

CHAPTER I. A critical enquiry why the blessed Baptist is called by Christ not only the lamp, but burning and shining.

Having but now with toil stayed our pen on the second book, and swum through the deep and wide sea of Divine contemplations, thinking so to reach the end, as a harbour, and all but mooring our skiff on the mainland, we see the commencement of another ocean, to wit; our course on the sequel. Which that we should accomplish with all diligence, both the nature of the thing shames us into, and that said by some one persuades us no less unto, *For glorious is the fruit of good labours*. Come then, let us, mounting up unto a courageous purpose of mind, commit our affairs to the guidance of the good and loving God: let us, spreading forth like a sail, the expanse of our understanding and embracing the grace of the Spirit as the sound of a fair wind from the stern, run out into deep in-search. For it is Christ *Which maketh a way in the sea and a path in the water*. Our second book then ended with, *But I receive not testimony from man; but these things I say, that YE might be saved*. Let us begin the third, joining in order what follows concerning the holy Baptist, of whom Christ says;

35 He was the lamp burning and shining; and YE were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

He likens the holy Baptist to *a lamp*, in that as far as appertains to the measure of man, he shone forth before His Coming, yet not with his own light: for not its own is the light in the lamp, but from without and bestowed and added: thus will you see in the saints also the illumination that is from Christ in the Spirit. Wherefore they both thinking and acting most wisely do themselves confess out of their own mouth, *Of His fulness have all WE received*. For the Only-Begotten is by Nature Light, in that from Light too He beamed forth, I mean, from the Essence of the Father: but the creation partakes of it, and whatever is endowed with power of reasoning and thinking, is as a vessel most excellently fashioned by God the Most Excellent Artificer of all things, with capacity for being filled with Divine Light.

The blessed Baptist then is a *lamp* according to the above-given explanation. The Saviour saying this economically calls the foolish Pharisees to remembrance of the Voice of God the Father, saying of Him, *I prepared a lamp for My Christ*. Very profitably and of necessity does Christ now subjoin these things to those already aforesaid. For, since, cutting off all occasion of unbelief from the Jews, and from all sides compelling them to the duty of believing on Him, He thought good to agree with them in not receiving his testimony, saying, *I receive not testimony from man*, that they might not suppose that the Lord was really and truly so minded respecting His forerunner, as the form of the words gives,---profitably to His present purpose, does He introduce him, not as Himself saying anything of him, but as proclaimed by the Voice of the Father. For He thought that from reverence certainly to God the Father, the gainsayer must either be ashamed, or shew himself now more nakedly fighting against God, as unrestrainedly going against the very words of God the Father.

He then (saith He) was the lamp, and YE were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. For it behoved Him not only to shew that the Pharisees easily went astray from what is right, and had by the great impiety of their ways thrust from them the will to believe, but also to convict them of being fickle, and by no means accustomed to cleave to the desire of good things, but after having barely tasted, and approved in words only those whom they thought to be holy, they were not ashamed quickly to go over to the contrary habit. For this I think is the meaning

of their being *willing for a season to rejoice in his light*. For at the commencement they admired the holy Baptist, as an ascetic, as a lover of God, as an example of all piety, but they who honour the miracle again insult it, not enduring to hear, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God*. For this they are clearly found doing through unbelief.

And now (as I think) having kept the well-trodden and commonly-used method of interpretation of the passage, we have put forth the meaning of it, according to our power: but since the Word of the Saviour extendeth to deep meanings, and evidently all but necessitateth the taking hold of more subtil conceptions, not merely signifying that John *was a lamp*, but also *burning and shining*, we deem it needful to apply ourselves more keenly to the force of the words and so track out the beauty of the truth. The sentence itself shall again be brought forward. *He was the Lamp*, He says. It would have been sufficient by this alone to have pointed out the holy Baptist, so that the hearers should go back to the thought of the prophecy concerning Him, which runs thus, *I prepared a lamp for My Christ*. But since He adds to the word *lamp*, *the burning and shining*, it is thence manifest that He carries the hearer back not merely to the prophet's voice, but also to some pre-figuring of the Law, fore-representing, as in figure and shadow, the torch-bearing of John, which he well performed by his testimony to Christ the Lord. He again convicts the Pharisees wise in their own conceits, who were conversant in the Law of Moses and that constantly, of being ignorant, and rather seeming to be wise than really having understanding of the Law. This then is the whole aim of the discourse: but I think we ought, bringing forward the Divine oracle itself, incontrovertibly to shew that the blessed Baptist is not simply *a lamp*, but one *burning and shining*.

When then God was ordaining the arrangements of the holy tabernacle, after the completion of the ten curtains, He saith to the hierophant Moses, *And do thou command the children of Israel and let them bring thee olive oil refined pure beaten to burn for a light, that the lamp burn always in the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is upon the testament, Aaron and his sons shall burn it from evening to morning before the LORD: a statute for ever unto your generations on the behalf of the children of Israel: and take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother and his sons with him from among the children of Israel to minister unto Me*. Thus far the oracle of God, we must now proceed to the interpretation of it as far as may be. The oil without lees and pure, seems to signify the most pure and undefiled Nature of the Holy Ghost, Which penetrating us incomprehensibly like oil, nourishes and preserves and increases the illumination in the soul, as in a lamp. And thus we believe that the Divine Baptist also shed forth the light of his testimony concerning our Saviour, having received the power of being able to illuminate from no other source than through the spiritual oil, which mightily and effectually availeth to kindle within us the Divine Light, to which also the Saviour Himself darkly alluded, saying, *I am come to cast fire on the earth and what will I, if it be already kindled?* The blessed Baptist then was again as in type *the lamp*, that was ever *burning and shining* in the tabernacle of testimony: and its shining in the tabernacle of testimony shews full well that his illumination was received in the churches, and will not be outside the holy and Divine Tabernacle of the Saviour. But the lamp being seen without the vail, seems to shew that he will bring in a simpler introductory illumination, saying, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven hath drawn nigh*; but of the things hidden within the vail, to wit, the mysteries of our Saviour, he revealeth nothing at all. For he baptized not unto participation of the Holy Ghost, nor did his illumination introduce within the vail: for it was in the outer tabernacle, while *yet standing*, according to the mouth of Paul. But when it says, that *Aaron and his sons shall burn it from evening to morning before the Lord: a statute for ever unto your generations*, I think we ought to understand it after this sort. *Aaron and his*

sons signify those who execute the priest's office in the Churches in their time, that is to say, the teachers therein and ministers of the Divine Altars. These are commanded to keep the spiritual lamp, that is, John, ever bright, for this is the meaning of, *They shall burn it from evening to morning*. For the whole period during which the light of the lamp was to appear, is the space of night, whereby is signified the term of the present life. For by light we understand the life to come. But the lamp burns or is kept bright, by always making its illumination perceptible to those who believe in Christ, and by testifying through the mouth of the Priests then being that it is true in saying such things of Christ.

That God may teach thee, that by this He was pourtraying the fore-messenger of the Saviour, He straightway subjoins the election of the Priests. You will attain again to the whole scope of the passage by ruminating on some such idea as this, and not amiss, as seems to me. On the completion of the tabernacle the ordering of the lamp is introduced, and immediately after, the appointment and function of the priests. For at the completion of the law and the Prophets, shone forth *the voice* of the forerunner *crying in the wilderness* (as it is written) *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God*; immediately after whom is the ordination and manifestation of the holy Apostles by Christ. For the Lord *chose out twelve, whom also He named Apostles*.

Our consideration of the lamp being herein completed, let us look again at the Voice of the Saviour. *He was* (saith He) *the burning and shining lamp, and YE were willing for a season to rejoice in his light*. He blames in the Pharisees their habit of mind unlearned and hard to be brought to obedience and convicts them again of being sick with incomparable ill-instructedness and not able to understand even what they professed to know, and very far indeed from an accurate knowledge of the law, wholly ignorant of what the Lawgiver was pourtraying afore in outline through Moses. For by saying that *he was the burning and shining lamp*, He shames (it is like) those who did not yet understand that which was long ago too limned out in figures of the Law: by saying, *and YE were willing for a season to rejoice in his light*, He introduceth them again as ever preferring their own will to the Divine Decree, and accustomed to follow only whom they would. For whereas the lawgiver (says He) commanded the lamp always to shine and be burning, *YE were willing* for it to shine not always, but *for a season* only, that is for the very briefest period. For ye at first marvelling quenched (as far as you are concerned) the light of the lamp, most unreasonably accusing him that was sent from God, and not only yourselves refusing to be baptized, but also forbidding him from baptizing others. For ye sent to him, saying, *Why baptizest thou then*, that is, why dost thou enlighten to repentance and the knowledge of Christ? The Saviour then brought a charge alike of folly and transgression of the Law upon the senseless Scribes and Pharisees, contending with them in behalf of the words of John. This I think that the blessed Luke also understanding, most excellently declares and cries aloud against their folly, saying, *And all the people that heard, that is, the words of the Saviour, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John: but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him*

36,37 *But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me: and the Father Which sent Me HE hath borne witness of Me.*

Even though he was *the lamp* (saith He) both depicted by the books of the law, and proclaimed afore by the voice of the holy Prophets, that he should one day appear, beaming

before the true Light, and declaring among you, that ye ought to put in good order the way of your Lord and God: yet since he haply seemeth to you not trustworthy, albeit so great in virtue, by reason of your innate unruly and most absurd folly, I proceed now to what is greater, against which probably ye will say nothing, ashamed before the very beauty of truth even against your own will. For I am no longer receiving glory by the words and judgements of men, nor shall I deem it needful to collect testimonies to Myself from bare words, but I will commit My affairs to witness more credible and far greater than these, and from the very magnificence of My deeds I make manifest that I am God by Nature, and of God the Father, and I nothing wrong Mine Own laws, trans-ordering them to whatsoever I will, and trans-elementing things which were darkly spoken to those of old, from the grossness of the letter to spiritual contemplation.

But let him that loves learning consider again that the Saviour by saying that He is well witnessed to by His *works* as to His being by Nature God, teaches clearly, that it was not possible that God-befitting Operation and Power should be in all exactitude in any one, unless he too were by Nature God. For He is *testified of* by His *works*, in no other way (I suppose) save this. For if He is seen a Finisher ¹ of *the works* of His Father, and whatever things are more suited to Him Alone, these He too accomplisheth by His Own Power: how shall it not be clear to every one, that He hath obtained the Same Nature with Him, and Radiant with the Properties of the Father, as being of Him, hath Equal Power and Operation with Him?

Yet He says He hath received *the Works* from Him, either by reason of the garb of human nature and servant's form speaking more lowly that was needful, and this economically, or extolling by the title of *gift* the good Pleasure and Approval of the Father, in regard to all His wondrous Miracles. For thus does He affirm that He was also sent, in that He *emptied Himself*, as it is written, of His unalloyed God-befitting Dignity by reason of His Love for us. For *He humbled Himself*, and we shall find the lowliness of this His humbling Himself in no other ways than in those whereby He sometimes speaks as Man. To this agreeth that which is said by the Psalmist of Him in human wise for our sakes, *I was set a King by Him upon Sion His Holy Mountain declaring the Law of the Lord*. For He That is King for ever with the Father, Co-enthroned and Co-seated, as God with God who begat Him, says that He has been ordained King and Lord, saying that what as God He had, He received when He was made Man to whom reigning is not inherent by nature, but both the title and reality of lordship are wholly from without.

CHAPTER II. That the Son is the Image of God the Father, wherein also is an exposure of the Jews as not understanding the words darkly uttered by Moses.

38 *Ye have neither heard His Voice at any time nor seen His Form and ye have not His Word abiding in you, for Whom HE hath sent, Him YE believe not.*

One may see that not simple is the arrangement of ideas poured forth upon the passage before under consideration, but that it is a swarm of hidden contemplations, which very easily escapes the mind of uncritical hearers, and haply admits of being seen by those only who investigate more keenly. For what was it (will one perchance say) that induced Jesus, when He was saying that He was borne witness to by His God-befitting Operation, to come to something most exceeding remote as though it belonged to the subject? I mean that the Pharisees had *neither at any time heard the Voice of God the Father nor seen His Form* nor yet had *His Word abiding in them*. And I will agree, and so I suppose will every one else, that

not without some cause is this their difficulty. What sense then we shall adapt to the passage before us, and what again we, on all sides holding by the truth, searching shall provide ourselves with, by the Operation and grace of the Spirit I will endeavour to tell forth.

