of this we have experimental proof in the deformity of

our penal condition. For those persons were carnal, not in a fleshly,

but in a spiritual way, to whom the apostle said, "I could not speak to

you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal."[1008] And a man is in this

life spiritual in such a way, that he is yet carnal with respect to

his body, and sees another law in his members warring against the law

of his mind; but even in his body he will be spiritual when the same

flesh shall have had that resurrection of which these words speak, "It

is sown an animal body, it shall rise a spiritual body."[1009] But what

this spiritual body shall be, and how great its grace, I fear it were

but rash to pronounce, seeing that we have as yet no experience of it.

Nevertheless, since it is fit that the joyfulness of our hope should

utter itself, and so show forth God's praise, and since it was from the

profoundest sentiment of ardent and holy love that the Psalmist cried,

"O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house,"[1010] we may, with

God's help, speak of the gifts He lavishes on men, good and bad alike,

in this most wretched life, and may do our best to conjecture the

great glory of that state which we cannot worthily speak of, because

we have not yet experienced it. For I say nothing of the time when God

made man upright; I say nothing of the happy life of "the man and his

wife" in the fruitful garden, since it was so short that none of their

children experienced it: I speak only of this life which we know, and

in which we now are, from the temptations of which we cannot escape so

long as we are in it, no matter what progress we make, for it is all

temptation, and I ask, Who can describe the tokens of God's goodness

that are extended to the human race even in this life?

22. \_Of the miseries and ills to which the human race is justly

exposed through the first sin, and from which none can be

delivered save by Christ's grace.\_

That the whole human race has been condemned in its first origin,

this life itself, if life it is to be called, bears witness by the

host of cruel ills with which it is filled. Is not this proved by

the profound and dreadful ignorance which produces all the errors

that enfold the children of Adam, and from which no man can be

delivered without toil, pain, and fear? Is it not proved by his love

of so many vain and hurtful things, which produces gnawing cares,

disquiet, griefs, fears, wild joys, quarrels, law-suits, wars,

treasons, angers, hatreds, deceit, flattery, fraud, theft, robbery,

perfidy, pride, ambition, envy, murders, parricides, cruelty,

ferocity, wickedness, luxury, insolence, impudence, shamelessness,

fornications, adulteries, incests, and the numberless uncleannesses

and unnatural acts of both sexes, which it is shameful so much as to

mention; sacrileges, heresies, blasphemies, perjuries, oppression

of the innocent, calumnies, plots, falsehoods, false witnessings,

unrighteous judgments, violent deeds, plunderings, and whatever

similar wickedness has found its way into the lives of men, though

it cannot find its way into the conception of pure minds? These are

indeed the crimes of wicked men, yet they spring from that root of

error and misplaced love which is born with every son of Adam. For

who is there that has not observed with what profound ignorance,

manifesting itself even in infancy, and with what superfluity of

foolish desires, beginning to appear in boyhood, man comes into this

life, so that, were he left to live as he pleased, and to do whatever

he pleased, he would plunge into all, or certainly into many of those

crimes and iniquities which I mentioned, and could not mention?

But because God does not wholly desert those whom He condemns,

nor shuts up in His anger His tender mercies, the human race is

restrained by law and instruction, which keep guard against the

ignorance that besets us, and oppose the assaults of vice, but

are themselves full of labour and sorrow. For what mean those

multifarious threats which are used to restrain the folly of

children? What mean pedagogues, masters, the birch, the strap, the

cane, the schooling which Scripture says must be given a child,

"beating him on the sides lest he wax stubborn,"[1011] and it be

hardly possible or not possible at all to subdue him? Why all

these punishments, save to overcome ignorance and bridle evil

desires--these evils with which we come into the world? For why is

it that we remember with difficulty, and without difficulty forget?

learn with difficulty, and without difficulty remain ignorant? are

diligent with difficulty, and without difficulty are indolent? Does

not this show what vitiated nature inclines and tends to by its

own weight, and what succour it needs if it is to be delivered?

Inactivity, sloth, laziness, negligence, are vices which shun labour,

since labour, though useful, is itself a punishment.

But, besides the punishments of childhood, without which there

would be no learning of what the parents wish,--and the parents

rarely wish anything useful to be taught,--who can describe, who can

conceive the number and severity of the punishments which afflict

the human race,--pains which are not only the accompaniment of the

wickedness of godless men, but are a part of the human condition

and the common misery,--what fear and what grief are caused by

bereavement and mourning, by losses and condemnations, by fraud

and falsehood, by false suspicions, and all the crimes and wicked

deeds of other men? For at their hands we suffer robbery, captivity,

chains, imprisonment, exile, torture, mutilation, loss of sight,

the violation of chastity to satisfy the lust of the oppressor, and

many other dreadful evils. What numberless casualties threaten our

bodies from without,--extremes of heat and cold, storms, floods,

inundations, lightning, thunder, hail, earthquakes, houses falling;

or from the stumbling, or shying, or vice of horses; from countless

poisons in fruits, water, air, animals; from the painful or even

deadly bites of wild animals; from the madness which a mad dog

communicates, so that even the animal which of all others is most

gentle and friendly to its own master, becomes an object of intenser

fear than a lion or dragon, and the man whom it has by chance

infected with this pestilential contagion becomes so rabid, that his

parents, wife, children, dread him more than any wild beast! What

disasters are suffered by those who travel by land or sea! What man

can go out of his own house without being exposed on all hands to

unforeseen accidents? Returning home sound in limb, he slips on his

own door-step, breaks his leg, and never recovers. What can seem

safer than a man sitting in his chair? Eli the priest fell from his,

and broke his neck. How many accidents do farmers, or rather all men,

fear that the crops may suffer from the weather, or the soil, or the

ravages of destructive animals? Commonly they feel safe when the

crops are gathered and housed. Yet, to my certain knowledge, sudden

floods have driven the labourers away, and swept the barns clean of

the finest harvest. Is innocence a sufficient protection against the

various assaults of demons? That no man might think so, even baptized

infants, who are certainly unsurpassed in innocence, are sometimes

so tormented, that God, who permits it, teaches us hereby to bewail

the calamities of this life, and to desire the felicity of the life

to come. As to bodily diseases, they are so numerous that they cannot

all be contained even in medical books. And in very many, or almost

all of them, the cures and remedies are themselves tortures, so that

men are delivered from a pain that destroys by a cure that pains. Has

not the madness of thirst driven men to drink human urine, and even

their own? Has not hunger driven men to eat human flesh, and that the

flesh not of bodies found dead, but of bodies slain for the purpose?

Have not the fierce pangs of famine driven mothers to eat their own

children, incredibly savage as it seems? In line, sleep itself, which

is justly called repose, how little of repose there sometimes is in

it when disturbed with dreams and visions; and with what terror is

the wretched mind overwhelmed by the appearances of things which are

so presented, and which, as it were, so stand out before the senses,

that we cannot distinguish them from realities! How wretchedly

do false appearances distract men in certain diseases! With what

astonishing variety of appearances are even healthy men sometimes

deceived by evil spirits, who produce these delusions for the sake

of perplexing the senses of their victims, if they cannot succeed in

seducing them to their side!