It is the custom of the Saviour Christ, when often making useful discourses with the unskilled Pharisees, to gaze into the depths of their heart, and to consider in God-befitting manner the reasonings still dumbly revolved and stirred up in their mind, and to these in particular to direct both His answers and words and exposures, and He does not altogether keep the thread of His own words unpassed, but to what *they* are counselling and imagining in themselves, to this He keenly replies, and by it shews that He is by Nature God, as knowing what lies in the depth and searching the hearts and reins. If any one will, let him receive the most clear demonstration hereof, from the other Evangelists, I mean Luke and his companions. It is written then in the Gospels, that there were once gathered together from all the region round about *Judea, Pharisees and doctors of the law. And, behold* (he says) *men bearing on a bed a man which was taken with a palsy, and they were seeking to bring him in and to lay him before him; and when they found not by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason saying, Who is This which speak-eth blasphemies? who can forgive sins but One, God? But when Jesus perceived* (it says) *their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What are ye reasoning in your hearts? whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise and walk? Seest thou how He not waiting their answer or murmuring in utterance of words, answers as God their inward thoughts? You will find again another example too, fashioned after this same manner. For thus says the blessed Luke, And it came to pass also on another sabbath that He entered into the Synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. And the Scribes and Pharisees watched Him whether He would heal on the sabbath day, that they might find an accusation against Him: but He knew* (it says) *their thoughts and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. And Jesus said unto them, I will ask you, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good or to do evil? Seest thou again evidently herein, that He framed His words as looking into the very heart of those who were foolishly trying to accuse Him? Something of this sort again in the passage too before us we will suppose to have been seen by the Saviour in the hearts of the Pharisees. But you will see that the discourse does not spurn the right line, or order of the subject, if you do not shrink from going over again each of those things which have been already said.*

This great long discourse with them took its beginning about the man that was healed on the Sabbath Day, and by manifold devices and arguments was Christ endeavouring to persuade those who were waywardly vexed at the healing on the sabbath, that it is lawful even to have compassion on the sabbath, and to do good to all, and besides, that the Law made the rest of the sabbath a shadow of a most note-worthy reality; moreover having in their judgement broken the honour of the sabbath, and hereby specially transgressed the law, He was affirming and that very strongly, that He had been sent by God the Father, and further was clearly telling them that He was borne witness unto by Him, and was well-pleasing to Him in all that He did. To these things (as far at least as the evidence of the arguments goes) the Pharisees again are reasoning with themselves (as waiting on the writings of the law, and ever holding out as a pretext the commands through Moses, and saying they had read) What does this Man say? how will God the Father be well-pleased with one who breaks the Law? when

has He testified, or what judgement did He give concerning Him? For we know from the Mosaic writings that God descended upon Mount Sinai, and His Face was seen by the fathers, and His Voice (say they) was heard: He spake to the whole Synagogue, and commanded them to keep the Sabbath Day, clearly commanding thus. *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy, six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but on the seventh day is a holy sabbath to the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.* And none other (say they) heard we saying these things: the multitude of the fathers was ear-witness to the Voice from God, and after them the Word of God was in us: But who is This?

When He perceived that they were thus imagining, He exposes them as keenly ignorant, saying, *Ye have neither heard His Voice at any time nor seen His Form, and ye have not His Word abiding in you, for whom HE sent, Him YE believe not.* For the things done in a type at that time, and why the descent of God upon Mount Sinai was figured out to them, these things they knowing nothing of, received them not as images of spiritual realities, but were imagining that the Divine Nature could actually be seen with the eyes of the body, and believed that He used a bodily voice. But that the Word of the Saviour to them was true, and that they neither *at any time heard* the Voice of God the Father, nor had any one with bodily vision seen *His Form*, that is, the Word in all things like unto Him, I think that we ought again to shew clearly, bringing to spiritual investigation and test the things written in Exodus. It says thus, *And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof was going up as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole people quaked greatly. And the voices of the trumpet sounded, going forth exceeding mighty, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.* Thus far then the oracle of the all-wise Moses: but I think we ought now too to convict the Jews of stumbling into a most absurd idea of God, imagining that they had both *seen His Form*, and *heard* the Voice actually inherent in the Divine Nature.

Come then taking courage in the bounty and grace of the Saviour, let us refine the grossness of the letter of the law into spiritual contemplation: for so will that be shewn to be true which was said to the Pharisees of God; *Ye have neither heard His Voice at any time nor seen His Form.* The people then being *brought forth* by Moses to meet God, as it is written, will be a manifest sign and token as in enigma, that none can unled and uninstructed come to God, but by the law are they led to the knowledge of the things which they seek to learn. For Moses will be understood to be put for the Law, according as is said by a certain one, *They have Moses and the Prophets.* But the standing by under the mount, when God had now descended and was on it, signifies the readiness of disposition and resolve of those who are called to serve Him, not refusing in any way to apply themselves even to things above their power and superior to their nature, while God is with them. Such in all respects are they who are partakers of the Saviour. Wherefore they practising manliness above men say, *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?* for all dreadful things are tolerable to the godly for love of Christ, and though tribulation should rise up as a mountain, they will rise superior against all danger, and will not withdraw their mind from love to God. But God is said to come down, not upon any low ground, but somewhere on high and on a mountain is He seen, that you may think some such thing as this with yourself, that although the Divine Nature condescending to our understandings, brings Itself to our conception, yet is It exceeding far above us, both in words and thoughts. For the height and intensity of the doctrines respecting It, are signified by the mountain, which he tells us was wholly darkened with smoke. For keen indeed and not

very clear to us are words respecting the Godhead, wounding like smoke the eyes of the understanding. Therefore the most wise Paul testified that we *see through a glass and darkly*: the Psalmist again says that *He*, that is, God, *made darkness His secret place*, under the name of darkness hinting the Incomprehensibleness around Him, whereof the smoke about the fire on the mount may well be taken as a type. But the Godhead Itself descended in the form of fire, at that particular time, fittingly and of necessity for the nature of the thing. For it behoved, it behoved that He Who called Israel unto bondage and understanding through the law that should be put forth, should appear as an Enlightener and an Avenger. And both these ends are accomplished by fire. Yea, and *the voices of the trumpet* (saith he) *sounded, going forward exceeding mighty*, that some such effect of ideas again may be wrought for us: for the Law too was proclaimed by God, yet not continuously at first, by reason of the infirmity of the pupils, but stammeringly, so to say, and not with the whole force of the trumpeter. Wherefore Moses too called himself *slow of speech*. But as time advances, and carries forward the believers in Christ from the shadow in the letter to the spiritual worship, the *voices of the Divine trumpet* waxed *exceeding mighty*, the saving and Gospel preaching resounding in a way through the whole earth. For not as the Law, feeble-voiced and petty-heralding, was this heard in the country of the Jews only, or proclaimed from Dan to Beersheba, but rather, *Their voice went forth into all the earth*, as it is written. And what besides? *Moses spake* (saith he) *and God answered him by a voice*.

Keen be again the mind of the more studious, accurately let it observe the stability inherent in the Divine Oracles. For *Moses* speaks, and *God* answers *him by a voice*, not surely by His Own Voice, for this it does not say, but simply and absolutely by a voice, wrought wondrously in more human wise by sound of words. For in respect of what work will God be powerless? What that God wills shall He not perform, and that full readily? Therefore *Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice*. Herein is the type, let us see the truth. You have therefore in the holy Gospels the Lord speaking, *Father, glorify Thy Son*, and the Father answering by a voice, *I both glorified, and will glorify again*. The Saviour shewed that this is not truly the voice of God the Father, by saying to those who were then present, *This voice was made not because of Me, but for your sakes*. Thou seest how He clearly affirmed that the Voice was made, since it is not meet to suppose that the Divine Nature useth a voice with a sound, though It conform Itself to our needs and speak like us, economically.

These considerations were of necessity brought into our present discourse: we deemed it altogether needful that Jesus should be shewn to the readers speaking truth, when He is found saying of His Father, *Ye have neither heard His Voice at any time nor seen His shape, and ye have not His Word abiding in you, for Whom HE hath sent, Him ye believe not*. That the Pharisees puffed up unto strange boasting, were wont to pretend that the Divine Word was with them and in them, and therefore foolishly affirmed that they had advanced to marvellous wisdom, the Spirit Itself will testify, since Christ says by the Prophet Jeremiah unto them, *How do ye say, WE are wise, and the word of the Lord is with us? For nought to the scribes became their lying pen; the wise men were ashamed, were dismayed and taken; what wisdom is in them? because they rejected the word of the Lord*. For how are they not taken rejecting the Living and Hypostatic Word of God, receiving not the faith to Him-ward, but dishonouring the Impress of God the Father, and refusing to behold *His* most true *Form* (so to say) through His God-befitting Authority and Power? For the Divine and Ineffable Nature is in no other wise apprehended (so far as may be) by us, than through what It effects and works, therefore Paul directs us to go from *the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably* unto the contemplation of the Creator, the Saviour again leads us to

the apprehending of Himself, saying, *If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe My works.* And with great reason did He blame His own disciple (this was Philip) who imagined thoughtlessly that he could in any other way attain to the contemplation of God the Father, albeit it was in his power to consider His Uncreated Image, which shews accurately in Himself Him Who begat Him. Wherefore He said, *So long time am I with you, and hast thou not known Me Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*

39,40 *Ye search the Scriptures, for in them YE think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me, and ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.*

The smooth, and passable to the many, and beaten explanation of the passage persuades us to suppose that it was spoken in the imperative mood by our Saviour to the Pharisees, that they ought to *search the Divine Scriptures* and gather testimonies concerning Him unto *life*. But since by interposing the conjunction (I mean, *And*) He joins on the clause, *Ye will not come to Me*, He evidently signifies something else, akin to what has been said, but a little different. For if it were to be taken imperatively, how should we not say it was necessary to say the whole sentence in some such fashion as this, *Search the Scriptures for in them YE think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me*; but when ye have searched, come to Me? But He is blaming them for not choosing to come, although led to it by the search, saying, *And ye will not come to Me.*

We will then, looking to what is more profitable and agreeable to what preceded, read it not imperatively, but rather as in connection and with a comma. Of this kind again will be the meaning of the passage before us. For when He saw that they were ever running to the books of Moses, and ignorantly collecting thence materials for gainsaying, but seeking for nothing else, nor receiving what would avail them for due belief: needs therefore does He shew them that their labour in searching for these things is useless and unprofitable, and clearly convicts them of exercising themselves in a great and most profitable occupation in a way not becoming its use. For what tell me (saith He) is the use of your searching *the Divine Scriptures*, and supposing that by them ye will attain unto *everlasting life*, but when ye find that they *testify of Me* and call Me *everlasting life, ye will not come to Me that ye might have life?* Whence then ye ought to be saved (He saith) ye perceive not that thence ye get the greatest damage to your own souls, ye who are sharpened from the Mosaic books only unto gainsaying, but the things whereby ye could gain *eternal life*, ye do not so much as receive into your minds.

For that in the Law and the holy Prophets there is much said concerning Him Who is by Nature Life, that is the Only-Begotten, will I think be plain to all who are lovers of learning.

41, 42 *I receive not honour from man, but I know you, that ye have not the Love of God in you.*

He perceives again, yea rather He sees in a God-befitting way, that the stubborn and contumacious band of the Pharisees were cut to the heart, and that not altogether at being accused of not searching *the Divine Scriptures* as they ought, but rather at His saying, *Ye will not come to Me*. For what diseases themselves easily fall into, these they think can take hold of the Saviour also. For they imagined (it seems) of their great folly that the Lord was ambitious, and wished to obtain for Himself honour from all, through His calling them to be His

disciples. Having got some such surmise as this into their minds, they expected to be deprived forthwith of their authority over the nation: they were cut to the heart in no slight degree at seeing the Heir desirous of demanding the fruit of the vineyard. Wherefore, as far as pertains to their wrath and envy at what is said, they all but say what is in the Gospel parables, *Come, let us hill Him and let us have His inheritance*. Taking away then their surmise the offspring of emptiness, and plucking up beforehand by the roots the shoots of envy and evil eye, He says downright, *I receive not honour from man*. For I do not (says He) call My hearers to discipleship under Me, as though hunting for honour from you, or from others, as YE do, nor do I receive this as the reward of My teaching, having most full *glory* from Myself, and not short of that from you, but I said that ye would *not come to Me*, because I know well, *that ye have not the love of God in you*. And being destitute of Love to God (says He) how should ye come to Me, Who am the Only Begotten, God of God?

43 *I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*

In order that the Pharisees might not think that the Lord was idly railing at them, from His saying, *Ye have not the love of God in you*, He immediately adds this also to the above, shewing that the saying is true. That I do not lie (says He) in saying that ye are bereft of love towards God, I will set before you by one thing. For I came *in My Father's Name* (for I am persuading you zealously to perform all things to the glory of God the Father) but ye shook off from you by your unbelief Him That cometh from above and proceedeth from God: but *ye will surely receive* (for as God, I know things to come) the falsely-called, who does not offer the glory to God the Father, and demands credence from you, yet works *in his own name*. Whence I suppose the blessed Paul too, having understanding, says something true concerning the Jews and the son of transgression, *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God sendeth ^a them an operation of error, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be doomed who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. This then which is said is a proof that the Pharisees were not slandered by our Saviour Christ with empty words, for it introduces a prophecy of an event which should come to pass in its time.

44 *How can ye believe, which receive glory of men, and seek not the glory that is of the only God?*

He accuses the Pharisees of love of rule and of prizing honours *from men*, covertly hinting that they do exceeding ill, in unadvisedly putting the diseases of their own soul upon God Who can by no means know disease. Next He says that they, fast held by vain glory, thereby lose the fairest prize, meaning faith in Him: whereof Paul too speaketh clearly to us: *for if* (says he) *I were yet pleasing men, I should not be Christ's servant*. It usually then as of necessity befalls those who hunt for honours *from men*, to fail of *the glory that cometh* from above and *from the only God*, as saith the Saviour. He says *only*, opposing God to the gods of the Gentiles, and not excluding Himself from the honour of the *Only*. For as we have often said already, the Fullness of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity mounteth up to One Nature and glory of Godhead.

45 *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is that accuseth you, Moses, in whom YE have hoped.*

Having said that the Pharisees cared more to live vain-gloriously than piously, and having taught that hence they turned aside to unmeasured unbelief, He says that they were accused by *Moses* himself, of whom it was their custom to boast very vehemently. And indeed when the man who was blind from his birth once said to them of Christ, *Will YE also be His disciples?* immediately they cry out and say openly, *THOU art His disciple, but WE are Moses disciples.* Even *Moses* himself therefore (says He) shall *accuse you, in whom ye* put all your hope, and he despised with the rest will denounce before God your innate folly. And we do not deem that they who believe not in Him will be without blame from Christ, by reason of His saying to the Jews, *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father.* For what shall we say when we hear Him saying, *Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I too confess before My Father which is in Heaven: but whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven?* shall we not reasonably suppose, that they shall be accused to God the Father for their denial, who meet with this from Christ? But I suppose this is clear to every one. The Jews then are not surely free from accusal who have through long unbelief denied Christ, but this applies to them most naturally. For since they shook off His admonitions, and made no account of His Divine and Heavenly teaching, but are ever about duly keeping the Mosaic law, so as to be seen at length even more nakedly crying out, *WE know that God hath spoken unto Moses, this man we know not from whence He is:---*most necessarily does He convict them of transgressing against that *Moses, in whom* they boast, and says that they need no other accuser, but that the law given through him will alone suffice for their with reason being accused for their unbelief in Him, even though the Voice of the Judge, that is, Christ, should be dumb.

46 *For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for of Me he wrote.*

Having said that the Jews would be accused by the all-wise Moses, and would undergo indictment at his hands for their unbelief in Him; He profitably subjoins these things also, teaching that He was not finding fault with them for nothing, or otherwise repudiating the suspicion of being given to railing, for it is evident that He is making no untrue speech. Be it then (saith He) that ye reject My words, I will bear with not being believed: receive your own Moses, give credence to him whom ye admire, and ye shall know of a surety Him whom not knowing ye dishonour. Break off your types which travail with the truth. For I am shadowed out in his books. Therefore will Moses himself also accuse you (saith He) when he seeth you disbelieving his writings about Me.

We ought then perhaps having interpreted what is before us, to proceed in order, committing it to sincere lovers of learning to investigate the images of Christ through Moses. For his books are full of passages, and there is much said by him, yet full of difficulty to understand and replete with exceeding subtle and hidden meanings. But lest we seem to let indolence have the mastery over us, and unreasonably to shirk so glorious a toil, by simply clothing with difficulty the books of Moses, we will apply ourselves to this too, knowing what is written, *The Lord will give utterance to them who evangelize with much power.*

But since there are, as we have said, many words on these things, and since the all-wise Moses hath through many forms foretypified the Mystery of Christ, we shall not deem it necessary to heap up a great multitude before our readers, but having chosen one out of the whole number,

we will essay to make clear proof that the Word of our Saviour was true, which He spake to the Jews, saying, *If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for of Me he wrote.*

CHAPTER III. That Moses was indicating the Coming of the Saviour. From Deuteronomy, concerning Christ.

The Lord thy God (it says) will raise up unto thee a Prophet from thy brethren, like unto me, Him shall ye hear; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let us not hear again the voice of the LORD our God, neither let us see this great fire any more, nor let us die: and the LORD said unto me, Well is all which they spake: I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My word in His Mouth, and He shall speak unto them as I shall command Him. And the man who shall not hearken unto what the Prophet shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him. Deuteronomy is a kind of repetition and summary of the Mosaic books: it is not therefore possible to take from it a type and image of the legal priesthood. Yet since we are not accustomed to be without understanding, who in all think rightly by Christ's aid, we will tell our readers and throw open the meaning of the passage in hand: Lo again is the mystery of Christ plainly told us, skilfully moulded by most subtle contemplation from likeness to Moses. For (says he) *a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me:* himself explaining, and that unflinchingly, what is the idea which from the likeness to himself his declaration introduces to us, clearly subjoins, *According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in the mount Sinai in the day of the assembly, saying, Let us not hear any more the voice of the LORD our God, neither let us see this great fire any more, and let us not die.* For he affirms that himself was at that time spoken of as a mediator, the Synagogue of the Jews being yet powerless to have to do with things above nature, and therefore prudently declining things above their power. For such was the sight of God, surprising the vision with unwonted sights, and the echoes of the trumpets supernatural and intolerable to the hearers.

Therefore the mediation of Moses was instituted as medicine of infirmity for those at that time, ministering to the synagogue the things decreed of God. You will transfer again the type to the truth, and will hereby conceive of Christ, the Mediator of God and men, ministering to the more teachable by means of human voice (when for our sakes He was born of a woman) the Ineffable Will of God the Father, made known to Him Alone, in that He is conceived of as both Son, of Him, and Wisdom, knowing all things, *yea the deep things of God.* For since it was not possible for the eyes of the body to fasten themselves upon the untempered and bare Divine and Ineffable glory of the Essence which surpasseth all things (*for there shall no man (saith He) see My Face, and live:*) needs was the Only-Begotten Word of God co-fashioned after our infirmities, clothed in this human body according to the Ineffable mode of the economy, and manifesting to us the counsel from above, that is of God the Father, saying, *All things that I heard of My Father, these will I declare unto you,* and again, *For I spake not of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak.* Therefore as an image of the mediation, Moses of old may be considered a type of Christ, ministering most excellently to the children of Israel the things appointed from God: but the mediation of Moses was ministrative, that of Christ is free and more mystical, in that He takes hold by Nature of the things mediated and reaches unto both, I mean the manhood that is mediated and God the Father.

For He was by Nature God, as the Only-Begotten of God, as not separated from the Essence of Him Who begat Him, and in-being in It, as He is conceived to be also of it. But He was Man too, in that He became Flesh likening Himself to us, that through Him that which is by nature far separated might be conjoined to God. When then Moses says, *A Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you like unto me*, you will understand it no other wise than we have just said. Since God Himself also sets His seal on the word saying, *Well is all which they spake; I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee, and will put My Words upon Him, and He shall speak unto them according to all that I shall command Him*. For the Son upholdeth all things by the word of His Power, as Paul saith, and telleth us the words of the Father, inasmuch as He is ordained a Mediator by Him, as is sung in the Psalms, as of Christ Himself, *And I was set King by Him upon Sion His holy Mountain, declaring the decree of the Lord*.

But if it seem good to any, by other considerations also to attain unto the mode of likeness, he will understand *Like unto me* as lawgiver, and will bring forward as proof the words, *It was said by them of old, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you, Thou shalt not lust*. He will understand again *like unto me*, saying that He is a kind of leader and master unto the being able to understand the will of the Father, and to the things whereby there is the high road into the Kingdom of Heaven: just as to them of old too the blessed Moses appeared a teacher of the instruction through the Law, adding everywhere to his own words, *That thou mayest live long, and that the Lord thy God may bring thee into the land which He sware to thy fathers*. But since he subjoined to what has been said, *And the man that will not hear what the Prophet shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him*; let the ignorant Jews, who harden their minds to most utter stubbornness, consider that they are pouring self-invited destruction upon their own heads. For they shall be under Divine wrath, receiving the total loss of good things as the wages of their rage against Christ. For if they had believed Moses, they would have believed Christ, for of Him he wrote.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My Words?

The verse might appear to a person, and with good reason, to have great obscurity. For he might even without being out of the mark, take to untrue surmises, supposing that the books of Moses excel the words of the Saviour. For the verse hath some such appearance, and as far as one can say, taking it without accurate consideration, it furnishes to the Mosaic writings a more worthy repute than to the words of the Saviour. For by saying, *If ye believe not Ms writings, how shall ye believe My Words*, He somehow gives us to understand that the writings of Moses are in a superior position to His Own words. But the very nature of the thing will shew that this so incredible idea is replete with the extremest folly: for how shall the writings of Moses be conceived to excel the words of the Saviour, when his were types and shadows, Christ's the truth? And it would not perhaps be hard to expend much reasoning hereupon: but things which are obvious and receive their proof, not from without, but from themselves, I think it superfluous to say that they are not in ill case or the reverse. For why should one waste time making fine distinctions about such things, and mince up what is by no means hard into unseasonable babblings?

Some such meaning as this then hath that which is said by the Saviour. If (says He) ye who have the Law written by Moses, and thoroughly study *his writings*, make no account of transgression of them, burying in strange oblivion that which is full often read, how will ye be better disposed to *My Words*, or how will ye shew yourselves more ready and more obedient to My sayings, since ye have not often nor always attended them, but hear them by the way,

and scarce once admit them into the bodily ears? You shall either clothe the verse in this dress, or you may consider it in another way: for to love of learning belongs the labour and research herein. The writings of Moses then introduce a kind of preparation for, and typical outline of the Mysteries of Christ, and the elements, so to say, of knowledge of Him are the things limned in Moses, as we shewed more at large by the things already examined. But the end of the instruction of the Law is Christ, according as it is written, Christ is the fulfilment of the law and the Prophets. They then (saith He) who received not *the elements of the beginning of the words* ⁴ *of God*, and in their folly thrust away the Law which by its clearer letter leadeth them, how shall they attain to yet more perfect knowledge? or how will the greater be acceptable, if that which is little and inferior be by no means admitted?

CHAPTER IV. That oftentimes the departures of Christ from Jerusalem signify the transferring of His grace to the Gentiles: wherein is also the discourse of the five barley loaves and the two little fishes.

Chap. vi. *And after these things Jesus departed across the sea of Tiberias.*

First I think it needful to tell my hearers, that the Lord evidently did not make His departures from Jerusalem without some most necessary reason. There is an economy on almost every occasion, and on the nature of things, as on a tablet, He inscribes mysteries. Of what nature then is the intent of the departure, and what is signified thereby, we will make manifest in its proper time, the chapters before us having reached their termination. For having divided every thing into sections, and interpreted what is profitable out of the Scriptures, and so set them before our readers for their understanding, we will offer the final consideration of the whole, epitomising in a summary what has been said in many portions. But I think we ought to speak first on what is now before us.

After these things (saith he) *Jesus departed across the sea of Tiberias.* After what things, must be sought not negligently. Christ then was manifested in Jerusalem as a wondrous Physician. He had healed the man who had been *thirty and eight years in his infirmity*, not by giving him any medicine, not by devising any disease-repelling remedy, but rather by a word, as God, by Almighty Authority and God-befitting beck: for *Arise* (saith He) *take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.* But since it was the sabbath, the Jews are ignorantly angry, who were sick with the grossness of the letter, who more than he, were bound by the folly that was their foster brother, who were sick of the listless want of all good things alike, who were paralytic in mind and enfeebled in habit, to whom might with reason be said, *Strengthen ye, ye weak hands and ye palsied knees.* But they are angry, saying that the honour due to the sabbath ought to be paid even by the Law-giver Himself; they condemn Christ as a transgressor, not admitting into their mind what is written, *Impious is he who says to a king, Thou transgressesst?* For these things they received sharp reproofs from the Saviour, and much and long discourse was prepared to shew that the rest of the sabbath had been typically ordained for them of old and that *the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.* But they prepared to no good thing, but full ready for all waywardness, rise up against Him Who teacheth what they ought to learn, and desire to kill Him who would make them wise, rewarding Him, as it is written, *evil for good.*

After these deeds therefore and words, the Lord, as of necessity, departs from Jerusalem, and since *the Jews' Passover* ⁵ *was nigh* (as we shall find a little further on) He sailed across *the sea of Tiberias*, or the lake in the country of the Jews so called. But since what principally

drove Him away, and induced Him to withdraw and to go to other places and those so far removed from Jerusalem, was (we have just said) that *the Jews' Passover was nigh*, I think it fitting to shew that exceeding well did Jesus eschew being found in Jerusalem at that time.