From this hell upon earth there is no escape, save through the grace

of the Saviour Christ, our God and Lord. The very name Jesus shows

this, for it means Saviour; and He saves us especially from passing

out of this life into a more wretched and eternal state, which is

rather a death than a life. For in this life, though holy men and

holy pursuits afford us great consolations, yet the blessings which

men crave are not invariably bestowed upon them, lest religion should

be cultivated for the sake of these temporal advantages, while it

ought rather to be cultivated for the sake of that other life from

which all evil is excluded. Therefore, also, does grace aid good

men in the midst of present calamities, so that they are enabled to

endure them with a constancy proportioned to their faith. The world's

sages affirm that philosophy contributes something to this,--that

philosophy which, according to Cicero, the gods have bestowed in its

purity only on a few men. They have never given, he says, nor can

ever give, a greater gift to men. So that even those against whom we

are disputing have been compelled to acknowledge, in some fashion,

that the grace of God is necessary for the acquisition, not, indeed,

of any philosophy, but of the true philosophy. And if the true

philosophy--this sole support against the miseries of this life--has

been given by Heaven only to a few, it sufficiently appears from

this that the human race has been condemned to pay this penalty of

wretchedness. And as, according to their acknowledgment, no greater

gift has been bestowed by God, so it must be believed that it could

be given only by that God whom they themselves recognise as greater

than all the gods they worship.

23. \_Of the miseries of this life which attach peculiarly to the

toil of good men, irrespective of those which are common to the

good and bad.\_

But, irrespective of the miseries which in this life are common

to the good and bad, the righteous undergo labours peculiar to

themselves, in so far as they make war upon their vices, and are

involved in the temptations and perils of such a contest. For though

sometimes more violent and at other times slacker, yet without

intermission does the flesh lust against the spirit and the spirit

against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things we would,[1012]

and extirpate all lust, but can only refuse consent to it, as God

gives us ability, and so keep it under, vigilantly keeping watch

lest a semblance of truth deceive us, lest a subtle discourse blind

us, lest error involve us in darkness, lest we should take good for

evil or evil for good, lest fear should hinder us from doing what we

ought, or desire precipitate us into doing what we ought not, lest

the sun go down upon our wrath, lest hatred provoke us to render

evil for evil, lest unseemly or immoderate grief consume us, lest an

ungrateful disposition make us slow to recognise benefits received,

lest calumnies fret our conscience, lest rash suspicion on our part

deceive us regarding a friend, or false suspicion of us on the part

of others give us too much uneasiness, lest sin reign in our mortal

body to obey its desires, lest our members be used as the instruments

of unrighteousness, lest the eye follow lust, lest thirst for revenge

carry us away, lest sight or thought dwell too long on some evil

thing which gives us pleasure, lest wicked or indecent language be

willingly listened to, lest we do what is pleasant but unlawful, and

lest in this warfare, filled so abundantly with toil and peril, we

either hope to secure victory by our own strength, or attribute it

when secured to our own strength, and not to His grace of whom the

apostle says, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through

our Lord Jesus Christ;"[1013] and in another place he says, "In all

these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved

us."[1014] But yet we are to know this, that however valorously we

resist our vices, and however successful we are in overcoming them,

yet as long as we are in this body we have always reason to say to

God, "Forgive us our debts."[1015] But in that kingdom where we shall

dwell for ever, clothed in immortal bodies, we shall no longer have

either conflicts or debts,--as indeed we should not have had at any

time or in any condition, had our nature continued upright as it was

created. Consequently even this our conflict, in which we are exposed

to peril, and from which we hope to be delivered by a final victory,

belongs to the ills of this life, which is proved by the witness of

so many grave evils to be a life under condemnation.

24. \_Of the blessings with which the Creator has filled this life,

obnoxious though it be to the curse.\_

But we must now contemplate the rich and countless blessings with

which the goodness of God, who cares for all He has created, has filled

this very misery of the human race, which reflects His retributive

justice. That first blessing which He pronounced before the fall, when

He said, "Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth,"[1016] He

did not inhibit after man had sinned, but the fecundity originally

bestowed remained in the condemned stock; and the vice of sin, which

has involved us in the necessity of dying, has yet not deprived us of

that wonderful power of seed, or rather of that still more marvellous

power by which seed is produced, and which seems to be as it were

inwrought and inwoven in the human body. But in this river, as I may

call it, or torrent of the human race, both elements are carried along

together,--both the evil which is derived from him who begets, and

the good which is bestowed by Him who creates us. In the original

evil there are two things, sin and punishment; in the original good,

there are two other things, propagation and conformation. But of the

evils, of which the one, sin, arose from our audacity, and the other,

punishment, from God's judgment, we have already said as much as suits

our present purpose. I mean now to speak of the blessings which God has

conferred or still confers upon our nature, vitiated and condemned as

it is. For in condemning it He did not withdraw all that He had given

it, else it had been annihilated; neither did He, in penally subjecting

it to the devil, remove it beyond His own power; for not even the

devil himself is outside of God's government, since the devil's nature

subsists only by the supreme Creator, who gives being to all that in

any form exists.

Of these two blessings, then, which we have said flow from God's

goodness, as from a fountain, towards our nature, vitiated by sin

and condemned to punishment, the one, propagation, was conferred

by God's benediction when He made those first works, from which He

rested on the seventh day. But the other, conformation, is conferred

in that work of His wherein "He worketh hitherto."[1017] For were He

to withdraw His efficacious power from things, they should neither

be able to go on and complete the periods assigned to their measured

movements, nor should they even continue in possession of that

nature they were created in. God, then, so created man that He gave

him what we may call fertility, whereby he might propagate other

men, giving them a congenital capacity to propagate their kind,

but not imposing on them any necessity to do so. This capacity God

withdraws at pleasure from individuals, making them barren; but from

the whole race He has not withdrawn the blessing of propagation once

conferred. But though not withdrawn on account of sin, this power

of propagation is not what it would have been had there been no

sin. For since "man placed in honour fell, he has become like the

beasts,"[1018] and generates as they do, though the little spark

of reason, which was the image of God in him, has not been quite

quenched. But if conformation were not added to propagation, there

would be no reproduction of one's kind. For even though there were no

such thing as copulation, and God wished to fill the earth with human

inhabitants, He might create all these as He created one without

the help of human generation. And, indeed, even as it is, those who

copulate can generate nothing save by the creative energy of God.