The Law of Moses then commanded that the Jews should hasten from the whole country round about to Jerusalem, there to celebrate in a type the feast of tabernacles. And the spiritual person will thence perceive the gathering together of all the Saints into Christ, when they shall be brought together from the whole world after the resurrection of the dead to the city which is above, the heavenly Jerusalem, there to offer the thank-offerings of the true pitching of tabernacles, that is of the framing and abidance of bodies, corruption having been destroyed and death fallen into death. As far as one can speak as to the fact of history, the multitude of them who went up to Jerusalem knew not number, and it was probable that at that time the Pharisees had great influence, making believe to take the part of the law, and mid so great a multitude crying out against the transgressor, or Him Who seemed to them to transgress. For it is not at all hard to fire up the countless swarm of common people, when one says that they are wronged and endeavours to stir them up even against those that have nothing wronged them. For like water or fire, they are flung about everywhere by unconsidered and random impulses, and advance to everything that can hurt. These things then the Lord not ignorant of, withdraws privily from Jerusalem with His disciples, and goes *across the sea of Tiberias*. But that He does exceeding well in shunning the Jews who desire to kill Him, we shall see by these things also. For the blessed Evangelist himself says, *And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for He would not walk in Jewry because the Jews were seeking to kill Him*.

That He avoids walking *in Jewry*, in order not to undergo death before His time, I will grant (will some one haply say) but whether He also avoids the feast, I do not yet know. They then that were reputed His brethren come to Christ in Galilee, saying, *Depart hence and go into Judaea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest*. But the Lord answered them, *Go YE up unto the feast, I go not up unto this feast, for My time hath not yet been fulfilled*.

It is then very plain and clear, that the Saviour had withdrawn from Jerusalem, not only sent into voluntary banishment, so to say, from thence, but also loathing the abomination of the unbelieving, both by His skill eluding the fierceness of His persecutors, and by His prudence thrusting back the dart of envy. He withdraws again, albeit able to suffer nothing, even though He were present, that He may limn us a fair example, not of cowardice, but of piety and charity towards our neighbour. For we shall know, led as by a pattern to the knowledge of what is profitable, that if our enemies persecute us, even though no harm at all be seen in our remaining, yet by retiring, and thereby evading the broadside of the onslaughts, and retreating from present heat, we may find the anger of those who wrong us beyond its zenith, and may cut away the boldness of their arrogance, profiting those who were not good towards us, and that unjustly, rather than ourselves profited, which is plainly, not seeking our own but also others' good. The work of love then, is the not wholly withstanding those who wish us evil, nor by being satisfied with not being able to suffer anything even if present, to work in them anger more bitter, from its not being able to attain the mastery over that which is hated. *Love* then, as Paul says, *seeketh not her own*, and this was purely in Christ.

But if you fix again the keen eye of the understanding upon what is written, you will be surprised to find a most excellent economy in the departures of our Saviour, I mean from

Jerusalem. For He is driven out oftentimes by the mad folly of the Jews, and lodging with the aliens, seems both to be kept safe by them, and to enjoy due honour. Where by He gives judgment of superiority to the Church of the Gentiles, and through the piety of others, convicts them of Israel of their hatred of God, and shews the cruelty that is in them by means of the gentleness that is in these, that in every respect they may be proved to have been well and rightly thrust out of the promise to the fathers. But the Lord having hastened away from Jerusalem, lodges not at one of the cities round about, nor takes up His abode in the neighbouring villages, but goes *across the sea of Tiberias*, by a most evident act all but threatening those who blasphemously take up the idea that they ought to persecute Him, that He would so far depart from them and estrange Himself from their whole nation, as even to make the way of their conversion to Him in some sort impassable: for *the sea* can by no means be trodden by foot of man. Some such thing as this will He be found saying to them in what follows too, *Ye shall seek Me and shall not find Me, and whither I go, YE cannot come*. For most smooth and easy and free from ruggedness to those who by faith go to Him is the way of righteousness; rugged and up-hill, yea rather, wholly impassable to them that provoke Him, as is said by one of the holy Prophets, *For right are the ways of the Lord, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fail therein*. Therefore the intervening tract of sea signifies the toilsomeness yea rather the impassableness by the Jews, of the way to Him, since God declares that He hedges up the ways of the ungodly soul, saying in the Prophets, *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns, and she shall not find her path*. What then the thorns there signified, this here too the sea in that it separates the Insulted from those who chose recklessly to insult Him, and severs the Holy from the unholy.

But the type seems as though it were pregnant to us with yet another hidden mystery. For when Israel was sent forth from the country of the Egyptians, Pharaoh was following in exceeding exasperation and, maddened at the unexpected well-doing of the nation, was hastening by law of battle to dare his envious and grievous designs; he was following, thinking he should be able to constrain to return to bondage those who had late and hardly slipped away from under his serfdom: but God was leading His people through the midst of the sea; and he hotly pursuing, and by no means enduring to abate his anger, and foolishly persuaded of his ungoverned wrath to fight against God, was swallowed up in the midst thereof with his whole army, and Israel alone was saved. But let now too Moses come forward in the midst of us, who lamented beforehand the mad folly of the Jews, and let him in his indignation at their impiety towards Christ say to them, *An evil and adulterous generation, do ye thus requite the Lord?* Him that bare thee through the midst of the sea and through mighty waves thou drivest *over the sea*, and dost thou not blush at persecuting Him? Thine then is the suffering, O Jew: thee will the sea at last swallow up. For to the persecutors, not to the persecuted did death belong both then in their case, and now in regard of Christ and of the unholy Jews. The divine David too singeth to us, *Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up*, hinting at the all-dread shipwreck of the Synagogue of the Jews, and entreating not to be swallowed up with them in their depth of ignorance. But in respect of the Egyptians and him that ruled over them, the peril was then of their earthly bodies, but the Jews' conduct being in respect of what is more precious, more severely are they punished; for they undergo punishment of the soul, receiving recompence proportionate to their wickednesses. For with reason was Pharaoh punished, endeavouring to get what was free into bondage: contrariwise again justly is Israel punished, for not entering into bond-service under the Lord of all: but what the one was to him in the might of his greed, this was he too found to be towards God from his great vain-glory.

We must note, that he calls the Lake of Tiberias a *sea*, in accordance with the words of Divine Scripture, for *the gathering together of the waters called the Creator Seas*. Among profane writers too the word is often indifferently used, insomuch that some do not hesitate sometimes to call the sea a lake.

2, 3, 4 *And a great multitude was following Him because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased: and Jesus went up into the mountain and there He sat with His disciples, and the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.*

For when Christ had gone forth from Jerusalem, according to that which is said in the Prophets; *I have forsaken Mine House, I have left Mine heritage*; when having spurned the disobedient and unruly people of the Jews, He gave Himself to the aliens, then *a great multitude followeth Him*. But He goeth up *into a mountain*, according to that surely which He had afore said, *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me*. For He was lifted up from the earth, on ascending the Cross for our sakes; He was lifted up again in another way having ascended as unto *amountain*, unto God-befitting honour and glory. For we do not, like Israel, dishonour Him as Man, but WE worship Him as God and Saviour and Lord. For among them He was conceived of as some lowly one and as nothing at all; and verily they would shrink not from calling Him *a Samaritan*, and with graver dishonour would call Him *the carpenter's Son*: but among them who believe on Him, He is admired as the Mighty Worker and God, a Doer of miracles. For you may hear how pious is the purpose of them who followed Him. For *because they saw His miracles upon the infirm*, therefore they thought they ought to follow Him more zealously, as being led from the things performed *proportionably* unto the knowledge of the Performer, and from His God-befitting Authority considering that He who was clothed therewith is by Nature Son. For by this way the Saviour commanded us to advance unto faith in Him. For *the works that I do* (saith He) *the very works bear witness of Me*, and again, *If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not, but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe My works*. As then from *the greatness of the beauty of the creatures, their Maker God is seen*, so from miracle, by a like process of thought, the Perfecter of signs is *seen*, and the faith of His followers is rightly marvelled at.

But I deem that some more special and not obvious interpretation is concealed in the things said. For we see that the Evangelist says that they who followed Christ were not only glad beholders of *miracles*, but also of what *miracles* they were most just admirers. For he adds, *Which He did on them that were diseased*, that hence he might shew that the frame of mind of those that followed Him was contrary to that of the Jews. For these because He had healed the sick of the palsy, are impiously angry, but the former not only admire Him for these things when present, but also flock together to Him at His departure, as Wonder-worker and God. Let us then, who have subscribed unto ourselves Christ as our Lord, flee the ignorance befitting the Jews, let us cleave to Him by patience, as the most wise disciples did enduringly, by no means enduring to depart from Him and be deserters, but by our very deeds crying aloud, that which was valiantly spoken by Paul, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Let us then follow Him, both persecuted and in fleeing from the stubbornness of those who strive against Him, that we may both go *up into a mountain and there sit with Him*, that is, may spring up into glorious and most excellent grace, by reigning together with Him, according as Himself said, *YE which have followed Me in My temptations, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, YE also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*. For I think that the *disciples* being said to abide with the Saviour, and to go up *into a mountain* and sit *with Him*, introduces these ideas.

5, 6, 7 *When Jesus therefore lifted up His Eyes and saw that a great company cometh unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? and this He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him,*

A lesson most excellent did Christ again devise for His disciples, and fittest for the most holy men, both persuading them in utter straits to overcome cowardice in respect of hospitality, and to cast far away hesitation hereto, rather with more zealous motions to attain unto the virtue thereof. For what is there greater than this among those who know and will the things whereby it becometh to purchase unto themselves the friendship from above? For when no small *crowd* cometh *to Him*, and an innumerable multitude is pouring forth like waters upon the parts, wherein He was stopping, He immediately ordered them to make preparations for feeding them. And in truth it was not unlikely that the zeal even of a very rich man would numb, by the multitude of those he saw startled into fear of not being able to be hospitable. But Christ shews that it is nothing at all great, when our brotherly love comes to a few, but wills that we should overcome with manful courage also things that surpass our expectation, firmly grounded by confidence in Him to boldness unto all good things.

In regard then of the narrative, the force of what is said, aims not away from the mark; but changing again these things unto their spiritual significance, and cutting away the gross typical dress, we say more openly, that those who by good zeal and faith seek Him, God fore-looketh, as from a mountain, that is from His high and God-befitting foreknowledge, according to that which is said by Paul, *For whom He did foreknow and predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son, these He also called.* Christ then *lifts up His Eyes* as shewing that they who love Him are worthy of the Divine Gaze, even as in blessing it was said to Israel, *The Lord lift up His Countenance upon thee and give thee peace.* But not by the mere looking on them is His grace toward them that honour Him bounded, but the blessed Evangelist adding something more, shews that the Lord was not unmindful of the multitudes, but well prepared for their food and entertainment: that hereby again thou mayest understand that which is delivered us in Proverbs, *The Lord will not suffer the righteous soul to famish.* For He sets before them Himself, as Bread from Heaven, and will nourish the souls of them that fear Him: and prepareth all things sufficient to them for sustenance; as he saith in the Psalms, *Thou preparest their food, for thus is Thy provision.* And Christ Himself somewhere saith, *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger.* For He will give, as we said before, food from heaven, and will richly bestow the manifold grace of the Spirit. He prepareth moreover to give food to them that come to Him, not even awaiting their asking. *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought,* but He forecometh us in reaching forth those things which preserve us unto eternal life.

He saith then unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread? We must needs see, why to Philip, although the rest of the disciples were standing by and cleaving to Him: *Philip* then was a questioner and apt to learn, but not over quick in ready power of understanding the more Divine. This you will learn, if you consider with yourself that he, after having followed the Saviour for a long time and gathered manifold lessons concerning His Godhead and gotten to himself apprehension through both deeds and words, as though he had learnt nothing yet, in the last times of the economy says to Jesus, *Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us;* but

as saying it in his simplicity he was fitly re-instructed, *So long time am I with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip?* saith Christ. Therefore as to one duller of understanding, and advancing more slowly than he ought to the apprehension of things more Divine, He puts forth the question, exercising the disciple in faith. For this is one meaning of, *To prove him*, in this passage, although as the blessed Evangelist affirmed, *He Himself knew what He would do*.