As, therefore, in respect of that spiritual growth whereby a man is

formed to piety and righteousness, the apostle says, "Neither is

he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that

giveth the increase,"[1019] so also it must be said that it is not he

that generates that is anything, but God that giveth the essential

form; that it is not the mother who carries and nurses the fruit of

her womb that is anything, but God that giveth the increase. For He

alone, by that energy wherewith "He worketh hitherto," causes the

seed to develope, and to evolve from certain secret and invisible

folds into the visible forms of beauty which we see. He alone,

coupling and connecting in some wonderful fashion the spiritual and

corporeal natures, the one to command, the other to obey, makes

a living being. And this work of His is so great and wonderful,

that not only man, who is a rational animal, and consequently

more excellent than all other animals of the earth, but even the

most diminutive insect, cannot be considered attentively without

astonishment and without praising the Creator.

It is He, then, who has given to the human soul a mind, in which

reason and understanding lie as it were asleep during infancy, and as

if they were not, destined, however, to be awakened and exercised as

years increase, so as to become capable of knowledge and of receiving

instruction, fit to understand what is true and to love what is good.

It is by this capacity the soul drinks in wisdom, and becomes endowed

with those virtues by which, in prudence, fortitude, temperance,

and righteousness, it makes war upon error and the other inborn

vices, and conquers them by fixing its desires upon no other object

than the supreme and unchangeable Good. And even though this be not

uniformly the result, yet who can competently utter or even conceive

the grandeur of this work of the Almighty, and the unspeakable boon

He has conferred upon our rational nature, by giving us even the

capacity of such attainment? For over and above those arts which

are called virtues, and which teach us how we may spend our life

well, and attain to endless happiness,--arts which are given to the

children of the promise and the kingdom by the sole grace of God

which is in Christ,--has not the genius of man invented and applied

countless astonishing arts, partly the result of necessity, partly

the result of exuberant invention, so that this vigour of mind, which

is so active in the discovery not merely of superfluous but even of

dangerous and destructive things, betokens an inexhaustible wealth

in the nature which can invent, learn, or employ such arts? What

wonderful--one might say stupefying--advances has human industry made

in the arts of weaving and building, of agriculture and navigation!

With what endless variety are designs in pottery, painting, and

sculpture produced, and with what skill executed! What wonderful

spectacles are exhibited in the theatres, which those who have not

seen them cannot credit! How skilful the contrivances for catching,

killing, or taming wild beasts! And for the injury of men, also,

how many kinds of poisons, weapons, engines of destruction, have

been invented, while for the preservation or restoration of health

the appliances and remedies are infinite! To provoke appetite and

please the palate, what a variety of seasonings have been concocted!

To express and gain entrance for thoughts, what a multitude and

variety of signs there are, among which speaking and writing hold the

first place! what ornaments has eloquence at command to delight the

mind! what wealth of song is there to captivate the ear! how many

musical instruments and strains of harmony have been devised! What

skill has been attained in measures and numbers! with what sagacity

have the movements and connections of the stars been discovered!

Who could tell the thought that has been spent upon nature, even

though, despairing of recounting it in detail, he endeavoured only

to give a general view of it? In fine, even the defence of errors

and misapprehensions, which has illustrated the genius of heretics

and philosophers, cannot be sufficiently declared. For at present

it is the nature of the human mind which adorns this mortal life

which we are extolling, and not the faith and the way of truth which

lead to immortality. And since this great nature has certainly been

created by the true and supreme God, who administers all things

He has made with absolute power and justice, it could never have

fallen into these miseries, nor have gone out of them to miseries

eternal,--saving only those who are redeemed,--had not an exceeding

great sin been found in the first man from whom the rest have sprung.

Moreover, even in the body, though it dies like that of the beasts,

and is in many ways weaker than theirs, what goodness of God, what

providence of the great Creator, is apparent! The organs of sense and

the rest of the members, are not they so placed, the appearance, and

form, and stature of the body as a whole, is it not so fashioned,

as to indicate that it was made for the service of a reasonable

soul? Man has not been created stooping towards the earth, like

the irrational animals; but his bodily form, erect and looking

heavenwards, admonishes him to mind the things that are above. Then

the marvellous nimbleness which has been given to the tongue and the

hands, fitting them to speak, and write, and execute so many duties,

and practise so many arts, does it not prove the excellence of the

soul for which such an assistant was provided? And even apart from

its adaptation to the work required of it, there is such a symmetry

in its various parts, and so beautiful a proportion maintained, that

one is at a loss to decide whether, in creating the body, greater

regard was paid to utility or to beauty. Assuredly no part of the

body has been created for the sake of utility which does not also

contribute something to its beauty. And this would be all the more

apparent, if we knew more precisely how all its parts are connected

and adapted to one another, and were not limited in our observations

to what appears on the surface; for as to what is covered up and

hidden from our view, the intricate web of veins and nerves, the

vital parts of all that lies under the skin, no one can discover

it. For although, with a cruel zeal for science, some medical men,

who are called anatomists, have dissected the bodies of the dead,

and sometimes even of sick persons who died under their knives, and

have inhumanly pried into the secrets of the human body to learn

the nature of the disease and its exact seat, and how it might be

cured, yet those relations of which I speak, and which form the

concord,[1020] or, as the Greeks call it, "harmony," of the whole

body outside and in, as of some instrument, no one has been able to

discover, because no one has been audacious enough to seek for them.

But if these could be known, then even the inward parts, which seem

to have no beauty, would so delight us with their exquisite fitness,

as to afford a profounder satisfaction to the mind--and the eyes are

but its ministers--than the obvious beauty which gratifies the eye.

There are some things, too, which have such a place in the body, that

they obviously serve no useful purpose, but are solely for beauty,

as \_e.g.\_ the teats on a man's breast, or the beard on his face; for

that this is for ornament, and not for protection, is proved by the

bare faces of women, who ought rather, as the weaker sex, to enjoy

such a defence. If, therefore, of all those members which are exposed

to our view, there is certainly not one in which beauty is sacrificed

to utility, while there are some which serve no purpose but only

beauty, I think it can readily be concluded that in the creation of

the human body comeliness was more regarded than necessity. In truth,

necessity is a transitory thing; and the time is coming when we shall

enjoy one another's beauty without any lust,--a condition which will

specially redound to the praise of the Creator, who, as it is said in

the psalm, has "put on praise and comeliness."[1021]

How can I tell of the rest of creation, with all its beauty and

utility, which the divine goodness has given to man to please his

eye and serve his purposes, condemned though he is, and hurled into

these labours and miseries? Shall I speak of the manifold and various

loveliness of sky, and earth, and sea; of the plentiful supply

and wonderful qualities of the light; of sun, moon, and stars; of

the shade of trees; of the colours and perfume of flowers; of the

multitude of birds, all differing in plumage and in song; of the

variety of animals, of which the smallest in size are often the

most wonderful,--the works of ants and bees astonishing us more

than the huge bodies of whales? Shall I speak of the sea, which

itself is so grand a spectacle, when it arrays itself as it were

in vestures of various colours, now running through every shade of

green, and again becoming purple or blue? Is it not delightful to

look at it in storm, and experience the soothing complacency which

it inspires, by suggesting that we ourselves are not tossed and

shipwrecked?[1022] What shall I say of the numberless kinds of food

to alleviate hunger, and the variety of seasonings to stimulate

appetite which are scattered everywhere by nature, and for which we

are not indebted to the art of cookery? How many natural appliances

are there for preserving and restoring health! How grateful is the

alternation of day and night! how pleasant the breezes that cool the

air! how abundant the supply of clothing furnished us by trees and

animals! Who can enumerate all the blessings we enjoy? If I were to

attempt to detail and unfold only these few which I have indicated

in the mass, such an enumeration would fill a volume. And all these

are but the solace of the wretched and condemned, not the rewards

of the blessed. What then shall these rewards be, if such be the

blessings of a condemned state? What will He give to those whom He

has predestined to life, who has given such things even to those whom

He has predestined to death? What blessings will He in the blessed

life shower upon those for whom, even in this state of misery, He has

been willing that His only-begotten Son should endure such sufferings

even to death? Thus the apostle reasons concerning those who are

predestined to that kingdom: "He that spared not His own Son, but

delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also give us

all things?"[1023] When this promise is fulfilled, what shall we be?

What blessings shall we receive in that kingdom, since already we

have received as the pledge of them Christ's dying? In what condition

shall the spirit of man be, when it has no longer any vice at all;

when it neither yields to any, nor is in bondage to any, nor has to

make war against any, but is perfected, and enjoys undisturbed peace

with itself? Shall it not then know all things with certainty, and

without any labour or error, when unhindered and joyfully it drinks

the wisdom of God at the fountainhead? What shall the body be, when

it is in every respect subject to the spirit, from which it shall

draw a life so sufficient, as to stand in need of no other nutriment?

For it shall no longer be animal, but spiritual, having indeed the

substance of flesh, but without any fleshly corruption.

25. \_Of the obstinacy of those individuals who impugn the

resurrection of the body, though, as was predicted, the whole

world believes it.\_

The foremost of the philosophers agree with us about the spiritual

felicity enjoyed by the blessed in the life to come; it is only

the resurrection of the flesh they call in question, and with all

their might deny. But the mass of men, learned and unlearned, the

world's wise men and its fools, have believed, and have left in

meagre isolation the unbelievers, and have turned to Christ, who in

His own resurrection demonstrated the reality of that which seems to

our adversaries absurd. For the world has believed this which God

predicted, as it was also predicted that the world would believe,--a

prediction not due to the sorceries of Peter,[1024] since it was

uttered so long before. He who has predicted these things, as I have

already said, and am not ashamed to repeat, is the God before whom

all other divinities tremble, as Porphyry himself owns, and seeks to

prove, by testimonies from the oracles of these gods, and goes so far

as to call Him God the Father and King. Far be it from us to interpret

these predictions as they do who have not believed, along with the

whole world, in that which it was predicted the world would believe in.

For why should we not rather understand them as the world does, whose

belief was predicted, and leave that handful of unbelievers to their

idle talk and obstinate and solitary infidelity? For if they maintain

that they interpret them differently only to avoid charging Scripture

with folly, and so doing an injury to that God to whom they bear so

notable a testimony, is it not a much greater injury they do Him when

they say that His predictions must be understood otherwise than the

world believed them, though He Himself praised, promised, accomplished

this belief on the world's part? And why cannot He cause the body to

rise again, and live for ever? or is it not to be believed that He

will do this, because it is an undesirable thing, and unworthy of God?

Of His omnipotence, which effects so many great miracles, we have

already said enough. If they wish to know what the Almighty cannot do,

I shall tell them He cannot lie. Let us therefore believe what He can

do, by refusing to believe what He cannot do. Refusing to believe that

He can lie, let them believe that He will do what He has promised to

do; and let them believe it as the world has believed it, whose faith

He predicted, whose faith He praised, whose faith He promised, whose

faith He now points to. But how do they prove that the resurrection is

an undesirable thing? There shall then be no corruption, which is the

only evil thing about the body. I have already said enough about the

order of the elements, and the other fanciful objections men raise;

and in the thirteenth book I have, in my own judgment, sufficiently

illustrated the facility of movement which the incorruptible body shall

enjoy, judging from the ease and vigour we experience even now, when

the body is in good health. Those who have either not read the former

books, or wish to refresh their memory, may read them for themselves.

26. \_That the opinion of Porphyry, that the soul, in order to

be blessed, must be separated from every kind of body, is

demolished by Plato, who says that the supreme God promised the

gods that they should never be ousted from their bodies.\_

But, say they, Porphyry tells us that the soul, in order to be

blessed, must escape connection with every kind of body. It does not

avail, therefore, to say that the future body shall be incorruptible,

if the soul cannot be blessed till delivered from every kind of

body. But in the book above mentioned I have already sufficiently

discussed this. This one thing only will I repeat,--let Plato, their

master, correct his writings, and say that their gods, in order to be

blessed, must quit their bodies, or, in other words, die; for he said

that they were shut up in celestial bodies, and that, nevertheless,

the God who made them promised them immortality,--that is to say, an

eternal tenure of these same bodies, such as was not provided for

them naturally, but only by the further intervention of His will,

that thus they might be assured of felicity. In this he obviously

overturns their assertion that the resurrection of the body cannot be

believed because it is impossible; for, according to him, when the

uncreated God promised immortality to the created gods, He expressly

said that He would do what was impossible. For Plato tells us that

He said, "As ye have had a beginning, so you cannot be immortal and

incorruptible; yet ye shall not decay, nor shall any fate destroy

you or prove stronger than my will, which more effectually binds

you to immortality than the bond of your nature keeps you from it."

If they who hear these words have, we do not say understanding, but

ears, they cannot doubt that Plato believed that God promised to the

gods He had made that He would effect an impossibility. For He who

says, "Ye cannot be immortal, but by my will ye shall be immortal,"

what else does He say than this, "I shall make you what ye cannot

be?" The body, therefore, shall be raised incorruptible, immortal,

spiritual, by Him who, according to Plato, has promised to do that

which is impossible. Why then do they still exclaim that this which

God has promised, which the world has believed on God's promise as

was predicted, is an impossibility? For what we say is, that the God

who, even according to Plato, does impossible things, will do this.

It is not, then, necessary to the blessedness of the soul that it be

detached from a body of any kind whatever, but that it receive an

incorruptible body. And in what incorruptible body will they more

suitably rejoice than in that in which they groaned when it was

corruptible? For thus they shall not feel that dire craving which

Virgil, in imitation of Plato, has ascribed to them when he says that

they wish to return again to their bodies.[1025] They shall not, I

say, feel this desire to return to their bodies, since they shall

have those bodies to which a return was desired, and shall, indeed,

be in such thorough possession of them, that they shall never lose

them even for the briefest moment, nor ever lay them down in death.