But His saying *Whence shall we buy* proves the uncare for money of them that were with Him, and their voluntary poverty for God's sake, in that they had not even wherewithal to buy necessary food. Together with this He works something, and orders it skillfully. For He says *Whence*, not emptily, as to those who had taken no trouble to provide anything at all, but as to those who were accustomed to entire uncare for money. Excluding then, and cutting short most skilfully expectation arising from money, He well nigh persuades them to go on to entreat the Lord, that He would, if He willeth them when they have nothing to feed those that come to Him, by His unspeakable Power and God-befitting Might create food. For this was what yet remained, and He was calling them at length to see that their only remaining hopes were thence, according to the Greek poets,

----- the iron wound of necessity.

Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

Feebly again does Philip advance, not to the power of Jesus to do all things, and that easily, but on hearing *Whence shall we buy* said to *prove him*, forthwith he catches at it, and looks at the means by money alone, not conceiving that the nature of the thing may be accomplished otherwise than by the common law, and that practised by all, to wit, prodigality of expenditure. Therefore as far as regards the disciples' uncare for money and their possessing nothing, and Philip's own apprehension, which did not as yet with perfect clearness view the exceeding dignity of our Saviour, liberality towards the multitudes is turned into an impossibility. But it was not so, the will of the Saviour conducts it to its completion. *The impossible with men is possible with God*, and the Divine Power proves on all sides superior to the natural order of things with us, strong to accomplish all things wondrously, even what overleap our understanding.

8, 9, 10 *One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many? Jesus saith,*

He both thinks and reasons akin to Philip, and is convicted of having a kindred apprehension of the Saviour Christ. For neither considering the power, nor yet led by the greatness of His preceding works unto Jesus' being able for all things, and that most easily; he points out what the *lad* has, but is evidently weak in faith: for *what are these* (he says) *among so many?* Albeit (for we must say it) in no unready way but resolutely rather ought he to go forth to the memory of those things which had been already miraculously wrought, and to consider that it was a work by no means strange or foreign from Him Who had transformed into wine the nature of water, had healed the palsied and driven away so great an infirmity by one word, that He, I say, should create food of that which had no being, and multiply Divinely the exceeding little that was found ready to hand. For the Authority that wrought in the one, how

should it not be able to work in the other? Wherefore the pair of disciples answered more feebly than was meet. But herein we must consider this again. For those things which appear to have been little falls in the Saints, are oftentimes not without their share of profit, but have something wrapt up with them, helpful to the nature of that in regard to which is the charge of their apparent infirmity. For the above mentioned holy disciples, having considered, and openly said, one, that *Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one may take a little*, the other, of the *five loaves and two little fishes*, that *what are these among so many?* raise the marvel to its height, and make the Might of the Saviour most marked, indicating by their own words the multitude that but now was to be filled, and the strength of their unbelief is converted into good testimony unto Christ. For in that they confessed that so large money would not suffice the multitude for even a slight enjoyment, by this very thing do they crown the Ineffable Might of the Host, when He, while there was nothing (for, as Andrew says, *what were the lad's supplies among so many?*) very richly outdid His work of love towards the multitude.

The like littleness of faith we shall find in the wilderness in the all-wise Moses too. For they of Israel were weeping and, excited to a foul lusting after the tables of Egypt, were picturing to themselves unclean dishes of flesh, and turning aside after most strange pleasure, of onions and garlic, and the like unseemly things, and disregarding the Divine good things, were attacking Moses their mediator and leader. But God was not ignorant, for what the multitude were eagerly groaning, and promised to give them flesh. But since the promise of liberality was made in the wilderness, and the thing appeared hard of accomplishment, as regards man's understanding, Moses came to Him crying out, *The people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen, and THOU saidst, I will give them flesh, and they shall eat a whole month: shall the flocks and the herds he slain for them, and shall it suffice them?* And what said God to these things? *Will the Lord's Hand suffice not?* For unto what can God be powerless?

Therefore one may well say to the words of Philip and Andrew also, *Will the Lord's Hand suffice not?* And let us too taking the nature of the thing by way of example, hold that littleness of faith is the worst of sicknesses and surpasses all evil, and if God work or promise to do, be it full surely received in simple faith, and let not the Deity be accused, from our inability to conceive how what is above us shall happen, by reason of our own powerlessness unto ought. For it becomes the good and sober-minded and him that hath his reason sound, to consider this too in his mind, how the bodily eye too sees not surely as far as one would like, but as far as it can, and as the limit of our nature permits. For the things that are situated at too great a height, it cannot distinguish, even if it imagine them, with difficulty snatching even the slightest view of them. So do thou conceive of the mind of man also, so far as the bounds given it by its Maker it attaineth and stretcheth forth, even if it be wholly purified; for it will see none of those things that are beyond, but will give way, even against its will, to what is above nature, wholly unable to grasp them. The things then that are above us are received by faith, and not by investigation, and as he that so believes is admired, so he that falls into the contrary is by no means free from blame. And this will the Saviour Himself testify, saying, *He that believeth on the Son is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already.*

Now having once taken up the discourse upon the duty of not mistrusting God, come, let us again shewing forth somewhat out of the sacred writings, put it forward, and blazon forth the punishment of the unbelief for the profit of our readers. Therefore (for I will go again to the

hierophant Moses) he was once bidden, in the wilderness, when the people were oppressed with intolerable thirst, to take Aaron, and smite the rock with his rod, that it might gush forth fountains of water. But he, not wholly believing the words of Him Who bade Him, but fainthearted by reason of human nature, saith, *Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand and with his rod he smote the rock once and again, and much water came out: and the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.* Is it not hence clear to every one, how bitter the wages of unbelief? And if Moses so great as he was, was reprov'd, whom shall God spare, upon whom will not He who thus respecteth not persons, inflict His wrath for their unbelief, since He would not spare even that Moses, to whom He had said, *I know thee above all, and thou didst find grace in My Sight.*

Make the men sit down: and there was much grass in the place: the men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand.

The Saviour practised His accustomed gentleness, and takes away the sharpness of His reproaches. For He doth not rebuke bitterly His disciples, albeit they were deeply slumbering in respect of their faintheartedness and littleness of faith in Him: but rather He leads them by His Deeds to the apprehension of the things which as yet they believe not. For the words *Make the men sit down* have no slight force, and wellnigh shew Jesus speaking after this sort, O slow to understand My Power, and to perceive Who it is that speaketh, *Make the men sit down*, that ye may see them filled with the nothing that lies before you and marvel. *Make the men sit down.* For it is what is lacking to them. For not two hundred pence would have sufficed to get means of life for the multitudes, but the lack of money such as men use, in respect of its being able to preserve life, My Power shall attain, which calleth all things into being, and createth out of things which are not. Nor did Elias the Prophet render the widow's cruse of oil unfailing, and make the barrel the source of unwasting food: but He, Who gave him the power, shall He not be able to multiply nothing, and to render any mere chance supply a fount of His ineffable Bounty and the principle and root of unlooked for grace?

It is not incredible that such were Christ's thoughts in what He said. Profitably doth the blessed Evangelist mention, that *there was much grass in the place*, shewing that the country was fit for the men to sit down in. But observe how, whereas the multitude of them that were fed was promiscuous, and that women were there with their children, he numbered the men only, following I suppose the custom of the Law. For God commanded the hierophant Moses, saying, *Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upwards.* The Prophet did as he was commanded, and collected a great list of names, and is seen to have completely passed over females and childhood, and enrolls the multitude that are of full age. For honourable in the book of God too is all that is manly and vigorous, and not what is infantile in purpose after good things. Therefore did he honour the custom of the Law also herein, and form again some spiritual conception. For shall we not with reason say, if we look to the whole mind of the passage, that the violent and vainglorious people of the Jews Christ rightly turns away from and leaves: but receives very graciously them that come to Him, and fattens them with heavenly Food, reaching them the *Spiritual Bread*, which *strengthened man's heart*? For He feedeth them not sadly, but joyously and freely and with much enjoyment in piety. For this the reclining of the multitudes on *the grass* signifieth, so that now too it is fit that each one to whom such grace has been

vouchsafed should say that in the Psalms, *The Lord is my Shepherd, and nought shall fail me: in a grassy spot there He settled me.* For in much enjoyment and delight through the gifts of the Spirit is the mind of the Saints fed, as it is said in the Song of Songs, *Eat and drink and he inebriated, ye neighbours.* But while there were many, and they sitting down promiscuously, as we said before, he mentioned the men alone, passing over in silence the women and children profitably for the idea [conveyed thereby]. For he teaches us, as in a riddle, that to those who quit them as men, that is, in good, will the food be supplied by the Saviour more fittingly and specially, and not to those who are effeminate unto no good habit of life, nor yet to those who are infantile in understanding, so as to be thereby able to understand none of the things that are necessary to be known.

11 *Jesus therefore took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed^z to them that were set down; likewise of the fishes also as much as they would.*

He *gives thanks*, as an ensample to us and a pattern of the piety which ought to be in us: and attributes again as Man the Power of the miracle to the Divine Nature. For this was His custom, both helping by an example of piety, as we have said, those to whom He was manifested as a Teacher of what is most excellent, and by an economy concealing yet His God-befitting Dignity, till the time of His Passion should be at hand: for it was His earnest care that it should be hid from *the prince of this world*. For this reason, doth He elsewhere too use words befitting men, as a Man, and heals again the understanding of His hearers, sometimes making most wise alluring as in the words, *Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me.* Seest thou in how human guise His speech, and well calculated to trouble the understanding of the more simple? But when He says this, as Man, then again He straightway unfolds the mode of the economy, and the object of His will to lie hid, by most excellent arrangement fortifying the mind of the more simple which had received a shock. For *I knew (He saith) that Thou hearest Me always.* Why then dost Thou speak these things? *Because of the multitude which stood by I said it, that they may believe (saith He) that Thou sentest Me.* Is it not then hereby plain, that with a view manifoldly to assist us, and to fulfill, as befitted Him, the secret economy with Flesh, He sometimes speaks more lowly, than He really is? As therefore in that passage, *I thank Thee*, is taken economically, so here too. *He blessed* is understood of the bread.]

But we must observe that instead of *gave thanks*, Matthew has said, *blessed*, but the edition of the saints will in no wise differ. For Paul will shew that they are both one, saying that *every meat of God is good, and nothing to be refused: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* But that which is sanctified through the prayer in supplication, which we are wont ever to make over the table, is surely blessed..

But since it is fit that nothing profitable be left uninvestigated by us; come let us say a little of *the five loaves* which the *lad* had and of *the two little fishes*: for both the species itself, and besides the numbers are replete with mystery. For why (will some more studious person say) were not the loaves rather five, and the fishes three? why not five, and the fishes four? what occasion was there at all for recounting the number found, and why did not he rather say more simply and absolutely that the innumerable multitude of them that followed Him were fed off exceeding few chance things? But the fact that the blessed Evangelist recounted very diligently these things too, gives us something surely to think of, which we must needs search into.

He says then that the *loaves* are *five*, and they of *barley*, and the *fishes* *two*, and with these Christ feedeth them that love Him. And I think (and let the lover of wisdom look out for something better) that by the *five barley loaves* are signified the five-fold book of the all-wise Moses, that is, the whole Law, bringing in as it were coarser food, that by the letter and history. For this the *barley* hints at. But by the *little fishes* is signified the food got through the fishermen, that is, the more delicate books of the disciples of the Saviour; and these two (he says), the apostolic and Evangelic preaching, shine forth among us. And both these are draughts and spiritual writings of the fishermen. The Saviour therefore mingling the new with the old, by the Law and the teachings of the New Testament nourishes the souls of them that believe on Him, unto life, plainly eternal life. That the disciples were of fishermen, is (I suppose) plain and clear: and though all were not so, yet since there are some such among them, our argument will not recede from truth in what has been said.