27. \_Of the apparently conflicting opinions of Plato and Porphyry,

which would have conducted them both to the truth if they could

have yielded to one another.\_

Statements were made by Plato and Porphyry singly, which if they

could have seen their way to hold in common, they might possibly

have become Christians. Plato said that souls could not exist

eternally without bodies; for it was on this account, he said, that

the souls even of wise men must some time or other return to their

bodies. Porphyry, again, said that the purified soul, when it has

returned to the Father, shall never return to the ills of this

world. Consequently, if Plato had communicated to Porphyry that

which he saw to be true, that souls, though perfectly purified, and

belonging to the wise and righteous, must return to human bodies; and

if Porphyry, again, had imparted to Plato the truth which he saw,

that holy souls shall never return to the miseries of a corruptible

body, so that they should not have each held only his own opinion,

but should both have held both truths, I think they would have seen

that it follows that the souls return to their bodies, and also that

these bodies shall be such as to afford them a blessed and immortal

life. For, according to Plato, even holy souls shall return to the

body; according to Porphyry, holy souls shall not return to the ills

of this world. Let Porphyry then say with Plato, they shall return

to the body; let Plato say with Porphyry, they shall not return to

their old misery: and they will agree that they return to bodies in

which they shall suffer no more. And this is nothing else than what

God has promised,--that He will give eternal felicity to souls joined

to their own bodies. For this, I presume, both of them would readily

concede, that if the souls of the saints are to be reunited to

bodies, it shall be to their own bodies, in which they have endured

the miseries of this life, and in which, to escape these miseries,

they served God with piety and fidelity.

28. \_What Plato or Labeo, or even Varro, might have contributed to

the true faith of the resurrection, if they had adopted one

another's opinions into one scheme.\_

Some Christians, who have a liking for Plato on account of his

magnificent style and the truths which he now and then uttered,

say that he even held an opinion similar to our own regarding the

resurrection of the dead. Cicero, however, alluding to this in his

\_Republic\_, asserts that Plato meant it rather as a playful fancy

than as a reality; for he introduces a man[1026] who had come to

life again, and gave a narrative of his experience in corroboration

of the doctrines of Plato. Labeo, too, says that two men died on one

day, and met at a cross-road, and that, being afterwards ordered to

return to their bodies, they agreed to be friends for life, and were

so till they died again. But the resurrection which these writers

instance resembles that of those persons whom we have ourselves known

to rise again, and who came back indeed to this life, but not so as

never to die again. Marcus Varro, however, in his work \_On the Origin

of the Roman People\_, records something more remarkable; I think his

own words should be given. "Certain astrologers," he says, "have

written that men are destined to a new birth, which the Greeks call

\_palingenesy\_. This will take place after four hundred and forty

years have elapsed; and then the same soul and the same body, which

were formerly united in the person, shall again be reunited." This

Varro, indeed, or those nameless astrologers,--for he does not give

us the names of the men whose statement he cites,--have affirmed

what is indeed not altogether true; for once the souls have returned

to the bodies they wore, they shall never afterwards leave them. Yet

what they say upsets and demolishes much of that idle talk of our

adversaries about the impossibility of the resurrection. For those

who have been or are of this opinion, have not thought it possible

that bodies which have dissolved into air, or dust, or ashes, or

water, or into the bodies of the beasts or even of the men that fed

on them, should be restored again to that which they formerly were.

And therefore, if Plato and Porphyry, or rather, if their disciples

now living, agree with us that holy souls shall return to the body,

as Plato says, and that, nevertheless, they shall not return to

misery, as Porphyry maintains,--if they accept the consequence of

these two propositions which is taught by the Christian faith, that

they shall receive bodies in which they may live eternally without

suffering any misery,--let them also adopt from Varro the opinion

that they shall return to the same bodies as they were formerly in,

and thus the whole question of the eternal resurrection of the body

shall be resolved out of their own mouths.

29. \_Of the beatific vision.\_

And now let us consider, with such ability as God may vouchsafe, how

the saints shall be employed when they are clothed in immortal and

spiritual bodies, and when the flesh shall live no longer in a fleshly

but a spiritual fashion. And indeed, to tell the truth, I am at a

loss to understand the nature of that employment, or, shall I rather

say, repose and ease, for it has never come within the range of my

bodily senses. And if I should speak of my mind or understanding,

what is our understanding in comparison of its excellence? For then

shall be that "peace of God which," as the apostle says, "passeth all

understanding,"[1027]--that is to say, all human, and perhaps all

angelic understanding, but certainly not the divine. That it passeth

ours there is no doubt; but if it passeth that of the angels,--and he

who says "\_all\_ understanding" seems to make no exception in their

favour,--then we must understand him to mean that neither we nor the

angels can understand, as God understands, the peace which God Himself

enjoys. Doubtless this passeth all understanding but His own. But as

we shall one day be made to participate, according to our slender

capacity, in His peace, both in ourselves, and with our neighbour, and

with God our chief good, in this respect the angels understand the

peace of God in their own measure, and men too, though now far behind

them, whatever spiritual advance they have made. For we must remember

how great a man he was who said, "We know in part, and we prophesy

in part, until that which is perfect is come;"[1028] and "Now we see

through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."[1029] Such also is now

the vision of the holy angels, who are also called our angels, because

we, being rescued out of the power of darkness, and receiving the

earnest of the Spirit, are translated into the kingdom of Christ, and

already begin to belong to those angels with whom we shall enjoy that

holy and most delightful city of God of which we have now written so

much. Thus, then, the angels of God are our angels, as Christ is God's

and also ours. They are God's, because they have not abandoned Him;

they are ours, because we are their fellow-citizens. The Lord Jesus

also said, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I

say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always see the face of my

Father which is in heaven."[1030] As, then, they see, so shall we also

see; but not yet do we thus see. Wherefore the apostle uses the words

cited a little ago, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face

to face." This vision is reserved as the reward of our faith; and of

it the Apostle John also says, "When He shall appear, we shall be like

Him, for we shall see Him as He is."[1031] By "the face" of God we are

to understand His manifestation, and not a part of the body similar to

that which in our bodies we call by that name.

And so, when I am asked how the saints shall be employed in that

spiritual body, I do not say what I see, but I say what I believe,

according to that which I read in the psalm, "I believed, therefore

have I spoken."[1032] I say, then, they shall in the body see God;

but whether they shall see Him by means of the body, as now we see

the sun, moon, stars, sea, earth, and all that is in it, that is a

difficult question. For it is hard to say that the saints shall then

have such bodies that they shall not be able to shut and open their

eyes as they please; while it is harder still to say that every

one who shuts his eyes shall lose the vision of God. For if the

prophet Elisha, though at a distance, saw his servant Gehazi, who

thought that his wickedness would escape his master's observation

and accepted gifts from Naaman the Syrian, whom the prophet had

cleansed from his foul leprosy, how much more shall the saints in the

spiritual body see all things, not only though their eyes be shut,

but though they themselves be at a great distance? For then shall

be "that which is perfect," of which the apostle says, "We know in

part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is

come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Then, that he

may illustrate as well as possible, by a simile, how superior the

future life is to the life now lived, not only by ordinary men, but

even by the foremost of the saints, he says, "When I was a child,

I understood as a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child;

but when I became a man, I put away childish things. Now we see

through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part;

but then shall I know even as also I am known."[1033] If, then, even

in this life, in which the prophetic power of remarkable men is no

more worthy to be compared to the vision of the future life than

childhood is to manhood, Elisha, though distant from his servant, saw

him accepting gifts, shall we say that when that which is perfect

is come, and the corruptible body no longer oppresses the soul, but

is incorruptible and offers no impediment to it, the saints shall

need bodily eyes to see, though Elisha had no need of them to see

his servant? For, following the Septuagint version, these are the

prophet's words: "Did not my heart go with thee, when the man came

out of his chariot to meet thee, and thou tookedst his gifts?"[1034]

Or, as the presbyter Jerome rendered it from the Hebrew, "Was not my

heart present when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?" The

prophet said that he saw this with his heart, miraculously aided

by God, as no one can doubt. But how much more abundantly shall the

saints enjoy this gift when God shall be all in all? Nevertheless the

bodily eyes also shall have their office and their place, and shall

be used by the spirit through the spiritual body. For the prophet

did not forego the use of his eyes for seeing what was before them,

though he did not need them to see his absent servant, and though he

could have seen these present objects in spirit, and with his eyes

shut, as he saw things far distant in a place where he himself was

not. Far be it, then, from us to say that in the life to come the

saints shall not see God when their eyes are shut, since they shall

always see Him with the spirit.

But the question arises, whether, when their eyes are open, they

shall see Him with the bodily eye? If the eyes of the spiritual body

have no more power than the eyes which we now possess, manifestly

God cannot be seen with them. They must be of a very different power

if they can look upon that incorporeal nature which is not contained

in any place, but is all in every place. For though we say that God

is in heaven and on earth, as He Himself says by the prophet, "I

fill heaven and earth,"[1035] we do not mean that there is one part

of God in heaven and another part on earth; but He is all in heaven

and all on earth, not at alternate intervals of time, but both at

once, as no bodily nature can be. The eye, then, shall have a vastly

superior power,--the power not of keen sight, such as is ascribed

to serpents or eagles, for however keenly these animals see, they

can discern nothing but bodily substances,--but the power of seeing

things incorporeal. Possibly it was this great power of vision which

was temporarily communicated to the eyes of the holy Job while yet

in this mortal body, when he says to God, "I have heard of Thee by

the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I

abhor myself, and melt away, and count myself dust and ashes;"[1036]

although there is no reason why we should not understand this of the

eye of the heart, of which the apostle says, "Having the eyes of your

heart illuminated."[1037] But that God shall be seen with these eyes

no Christian doubts who believingly accepts what our God and Master

says, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."[1038]

But whether in the future life God shall also be seen with the bodily

eye, this is now our question.

The expression of Scripture, "And all flesh shall see the salvation

of God,"[1039] may without difficulty be understood as if it were

said, "And every man shall see the Christ of God." And He certainly

was seen in the body, and shall be seen in the body when He judges

quick and dead. And that Christ is the salvation of God, many

other passages of Scripture witness, but especially the words of

the venerable Simeon, who, when he had received into his hands the

infant Christ, said, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace,

according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."[1040]

As for the words of the above-mentioned Job, as they are found in the

Hebrew manuscripts, "And in my flesh I shall see God,"[1041] no doubt

they were a prophecy of the resurrection of the flesh; yet he does

not say "\_by\_ the flesh." And indeed, if he had said this, it would

still be possible that Christ was meant by "God;" for Christ shall be

seen by the flesh in the flesh. But even understanding it of God, it

is only equivalent to saying, I shall be in the flesh when I see God.

Then the apostle's expression, "face to face,"[1042] does not oblige

us to believe that we shall see God by the bodily face in which are

the eyes of the body, for we shall see Him without intermission in

spirit. And if the apostle had not referred to the face of the inner

man, he would not have said, "But we, with unveiled face beholding

as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same

image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."[1043] In

the same sense we understand what the Psalmist sings, "Draw near unto

Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed."[1044]

For it is by faith we draw near to God, and faith is an act of

the spirit, not of the body. But as we do not know what degree of

perfection the spiritual body shall attain,--for here we speak of a

matter of which we have no experience, and upon which the authority

of Scripture does not definitely pronounce,--it is necessary that

the words of the Book of Wisdom be illustrated in us: "The thoughts

of mortal men are timid, and our forecastings uncertain."[1045]

For if that reasoning of the philosophers, by which they attempt

to make out that intelligible or mental objects are so seen by the

mind, and sensible or bodily objects so seen by the body, that the

former cannot be discerned by the mind through the body, nor the

latter by the mind itself without the body,--if this reasoning were

trustworthy, then it would certainly follow that God could not be

seen by the eye even of a spiritual body. But this reasoning is

exploded both by true reason and by prophetic authority. For who

is so little acquainted with the truth as to say that God has no

cognisance of sensible objects? Has He therefore a body, the eyes

of which give Him this knowledge? Moreover, what we have just been

relating of the prophet Elisha, does this not sufficiently show that

bodily things can be discerned by the spirit without the help of the

body? For when that servant received the gifts, certainly this was

a bodily or material transaction, yet the prophet saw it not by the

body, but by the spirit. As, therefore, it is agreed that bodies are

seen by the spirit, what if the power of the spiritual body shall be

so great that spirit also is seen by the body? For God is a spirit.

Besides, each man recognises his own life--that life by which he

now lives in the body, and which vivifies these earthly members and

causes them to grow--by an interior sense, and not by his bodily eye;

but the life of other men, though it is invisible, he sees with the

bodily eye. For how do we distinguish between living and dead bodies,

except by seeing at once both the body and the life which we cannot

see save by the eye? But a life without a body we cannot see thus.