12, 13 *When they were filled, He saith unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.*

To some one Christ may seem out of sparing of the *fragments* to have bidden His disciples to gather them together. Yet (I think) every one will fitly imagine, that Christ would not endure to descend to such littleness: and why say I Christ? not even one of us would do so: for what would be supposed to be the remnant of *five barley loaves*? But the verse has a great economy, and makes the miracle evident to the hearers. For so great is the efficacy of God-befitting Authority in this matter, that not only was so great a multitude sated from *five barley loaves and two little fishes*, but *twelve baskets* full of *fragments* were gathered besides. Moreover the miracle repelled another (as is like) suspicion, and by the finding of the fragments confirmed the belief of there having been really and truly an abundance of food, and not rather the appearance of a vision deceiving both the eye of the feasters and of those who minister to them. But greater yet and more noteworthy, and of exceeding profit to us, is this: consider how by this miracle He makes us most zealous in our desire to exercise hospitality most gladly, wellnigh calling aloud to us by the things that were done, that the things of God shall not fail him that is ready to communicate, and rejoiceth in habit of neighbourly love, and readily fulfilleth what is written, *Break thy bread to the hungry*. For we find that the disciples at the beginning were hampered by reluctance about this, but seeing they were thus minded, the Saviour gave them, a rich gathering from the fragments: and teacheth us too thereby, that we, on expending a little for the glory of God, shall receive richer grace according to the saying of Christ, *Good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, shall they give into your bosom*. We must not be slothful therefore unto the communion of love to the brethren, but rather advance unto good resoluteness, and put as far as possible from us the cowardice and fear that dispose us to inhospitality and, confirmed in hope through faith in the power of God to multiply little things too, let us open our bowels to the needy, according to the appointment of the Law, for He says, *Thou shalt open thy bowels wide unto thy needy brother within thee*. For when wilt thou be found merciful, if thou remainest hard in this life? when wilt thou fulfil the commandment, if thou sufferest the time of being able to do it to slip by in idleness? Remember the Psalmist saying. *For in death there is none that remembereth Thee: in the grave who shall confess to Thee?* For what fruit is there yet of the dead, or how shall one of them that have gone down into the pit remember God by fulfilling His Commandments? For *God closed upon him*, as it is written. Therefore

did the most wise Paul too instruct us, writing to certain, *While we have opportunity let us do good.*

And these things shall be said for profit from the narrative. But since we taking what has been said in a spiritual sense (for so we ought, and not otherwise) said that by the *five barley loaves* the book of Moses was hinted at, and by the *two little fishes*, the wise writings of the holy Apostles: in the gathering together of the fragments too, I suppose we ought to perceive some mystical and spiritual conception, agreeing with the order of the account. The Saviour then commanded the multitudes to sit down, and having blessed, He distributed the bread and the fishes, i. e., through the ministry of the disciples: but when they that had eaten were miraculously filled, He commands them to gather together the fragments, and *twelve baskets* are filled, one (it seems) for each of the disciples: for so many were they too. What then shall we understand from thence, save surely this, and truly, that Christ is the President of them that believe on Him, and nourishes them that come to Him with Divine and heavenly food? doctrines plainly of the Law and Prophets, Evangelic and Apostolic. But He does not altogether Himself appear as the Worker of these things, but the disciples minister to us the grace from above (for it is not they *that speak*, as it is written, *but the Spirit of the Father which speaketh in them*) yet not without reward to the holy Apostles shall be their labour therein. For they having dispensed to us the spiritual food, and ministered the good things of our Saviour, will receive richest recompense and obtain the fullest grace of bounty from God. For this and nothing else, I think, is the meaning of the gathering together of a basketful by each at the commandment of Christ, after their toils and the service expended upon the feasters. But there is no doubt, that after them the things typically signified will pass also to the rulers of the holy Churches.

14 The men therefore, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth the Prophet that should come into the world.

They marvel at the sign who know how to approve things God-befitting, and regulate themselves by human reason rather than are diseased with unreason befitting the beasts, as were the blasphemous Jews, who, when they ought to have profited by the publicity of the things wrought, lost even the power of right judgment. For they deemed that Jesus ought now to be stoned also, because He so often appeared as a Worker of miracles. Superior then, and that in no small degree, to the folly of those men, are they who marvel, soberly persuaded by this one great miracle, that He it surely was Whose coming *into the world* as a *Prophet* was foretold. But observe, how great a difference hence appears, I mean, between the race of Israel, and those situate out of Judaea; for the one, although they were spectators of many things, and those not unworthy of admiration, are not only hard of heart and inhuman, but also desire unjustly to slay Him Who was zealous to save them, driving Him with their wild folly from their city and country: while they who dwelt away from Jerusalem, and hence signify the race of aliens, from one miracle alone glorify Him, and nobly determine that their conceptions of Him should be received with faith unhesitatingly. From all these things, was Israel shewn to be self-condemned and self-invited to her final just rejection, and that it was due to the Gentiles to obtain at length their share of mercy from above and love through Christ.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force to make Him a King, He departed again into the mountain Himself Alone.

Most praiseworthy judgment would one give, and full rightly, to those who had been easily brought by the great miracle to believe, that it was indeed befitting that their very choicest should be Christ's, and their chiefest offered to Him as an honour. For what else but this does their desire *to choose Him for their King* signify to us? But among other things one may admire this too; for Christ is made an example to us of contempt of glory, in that He flees from those who desire to give Him due honour, and refuses a kingdom that highest earthly prize, although to Him it was in truth no object of envy, in that He with the Father reigneth over all things, yet giveth He to them too who look for the hope to come, to understand that little to them is worldly greatness, and that it is not good to accept honours in this life, that is, in the world, though they offer themselves, that they may mount up to honour from God. For unseemly is it in truth that they should wish to shine in these things, who are pressing on to the Divine grace, and thirsting for everlasting glory.

We must then eschew the love of glory, sister and neighbour of arrogance, and not far distant from its borders. And illustrious honour in this present life let us eschew us hurtful, let us rather seek for a holy lowliness, giving way to one another as the blessed Paul too admonisheth, saying, *Be each among you so minded according to what was also in Christ Jesus; Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be Equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking servant's form, made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: wherefore God also highly exalted Him and gave Him the Name which is above every Name.* Seest thou how His voluntary abasement hath a glorious consummation, and His lowly-mindedness shews itself a root of many good things to us? For the Only-Begotten being in the Form of God the Father hath humbled Himself, being made Man for our sakes, but even though He appeared in this life with Flesh, yet He remained not lowly: for He hastes back to His ancient Dignity and to His God-befitting glory, even though He became Man: this same way may one suppose will it be as to us too. For when we bring ourselves down from the empty heights of the present life and seek low things, then shall we surely receive in return the glory from above, and mount up unto being gods by grace, receiving after likeness so to say to Him Who is truly and by Nature Son, the being called children of God. And that I may say something akin to the subject before us, let us refuse, if it offer itself, excellency upon earth, the mother of all honour, if we mind heavenly things, and live for things above rather than those on the earth.

But our discourse is not devoid of spiritual thought, therefore we will repeat, summing up as it were the whole force of what has been done, and again going through from the beginning the account before us. For so will it become clear to us what is about to be said, specially as the blessed Evangelist hath added, as though hinting at something necessary and not to be rejected, that He *withdrew into the mountain Himself Alone.* Therefore rejecting the cruelty of the Jews, Christ began to depart from Jerusalem, which plainly is, *I have forsaken Mine House, I have left Mine heritage.* When He had crossed *the sea of Tiberias*, and was very far removed from their folly, He goes up *into a mountain* together *with His disciples.* This we said signified the impassable so to say and impracticable nature of the way to Him unto the Jews, and Christ's withdrawal from them in anger at His Passion, for a season, that is, the fit time, and that Christ will be manifest, together with His disciples, when He departs from Judaea, and goes unto the Gentiles, transferring His grace to them. From the mountain did He look on them that followed Him, and moreover take thought for their food. And this again we said signified as it were typically, the supervision from above which is due to the Saints according to, *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous*, and that Christ is not without

thought for them that fear Him. Next much people were miraculously fed with *the five loaves and two little fishes*; of which we defined that they ought to be conceived to be the writings of the Saints *old and new* set by the Apostles before them that love Christ. Moreover, that the choir of the disciples will receive from God the rich fruit of their ministry to usward, and after them, the overseers of the holy churches of God: for the type was in the beginning to all in them. Next the spectators marvel at the miracles, and devise to *take Jesus by force for a king*. This He understanding, *departs alone into the mountain*, as it is written; for when Christ was marvelled at by the Gentiles, as Wonder-worker and God, when all enrolled ¹² Him their King and Lord, then was He received up Alone into Heaven, no one at all following Him thither. For He, the Firstfruits of the dead, hath gone up *Alone into the great and truer mountain*, according as is said by the Psalmist, *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart*. For such an one shall follow Christ, and shall go up into *the spiritual mountain* also, at the time of the Kingdom of Heaven. But *He hath withdrawn into the mountain*, that is, hath gone up into Heaven, not refusing to reign over them that believed on Him, but delaying the time of His more manifest kingdom, until His return to us from above, when He shall descend in the glory of the Father, no longer by miracles, as before, known to be truly and by Nature Lord, but by God-befitting glory confessed that He is undoubtedly King.

Therefore (for I will say it again briefly, compressing the multitude of words), when by His miracles He was believed on and acknowledged to be God, having gone away from the Jewish people, then do all press forward to receive Him for their King, but He ascends into Heaven *Alone*, laying up for its fitting time the more open manifestation of His Kingdom.

16, 17 *And when even was come, His disciples went down unto the sea, and entered into a ship and went over the sea unto Capernaum.*

The first sign having been miraculously accomplished, His flight and withdrawal are economically found to be the root again and occasion of another, and the Wonderworker proceeds, as it is written, *from might to might*. For since He was being sought as King by them who were astonished at that great miracle, and was Himself refusing worldly honours according to the preceding account; it was altogether necessary that He should depart from the place, yea, rather from their whole country. In order then that He might seem to have sailed away, and might relax somewhat the intensity of the seekers, He orders the disciples to depart before Him, but Himself stays, advancing opportunely unto the next miracle. For it was His most earnest endeavour, by every occasion and act, to confirm the mind of the Apostles in their faith to Himward. For since they were to be teachers of the earth, and to *shine forth as lights in the world*, as Paul saith, He necessarily led them to all things that would profit them. For this was to shew kindness not on them alone, but to those also who should be led by them unto the unerring apprehension of Him.

But why (will some one perchance say) after that miracle, is the Power of Jesus to walk on the very sea immediately introduced? Such an one shall hear a very credible cause. For when He desired to feed the multitudes, Philip and Andrew supposed that He would be powerless thereto, the one saying that no small sum of money would barely suffice them for just a little enjoyment, the other telling that *five loaves and two small fishes* were found with one of the lads, nay that what was found was nothing to so great a multitude; and from all (so to speak) their words, they thought that He could do nothing out of the due course of our affairs:---- needs, in order that He might free Himself from so petty a conception, and might bring the

still feeble mind of the Apostles to learn, that He doth all things wondrously which He willeth, unrestrained by the nature of things, the necessary order of things not hampering Him in the least, does He place under His Feet the humid nature of the waters, albeit unpractised to lie under the bodies of men, for all things were possible, as to God. *Evening* then being now come, and the time abating the vigilance of those who were seeking for Him, the choir of the holy disciples goes down to the sea, and began to sail away immediately, obeying in all things their God and Teacher, and that without delay.

18 *And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them, and the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.*

Many things at once are being profitably contrived, and the circumstances drive the disciples to a more zealous search after the Saviour. For the deep darkness of the night troubles them, hovering like smoke upon the raving waves, and takes from them all knowledge of whither at length to steer. Moreover the fierceness of winds troubles them not a little, riding on the waves with a rushing noise, and raising the billows to unwonted height. Yea, and though these things had taken place, *Jesus (it says) was not yet come to them*: for herein was their special danger, and the absence of Christ from the voyagers was working increase of their fear.

They therefore must needs be tempest-tost, who are not with Jesus, but are cut off, or seem to be absent from Him through their departure from His holy laws, and severed because of sin from Him Who is able to save. If then it be heavy to be in spiritual darkness, if grievous to be swallowed up in the bitter sea of pleasures, let us receive Jesus: for this will deliver us from dangers, and from death in sin. The figure of what has been said will be seen in what happened, He will therefore surely come to His disciples.

19, 20 *So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea and drawing nigh unto the ship; and they were afraid. But He saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid.*

When they are separated by great interval from the land, and it was like that they in their trouble would no way be saved (for they were now in the midst of the sea) then Christ thrice longed for appears to them. For thus could He give most welcome salvation to those in danger, when fear had already cut off all hope of life. But He appears to them miraculously (for so was it ordered to their greater profit) and they are astonished beholding Jesus going through the midst of the sea and upon the very waters, and make the miracle an addition to their fear. But Christ immediately relieves them from their misfortunes, saying, *I am, be not afraid*. For need, need must all disquiet be away, and they be openly superior to all danger, to whom Christ is now present. We shall see then by this again, that we ought to have a spirit courageous and manly in temptations, and endurance intense from hope in Christ, confirmed unto good confidence in our being surely saved, even though many be the fears of temptation that pour around us.

For observe that Christ does not appear to those in the boat immediately on their setting sail, nor at the commencement of their dangers, but when they are many *furlongs* off from the land. For not when the condition which harasses us first begins, does the grace of Him who saves visit us, but when the fear is at its height, and the danger now shews itself mighty, and we are found, so to say, in the midst of the waves of afflictions: then unlooked for does Christ

appear, and puts away our fear, and will free us from all danger, by His Ineffable Power changing the dread things into joy, as it were a calm.

21 They therefore would receive Him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they were going.

The Lord not only releases the voyagers from dangers, wondrously shining on them, but also frees them both from toil and sweat, by His God-befitting Power thrusting forward the ship on to the opposite shore. For they were expecting that by rowing on still, they should with difficulty be able to reach the end, but He releases them from these their toils, revealing Himself to them in a very little time the Worker of many miracles to their full assurance. When then Christ appears and beams upon us, we shall without any labour succeed even against our hope, and we who are in danger through not having Him, shall have no more need of toil to be able to accomplish what is profitable for us, when He is present. Christ then is our deliverance from all danger, and the accomplishment of achievements beyond hope to them that receive Him.

But since we have discoursed on every portion of the subject singly, come and let us, joining the meaning hereof with the connexion of the preceding portions, work out the spiritual interpretation. We said then that Jesus ascended into Heaven as into a mountain, that is to say, being received up, after His resurrection from the dead. But when this has taken place, then His disciples alone and by themselves, a type of Ecclesiastical teachers in succession throughout all time, swim through the billows of this present life as a kind of sea, meeting with varied and great temptations, and enduring no contemptible dangers of teaching at the hands of those who oppose the faith and war against the Gospel preaching: but they shall be freed both from their fear and every danger, and shall rest from their toils and misery, when Christ shall appear to them hereafter too in God-befitting Power, and having the whole world under His Feet. For this I deem His walking on the sea signifies, since the sea is often taken as a type of the world by Divine Scripture, as it is said in the Psalms, *This great and wide sea, there are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* When Christ then cometh *in the glory of His Father*, as it is written, then shall the ship of the holy Apostles, that is, the Church, and they that sail therein, i. e., they who through faith and love toward God are above the things of the world, without delay and without all toil, gain the land, *whither they were going.* For it was their aim to attain unto the Kingdom of Heaven, as to a fair haven. And the Saviour confirms this understanding of all that has been said, in that he says to His Disciples at one time, *A little while and ye shall no more see Me, and again a little while and ye shall see Me*, at another again, *Tribulation shall ye have in the world, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* But in the night the Lord cometh down from the mountain and visiteth His disciples who are watching, and they look on Him coming, not without fear (for they tremble) that something needful for our understanding may in this too be made known unto us. For He shall descend from Heaven, as in the night, the world yet sleeping and slumbering in much sin. Therefore to us too doth He say, *Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.* The parable too of the Virgins will no less teach us this. For He says that five were wise, five foolish: but *while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept: and at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.* Seest thou how at midnight the Bridegroom is announced to us? And what the *cry* is, and the mode of the *meeting*, the Divine Paul will make known, saying at one time, *For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a summons, with voice of archangel, with the trump of God*, at another of the saints who are raised up, *WE which are*

alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. But the disciples being smitten with fear, albeit they saw Him coming, and were found in toil and watching, signifies that the Judge will come terrible to all, and that the righteous man will surely quake within himself, proven as by fire, albeit ever foreseeing Him Who was to come, and not shrinking from toils in virtue, nourished in vigilance alike and good watching. But the Lord doth not enter into the ship with His disciples, as though He were going to sail with them, but rather moveth the ship on to the land. For Christ will not appear co-working any more with those who honour Him, unto their achievement of virtue, but to give to them that have already achieved their looked-for end.

22, 23 The morrow, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there save that one whereinto His disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, yet that His disciples had gone away, howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks.

The miracle does not escape notice, I mean Jesus walking on the very sea, although it took place by night and in the dark, and was ordered in secret. But the crowd of those who were wont to follow Him perceives, assured (as is probable) by much watching, that He had neither sailed with His disciples, nor had crossed in any other ship. For there was there the Apostles' ship alone, which they took and went away before Him. Nought then is hidden of what is good even though it be performed in secret by any, and here we see that that is true, *Nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither hid that shall not be known and come abroad.* I say then that he who desireth to track the footsteps of Christ, and, as far as man can, to be moulded after His Pattern, ought not to be eager to live in much boasting, nor when he practises virtue to be led away in pursuit of praise, nor if he enter upon an extraordinary and exceeding disciplined life, should he desire to glory immoderately thereat, but should desire to be seen alone by the Eyes of the Deity, Who revealeth hidden things, and that which is performed in secret bringeth He into clearest apprehension.

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there neither His disciples, they also took shipping and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus.

These men follow Him, marvelling perchance at His miracles, yet not receiving any profit from them unto the duty of faith, but as though they were making some return to the Wonder-worker by merely bestowing on Him a not undesired praise. For this is a dreary disease of a mind and soul which is never accustomed to be led to the choice of what is profitable for her. The reason why this was so with them was, that they delighted solely in the pleasures of the flesh, and jumped eagerly at the meanest temporal food, rather than hasten after spiritual goods, and endeavour to gain what would support them to life eternal. This you will learn clearly by what follows too.

25 And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi when camest Thou hither?

Their speech takes the form of being that of those who love Him and feigns sweetness, but is convicted of being exceeding senseless and childish. For they ought not on meeting with so great a teacher, to have talked to no purpose, and taken no pains to learn anything. For what was the need of being eager to ask Him, when He came there? what good would they be likely

to get from knowing? We must then seek wisdom from the wise, and let a prudent silence be preferred to undisciplined words. For the disciple of Christ bids that our *speech be seasoned with salt*: and another of the wise exhorts us to this, saying, *My son, if thou hast a word of understanding, answer, if not, lay thy hand upon thy mouth*. And how evil it is to be condemned for an undisciplined tongue, we shall know from another: for he says, *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain*.

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, I say unto you, ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracle, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled.

We will say something common, yet worn by little use. Great teachers are often wont to be not slightly angry, when they are questioned about vain and useless matters. And we shall find them so, not out of haughtiness, but rather from annoyance at the folly of the questioners. Of us therefore and those like us I think that this is not unrightly said: but the Saviour inflicts a warm rebuke upon those who made those enquiries, for speaking uninstructedly, and unwisely enquiring not because it was their duty to seek out the things whereby they might become honest and good, but because they followed Him for carnal reward and that a most mean one. For what is less than daily food, and that not sumptuous? We must then practise piety towards Christ and Love of Him, not that we may obtain ought of carnal goods but that we may gain the salvation that is through Him; and let us not say good words to Him, as these say *Rabbi*, nor devise fair-speaking as a foundation of gain and boundless ingathering of riches. Truly he that attempts such things, will not be ignorant that he shall encounter Christ Who keenly convicteth him, and revealeth his hidden wickedness.

It is meet again to admire also the economy herein. For when He saw that they were enveloped with the afore-mentioned disease, as a Physician skilful and master of his art, He devised a twofold medicine for them, entwining the helpful reproof with most glorious miracle. The miracle then we shall find in His knowing their thoughts; and in the Wonder-worker not telling them what they sought not out of piety to know, you will behold the reproof. And the advantage is twofold. For in that He knows perfectly their devices and has accurate perception thereof, He shews that they are without understanding, in that they think to escape the Divine Eye, while they heap up wickedness in their heart, and practise sweet words with their tongue. But this is the part of One Who persuades them to leave off this their disease, and to cease from no slight sin. For outrageous is he and lawless, who hath this conception of God. In usefully convicting them of sinning, He restrains in some sort the future course of evil. For that which has no hindrance, creeps on and extends itself; but when caught in the fact, it is well-nigh ashamed, and like a rope contracts into itself. Therefore the Lord profiteth them by reproof also, and by those things whereby one thinks that He smites, by these very things He is seen to be their Benefactor. We must then hold that even though some flatter or with mild words wheedle the rulers of the Churches, yet are not sound concerning the faith, it is not meet that they should be carried away by their fawnings nor by way of payment for their applause lend in turn to them who need correcting, silence in regard to their faults: but we ought rather boldly to rebuke them, and to persuade them to change for the better, or at least hereby if so be to profit others, according to that spoken by Paul, *Them that sin rebuke before all, that the rest also may fear*.

This then for the subjects separately: but that they are in connexion, and of necessity follow those before considered, I think I ought to shew. We said then that our Saviour's coming down from the mountain typified His second and future Coming to us from Heaven, and we added as in summary, that He appeared to His disciples while they were watching, and yet toiling, and released them from their fear, and brought the ship at once to land. And what is hence pourtrayed to us, as in a type, we have there declared. But now observe, that after Jesus had come down from the mountain, certain miss following Him, and come to Him at last. For they come on *the day following*, the Evangelist having not without care added this also. Then on meeting with Him, they endeavour to wheedle Him with good words: but Christ chides them, bringing upon them hot and keen reproof, that we might consider this again, that after the Coming of our Lord to us from Heaven, most vain and profitless unto men is the search after good things, nor will the desire to follow Him find any fitting season. Yea even though certain approach Him, thinking to appease Him with smoothest words, they shall meet the Judge no longer mild and gentle, but reproofing and avenging. For thou wilt see the flattery of them that are reproofed, and the reproof itself in the words of the Saviour, when He saith, *Many will say to Me in that Day*, to wit, the Day of Judgment, *Lord, Lord, did we not in Thy Name cast out devils?* But says He, *Then will I profess unto them, Verily I say unto you, I never knew you.* For ye sought Me not purely (saith He) nor loved to excel in holiness, for thereby would I have known you, but since ye practised piety in semblance only and in mere imaginaries for the purpose of gain, justly do I confess that I have not known you. What then in that passage is *Lord, Lord*, here is *Rabbi*. To whomsoever therefore punishment is a bitter thing, let him not fall into inertness nor be manifoldly infirm in transgression, looking to the goodness of God, but let him *prepare his works for his going forth*, as it is written, *and make it fit for himself in the field*, i. e., while he is in the world. For the Saviour interpreted that *the field is the world*. Let him prepare to shew holiness and righteousness before the Divine Judgment Seat. For he will behold no unseasonably clement Judge, nor yet yielding to entreaties for mercy, in Him Whom he ought without delay to have obeyed when He was calling him to salvation, while the time of mercy was granting to him both to beg for forgiveness for his already past transgressions, and to seek for loving-kindness from God Who saves.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life.

Something of this sort doth Paul teach us expanding the discourse universally and more generally, saying, *He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soiveth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* For he says that they sow to the flesh who giving as it were full rein to the pleasures of the flesh, advance at full speed to whatever they will, by no means distinguishing what is profitable for them from what is hurtful and injurious, nor in any way accustomed to approve what seems good unto the Law-giver, but heedlessly hurried off to that alone which is pleasant and agreeable, and preferring nothing to things seen. Again he affirms that they sow to the Spirit, who expend the whole aim of their mind on those things wherein the Holy Ghost willeth us to excel, employing a mind so intense toward the cultivation of good things, that, did not voice of nature not to be disregarded constrain them to minister needful food to the flesh, they would not endure to descend even to this. I think then that we ought to take no forethought whatever *for the flesh for the lusts* thereof, but rather to apply ourselves to what is most needful, and to be zealous in practising those things, which bring us to the everlasting and Divine Life. For admiration for the delights of the body, and the esteeming nothing better than the superfluities of the

belly, is truly brutish and akin to the extremest folly. But to apply ourselves to good things, and earnestly to strive to excel in virtues, and to be subject to the laws of the Spirit, and with all readiness to seek after the things of God, which are able to support us unto salvation:---I will grant that this truly beseemeth him who knoweth his own nature, and is not ignorant that he hath been made a reasonable creature *after the Image of Him that created him*. Therefore as the Saviour somewhere saith, *Take we no thought, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed?* but considering that *the soul is more than meat, and the body than raiment*, let us take thought how the more precious part of us may do well.