Wherefore it may very well be, and it is thoroughly credible, that

we shall in the future world see the material forms of the new

heavens and the new earth in such a way that we shall most distinctly

recognise God everywhere present and governing all things, material

as well as spiritual, and shall see Him, not as now we understand the

invisible things of God, by the things which are made,[1046] and see

Him darkly, as in a mirror, and in part, and rather by faith than

by bodily vision of material appearances, but by means of the bodies

we shall wear and which we shall see wherever we turn our eyes. As

we do not believe, but see that the living men around us who are

exercising vital functions are alive, though we cannot see their life

without their bodies, but see it most distinctly by means of their

bodies, so, wherever we shall look with those spiritual eyes of our

future bodies, we shall then, too, by means of bodily substances

behold God, though a spirit, ruling all things. Either, therefore,

the eyes shall possess some quality similar to that of the mind, by

which they may be able to discern spiritual things, and among these

God,--a supposition for which it is difficult or even impossible to

find any support in Scripture,--or, which is more easy to comprehend,

God will be so known by us, and shall be so much before us, that we

shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself,

in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing which

shall then exist; and also by the body we shall see Him in every

body which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall

reach. Our thoughts also shall be visible to all, for then shall be

fulfilled the words of the apostle, "Judge nothing before the time,

until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things

of darkness, and will make manifest the thoughts of the heart, and

then shall every one have praise of God."[1047]

30. \_Of the eternal felicity of the city of God, and of the

perpetual Sabbath.\_

How great shall be that felicity, which shall be tainted with no evil,

which shall lack no good, and which shall afford leisure for the

praises of God, who shall be all in all! For I know not what other

employment there can be where no lassitude shall slacken activity, nor

any want stimulate to labour. I am admonished also by the sacred song,

in which I read or hear the words, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy

house, O Lord; they will be still praising Thee."[1048] All the members

and organs of the incorruptible body, which now we see to be suited to

various necessary uses, shall contribute to the praises of God; for in

that life necessity shall have no place, but full, certain, secure,

everlasting felicity. For all those parts[1049] of the bodily harmony,

which are distributed through the whole body, within and without,

and of which I have just been saying that they at present elude our

observation, shall then be discerned; and, along with the other great

and marvellous discoveries which shall then kindle rational minds in

praise of the great Artificer, there shall be the enjoyment of a beauty

which appeals to the reason. What power of movement such bodies shall

possess, I have not the audacity rashly to define, as I have not the

ability to conceive. Nevertheless I will say that in any case, both in

motion and at rest, they shall be, as in their appearance, seemly; for

into that state nothing which is unseemly shall be admitted. One thing

is certain, the body shall forthwith be wherever the spirit wills, and

the spirit shall will nothing which is unbecoming either to the spirit

or to the body. True honour shall be there, for it shall be denied

to none who is worthy, nor yielded to any unworthy; neither shall

any unworthy person so much as sue for it, for none but the worthy

shall be there. True peace shall be there, where no one shall suffer

opposition either from himself or any other. God Himself, who is the

Author of virtue, shall there be its reward; for, as there is nothing

greater or better, He has promised Himself. What else was meant by

His word through the prophet, "I will be your God, and ye shall be my

people,"[1050] than, I shall be their satisfaction, I shall be all that

men honourably desire,--life, and health, and nourishment, and plenty,

and glory, and honour, and peace, and all good things? This, too, is

the right interpretation of the saying of the apostle, "That God may

be all in all."[1051] He shall be the end of our desires who shall

be seen without end, loved without cloy, praised without weariness.

This outgoing of affection, this employment, shall certainly be, like

eternal life itself, common to all.

But who can conceive, not to say describe, what degrees of honour

and glory shall be awarded to the various degrees of merit? Yet it

cannot be doubted that there shall be degrees. And in that blessed

city there shall be this great blessing, that no inferior shall envy

any superior, as now the archangels are not envied by the angels,

because no one will wish to be what he has not received, though

bound in strictest concord with him who has received; as in the body

the finger does not seek to be the eye, though both members are

harmoniously included in the complete structure of the body. And

thus, along with his gift, greater or less, each shall receive this

further gift of contentment to desire no more than he has.

Neither are we to suppose that because sin shall have no power to

delight them, free will must be withdrawn. It will, on the contrary,

be all the more truly free, because set free from delight in sinning

to take unfailing delight in not sinning. For the first freedom of

will which man received when he was created upright consisted in an

ability not to sin, but also in an ability to sin; whereas this last

freedom of will shall be superior, inasmuch as it shall not be able

to sin. This, indeed, shall not be a natural ability, but the gift of

God. For it is one thing to be God, another thing to be a partaker

of God. God by nature cannot sin, but the partaker of God receives

this inability from God. And in this divine gift there was to be

observed this gradation, that man should first receive a free will

by which he was able not to sin, and at last a free will by which he

was not able to sin,--the former being adapted to the acquiring of

merit, the latter to the enjoying of the reward.[1052] But the nature

thus constituted, having sinned when it had the ability to do so,

it is by a more abundant grace that it is delivered so as to reach

that freedom in which it cannot sin. For as the first immortality

which Adam lost by sinning consisted in his being able not to die,

while the last shall consist in his not being able to die; so the

first free will consisted in his being able not to sin, the last in

his not being able to sin. And thus piety and justice shall be as

indefeasible as happiness. For certainly by sinning we lost both

piety and happiness; but when we lost happiness, we did not lose the

love of it. Are we to say that God Himself is not free because He

cannot sin? In that city, then, there shall be free will, one in all

the citizens, and indivisible in each, delivered from all ill, Filled

with all good, enjoying indefeasibly the delights of eternal joys,

oblivious of sins, oblivious of sufferings, and yet not so oblivious

of its deliverance as to be ungrateful to its Deliverer.

The soul, then, shall have an intellectual remembrance of its past

ills; but, so far as regards sensible experience, they shall be quite

forgotten. For a skilful physician knows, indeed, professionally

almost all diseases; but experimentally he is ignorant of a great

number which he himself has never suffered from. As, therefore, there

are two ways of knowing evil things,--one by mental insight, the

other by sensible experience, for it is one thing to understand all

vices by the wisdom of a cultivated mind, another to understand them

by the foolishness of an abandoned life,--so also there are two ways

of forgetting evils. For a well-instructed and learned man forgets

them one way, and he who has experimentally suffered from them

forgets them another,--the former by neglecting what he has learned,

the latter by escaping what he has suffered. And in this latter way

the saints shall forget their past ills, for they shall have so

thoroughly escaped them all, that they shall be quite blotted out of

their experience. But their intellectual knowledge, which shall be

great, shall keep them acquainted not only with their own past woes,

but with the eternal sufferings of the lost. For if they were not to

know that they had been miserable, how could they, as the Psalmist

says, for ever sing the mercies of God? Certainly that city shall

have no greater joy than the celebration of the grace of Christ, who

redeemed us by His blood. There shall be accomplished the words of

the psalm, "Be still, and know that I am God."[1053] There shall be

the great Sabbath which has no evening, which God celebrated among

His first works, as it is written, "And God rested on the seventh day

from all His works which He had made. And God blessed the seventh

day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all

His work which God began to make."[1054] For we shall ourselves be

the seventh day, when we shall be filled and replenished with God's

blessing and sanctification. There shall we be still, and know that

He is God; that He is that which we ourselves aspired to be when we

fell away from Him, and listened to the voice of the seducer, "Ye

shall be as gods,"[1055] and so abandoned God, who would have made

us as gods, not by deserting Him, but by participating in Him. For

without Him what have we accomplished, save to perish in His anger?

But when we are restored by Him, and perfected with greater grace,

we shall have eternal leisure to see that He is God, for we shall be

full of Him when He shall be all in all. For even our good works,

when they are understood to be rather His than ours, are imputed to

us that we may enjoy this Sabbath rest. For if we attribute them to

ourselves, they shall be servile; for it is said of the Sabbath, "Ye

shall do no servile work in it."[1056] Wherefore also it is said

by Ezekiel the prophet, "And I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign

between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who

sanctify them."[1057] This knowledge shall be perfected when we shall

be perfectly at rest, and shall perfectly know that He is God.

This Sabbath shall appear still more clearly if we count the ages as

days, in accordance with the periods of time defined in Scripture,

for that period will be found to be the seventh. The first age, as

the first day, extends from Adam to the deluge; the second from the

deluge to Abraham, equalling the first, not in length of time, but in

the number of generations, there being ten in each. From Abraham to

the advent of Christ there are, as the evangelist Matthew calculates,

three periods, in each of which are fourteen generations,--one period

from Abraham to David, a second from David to the captivity, a

third from the captivity to the birth of Christ in the flesh. There

are thus five ages in all. The sixth is now passing, and cannot be

measured by any number of generations, as it has been said, "It is

not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own

power."[1058] After this period God shall rest as on the seventh

day, when He shall give us (who shall be the seventh day) rest in

Himself. But there is not now space to treat of these ages; suffice

it to say that the seventh shall be our Sabbath, which shall be

brought to a close, not by an evening, but by the Lord's day, as an

eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ,

and prefiguring the eternal repose not only of the spirit, but also

of the body. There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and

praise. This is what shall be in the end without end. For what other

end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which

there is no end?

I think I have now, by God's help, discharged my obligation in writing

this large work. Let those who think I have said too little, or those

who think I have said too much, forgive me; and let those who think I

have said just enough join me in giving thanks to God. Amen.

FOOTNOTES:

[961] Luke i. 33.

[962] Phil. ii. 13.

[963] John viii. 17.

[964] Ps. xxxvii. 31.

[965] Gal. iv. 9.

[966] Gen. xxii. 18.

[967] Isa. xxvi. 19.

[968] Isa. lxv. 17-19.

[969] Dan. xii. 1, 2.

[970] Dan. vii. 18.

[971] Dan. vii. 27.

[972] Another reading has \_diffamatum\_, "published."

[973] A somewhat fuller account of this miracle is given by Augustine

in the \_Confessions\_, ix. 16. See also \_Serm.\_ 286, and Ambrose,

\_Ep.\_. 22. A translation of this epistle in full is given in Isaac

Taylor's \_Ancient Christianity\_, ii. 242, where this miracle is taken

as a specimen of the so-called miracles of that age, and submitted

to a detailed examination. The result arrived at will be gathered

from the following sentence: "In the Nicene Church, so lax were the

notions of common morality, and in so feeble a manner did the fear of

God influence the conduct of leading men, that, on occasions when the

Church was to be served, and her assailants to be confounded, they did

not scruple to take upon themselves the contrivance and execution of

the most degrading impostures."--P. 270. It is to be observed, however,

that Augustine was, at least in this instance, one of the deceived.

[974] Alypius was a countryman of Augustine, and one of his most

attached friends. See the \_Confessions\_, passim.

[975] Cleros.

[976] Easter and Whitsuntide were the common seasons for

administering baptism, though no rule was laid down till towards

the end of the sixth century. Tertullian thinks these the most

appropriate times, but says that every time is suitable. See Tertull.

\_de Baptismo\_, c. 19.

[977] A town near Carthage.

[978] This may possibly mean a Christian.

[979] Near Hippo.

[980] Augustine's 325th sermon is in honour of these martyrs.

[981] See Isaac Taylor's \_Ancient Christianity\_, ii. 354.

[982] See Augustine's \_Sermons\_, 321.

[983] \_Sermon\_ 322.

[984] Ps. xciv. 11.

[985] C. 18.

[986] Luke xxi. 18.

[987] Eph. iv. 13.

[988] Rom. viii. 29.

[989] Luke xxi. 18.

[990] Rom. viii. 29.

[991] Rom. xii. 2.

[992] Eph. iv. 13.

[993] Rom. viii. 29.

[994] Gen. ii. 22.

[995] Eph. iv. 12.

[996] Matt. xxii. 29.

[997] Matt. xxii. 30.

[998] Eph. iv. 10-16.

[999] 1 Cor. xii. 27.

[1000] Col. i. 24.

[1001] 1 Cor. x. 17.

[1002] Another reading is, "Head over all the Church."

[1003] Eph. i. 22, 23.

[1004] Ps. cxii. 1.

[1005] Luke xii. 7.

[1006] Matt. xiii. 43.

[1007] Cic. \_Tusc. Quæst.\_ i. 27.

[1008] 1 Cor. iii. 1.

[1009] 1 Cor. xv. 44.

[1010] Ps. xxvi. 8.

[1011] Ecclus. xxx. 12.

[1012] Gal. v. 17.

[1013] 1 Cor. xv. 57.

[1014] Rom. viii. 37.

[1015] Matt. vi. 12.

[1016] Gen. i. 28.

[1017] John v. 17.

[1018] Ps. xlix. 20.

[1019] 1 Cor. iii. 7.

[1020] \_Coaptatio\_, a word coined by Augustine, and used by him again

in the \_De Trin.\_ iv. 2.

[1021] Ps. civ. 1.

[1022] He apparently has in view the celebrated passage in the

opening of the second book of Lucretius. The uses made of this

passage are referred to by Lecky, \_Hist. of European Morals\_, i. 74.

[1023] Rom. viii. 32.

[1024] \_Vide\_ Book xviii. c. 53.

[1025] Virg. \_Æn.\_ vi. 751.

[1026] In the \_Republic\_, x.

[1027] Phil. iv. 7.

[1028] 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10.

[1029] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

[1030] Matt. xviii. 10.

[1031] 1 John iii. 2.

[1032] Ps. cxvi. 10.

[1033] 1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12.

[1034] 2 Kings v. 26.

[1035] Jer. xxiii. 24.

[1036] Job xlii. 5, 6.

[1037] Eph. i. 18.

[1038] Matt. v. 8.

[1039] Luke iii. 6.

[1040] Luke ii. 29, 30.

[1041] Job xix. 26.

[1042] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

[1043] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

[1044] Ps. xxxiv. 5.

[1045] Wisd. ix. 14.

[1046] Rom. i. 20.

[1047] 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[1048] Ps. lxxxiv. 4.

[1049] Numbers.

[1050] Lev. xxvi. 12.

[1051] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

[1052] Or, the former to a state of probation, the latter to a state

of reward.

[1053] Ps. xlvi. 10.

[1054] Gen. ii. 2, 3.

[1055] Gen. iii. 5.

[1056] Deut. v. 14.

[1057] Ezek. xx. 12.

[1058] Acts i. 7.

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