For though the body do well, and be fat with succession of delights, it will not profit the miserable soul; but on the contrary, will work it much harm. For it will depart into the everlasting fire, since they who have wrought no good, must needs undergo punishment for it: but if the body have been bridled with due reason, and brought under the law of the Spirit, both must surely be saved together. It is then most absurd, that for the flesh we should so take thought, which is but for a time and even now shall perish, as to think that it ought not to lack any one thing which it loves: and to take care for the soul, by way of appendix, or as though it were nothing worth; albeit I think we ought to apply ourselves so much the rather to cares for the soul, as it is of more value than the body. For so of a truth preferring what surpasses in the comparison to what is inferior, and giving a just vote in this matter, we shall become holy and wise jurors, and not bestow upon any other the palm of right reasoning, but rather shall put it upon our own heads. Let us then, as the Saviour saith, *labour not for the meat which perisheth*, which when it hath passed into the belly, and for a very little while deluded the mind with pettiest pleasure, goeth out into the draught, and is conveyed forth again from the belly. But the spiritual food which *strengthened the heart*, keepeth the man unto life everlasting, which also Christ promiseth to give us, saying, *Which the Son of Man shall give unto you*; at once knitting the human with that which is Divine, and connecting the whole mystery of the economy with Flesh in its order. But He hints, I suppose, at the Mystic and more Spiritual Food, whereby we live in Him, sanctified in body and soul. But we shall see Him speaking more openly of this hereafter. The discourse then must be kept for its fit time and place.

CHAPTER V. That the Only-Begotten Son is the Impress of the Person of God the Father, and no other Impress either is, or is conceived of, save He.

which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him the Father sealed, God.

He was not ignorant, as God, of the charges that would result from Jewish folly, nor of the reasons why they were often foolishly enraged. He knew that they would reason in themselves, looking to the flesh alone, and not conceiving of God the Word therein, Who is This That seizeth upon God-befitting words? for who can give unto men food that keepeth them unto everlasting life? for wholly foreign to man's nature is such a thing, and it beseemeth Him Alone Who is God over all. The Saviour therefore defends Himself beforehand, and by seasonable arguments, shames their looked-for shameless talk. For He says that *the Son of Man* will *give* them the food which nourisheth them unto everlasting life, and immediately affirmed that He is sealed by the Father. *Sealed* again is either put for *anointed* (for he who is anointed is sealed), or as shewing that He has been by Nature formed unto the Father. Just as if He had said, I am not unable to give you food which endureth and bringeth up unto everlasting life and delight. For though I seem as one of you, that is Man with flesh, yet was I anointed and sealed by God the Father unto an exact Likeness

with Him. For ye shall see (He saith) that He is in Me, and I again in Him Naturally, even though for your sakes I was born Man of a woman, according to the Ineffable order of the economy. For I can do all things in God-befitting Authority and do not in any way come short of the Might inherent in My Father. And though God the Father giveth you the Spiritual Food, which preserveth unto everlasting life, it is clear that *the Son* too *will give* it, even though made in Flesh, since He is His Exact Image; the Likeness in every thing being conceived, not after the lineaments of flesh, nor yet ought conceived of in bodily form, but in God-befitting glory and Equal Power and royal Authority. But we must observe again, that when He says that *the Son of Man* will give the things God-befitting and that He hath been sealed unto the Image of God the Father, He endureth not the division of him that separateth the Temple of the Virgin from the true Sonship, but defines Himself and willeth to be conceived of again as One. For One in truth over us is Christ, bearing as it were the royal purple His Own Robe, I mean His Human Body, or His Temple, to wit of Soul and Body; since One too of Both is Christ.

But, most excellent sir, will the Christ-opposer again say, give the truth the power of overcoming: deal not subtilly with the saying, dishonourably turning it about, whithersoever thou wilt. Lo clearly hereby is the Son proved to be not of the Essence of the Father, but rather a copy of His Essence. Suppose some such thing (say they) as we say: A seal or signet impressed on wax, for example, or any other matter fit to receive it, and engraving a likeness only of itself, is taken away again by him who pressed it on, having lost no part of itself: so the Father, having imposed and imprinted Himself Wholly upon the Son in some way by a most accurate Likeness, from Himself hath He surely no part of His Essence, nor is conceived of as therefrom but a mere image and accurate likeness.

Let him that is zealous for knowledge see that now too is our opponent darting on us, like a serpent, and rears aloft his head surcharged with venom: but He Who shattereth *the heads of the Dragon*, will shatter it too, and will give us power to escape his manifold stubbornness. Let him then tell us, who has just been dinning us with dreadful words, Does not the seal or signet, which is made (it may be) of wood or of iron or of gold, full surely seal with some impress those things whereon it comes, and will it not be and be conceived of as a seal apart from the impress? But I suppose that any one of our opponents too, even against his will constrained by fitness unto the very truth would confess that it will by all means seal with an impress; and without an impress, according to fair reasoning, not at all. Since then, as the Divine Scripture testifieth to us, the Son is the *Impress of the Person* of God the Father, in that He is in It and of It by Nature, whereupon is Himself impressed, or through whom else will the Father seal His Own Impress? For no one will say that the Father is not altogether in God-befitting Form, which is the Son, the Form of Him That begat Him; Whom if any behold spiritually, it is manifest that he will see the Father. Wherefore He says that He too is in Him Naturally, even though He be conceived to be of Him by reason of His Own Existence: as the brightness for instance, is in the brightening and of the brightening, and something different, according to the mode of conception, and again not different, as viewed in relation to it, because it is said to be of it, and again in it. And not I suppose in the way of division and complete essential partition are these things considered of: for they are inherent in respect of identity of essence in those things whence they are, and of which they are believed to be, tending forth according to expression in idea to something else, of their own, yet not separate. The Word of the Essence of the Father, not bare Word, nor without Flesh, is sealed then by the Father, yea rather through Him are sealed those things which are brought to likeness with God, as far as can be, as we understand in that which certain say, *The light of Thy*

Countenance was marked upon us, O Lord. For he says that the Countenance of God the Father, is the Son, Which is again the Impress, but the light thereof is the grace which through the Spirit passeth through unto the creation, whereby we are remoulded unto God through faith, receiving through Him as with a seal, the conformation unto His Son, Who is the Image of the Father, that our being made after the Image and Likeness of the Creator, might be well preserved in us. But since the Son is confessedly the Countenance of God the Father, He will surely be the Impress too with which God seals.

Yea (says our opponent) we believe that God through the Spirit seals the Saints, but the things that you are bringing forward have no place in the present question. Wherefore we will recapitulate and say, The seal supposed to be of iron, or may be gold, impresses its own likeness on the matter whereon it comes, losing nothing of its own, but by the operation only of its being pressed on does it mark the things that receive it: thus do we hold that the Son has been *sealed* by the Father, not having ought of His Essence but possessing merely an accurate likeness thereof, and being Other than He, as the image to the archetype.

O boundless folly, and perilous conceit! how easily hast thou forgotten those things just now gone through. For we said that the Son was the Impress of the Father, and that with Him was sealed other than He, and not Himself, lest He be thought to be His Own Impress. But thou, having not rightly spurned our argument hereon, dost not blush to put about Him a likeness of operation only. In image only then will the Son be God according to you, and by Nature not at all, but merely in that He was fashioned and well formed after the Likeness of Him That begat; haply no longer of Him That begat: for it is time that ye should on these accounts take away the begetting also, yea rather there is every need even if ye will it not. On the duty of believing that the Son is begotten of the Father, we have already expended much argument, or shall do so in its place. But it were more fitting that we should proceed to the matter in hand, putting forward to those who are accustomed unrestrainedly to shameless talk the question, Will they not surely say that that which is given may also be taken away, and confess that that which is added can altogether be also lost? for does it not at some time happen that every thing is rejected, which is not firmly rooted in any by nature? It is evident, even should any of them not assent thereto. Some time then or other, according to the argument of possibility, the Son will be bereft of His Likeness. For He was sealed (as ye say) by the mere Operation of His Father upon Him, not having the stability that 'is of natural Endowments, but conceived of and existing wholly other than His Father, and completely severed from His Essence. Doing then very excellently and fore-seeing matters by most cunning reasoning did ye secure the Father, by saying that He gives nought of Himself to the Son, save that He vouchsafes Him Likeness only, lest ought of passion should be conceived of as about Him. For this is your foolish mystery. For belike ye were ignorant that God the Father Who doeth all things without passion, will also beget without passion, and is superior to fire (for the argument brings us down to this necessity) which without passion or corporeal division, begets the burning which is of it. Let those then hear who are zealous in fancies only, and account unrestrained blasphemy to be not an unholy thing, but rather a virtue, that if they say that the Son is classed with the Father, in the propriety of likeness alone, He will abide in no secure possession of good things, but will wholly risk His being by Nature God, and will in possibility at least, admit of change for the worse. For there was said to that governor of Tyre too, words which reason necessitates us to attribute to the person of the devil, *Thou art the seal of the likeness:* but he to whom that speech is addressed, is found to have fallen from the likeness. Thou seest then, and clearly too, by such instances, that the mere being in the likeness of God is no security for an unmoved stability in things spiritual, nor yet does it suffice to perfect

endurance in the good things in which they are, to have been duly sealed unto the Nature of the Maker. For they too fall, and are borne headlong, oft-times changing into a worse mind, than they had at the beginning. It is then possible, according to this argument, that the Son, attaining to Likeness with the Father by sameness of work only, and not firm fixed by the prop by Nature, but having His stability in the mere motions of His Own Will, should undergo change, or, though He do not suffer it, should find the not so suffering the result of admirable purpose, and not rather the steadfastness of Native stability, as God.

What then, most noble sirs, is the Son no longer God in truth? And if according to you, He is so found, why do we worship Him? why is He co-glorified with God the Father? why is He borne, as God, upon the highest Powers? Are then with us the Holy Seraphim themselves too ignorant that they do greatly err from what is fit, in glorifying Him Who is not by Nature God? They err, it seems, in calling Him Who is honoured with equal honour Lord of Sabaoth. Or shall we not say, that the highest Powers, Principalities Thrones and Dominions and Lordships, essay, after their power, to appear conformed to God? For if the so small animal of the earth, in respect of that creation, I mean man, be honoured with such beauty, what reason has one not for fully thinking, that to them who are far better than we, far better things are allotted? How then do they both call Him Lord of Sabaoth, and stand around as a guard, as ministering to the King of the universe? why sitteth He with the Father, and that on His Right Hand, the bond with the Lord, the creature with the Creator? For is it not fitter to bring that which by means of heed and wariness is free from passion and perfect, to the level of things originate rather than of God by Essence Who hath Naturally the inability to suffer? But it is manifest, though they confess it not. Who then will endure these babblers, or how will they not with reason hear, *Woe to them that are drunken without wine?*

But perchance they will Be ashamed of the absurdities of such arguments, and will betake themselves to this, and say, that the Son was sealed by the Father unto a most accurate Likeness, and is Unchangeable in Nature, even though He be not from the Father.

How then, tell me, will that which is not of God by Nature, bear His Attribute, and that be found not without share-essentially of the Excellences of the Divine Essence, which proceeded not therefrom, after the true mode of generation? For it is, I suppose, clear and confessed by all, that the Properties of the Godhead are wholly unattainable by the created nature, and that the qualities belonging to It by Nature will not exist in ought else that is, in equal and exact manner: as for example, Immutability is in God Naturally; in us by no means so, but a kind of stability likens us thereto, through heed and vigilance not suffering us readily to go after those things which we ought not. But if it were possible, that according to them, ought of Divine Attributes should be in any who is not of the Divine Nature Essentially, and that they should be so in him as they are in It; what (tell me) is to prevent all things God-befitting from at length coming down even upon those who are not by nature gods? For if one of them unhindered finds place (I mean Immutability) there will be room for the rest also, and what follows? utter confusion. For will not the superior pass below, and the inferior mount up into the highest place? And what is there yet to hinder even the Most High God from being brought down to our level, and us again from being gods even as the Father, when there no longer is or is seen any difference intervening, if the qualities which belong to God Only pass to us, and are in us naturally? And since God the Father contains in Himself Alone, as it seems, those Properties whereby we should be as He, we have remained men, and the angels likewise with us what they are, not mounting up to That which is above all. For if God should reveal Himself not Jealous, by putting His Own Attribute into the power of all, many surely

would be those who were by nature gods, able to create earth and heaven and all the rest of the creation. For the Excellencies of Him Who is by Nature the Creator having once passed on, how will not they be as He is? or what prevents that which is radiant with equal goods from appearing in equal glory? But the God-opposer surely sees completely, how great the multitude of strange devices which is hence heaped up upon us and exclaims against the mislearning that is in him. The Godhead then will remain in Its Own Nature, and the creature will partake of It through spiritual relationship, but will never mount up unto the Dignity that unchangeably belongs to It. But our argument being thus arranged, we shall find that Immutability exists Essentially in the Son: He is then God by Nature, and of necessity of the Father, lest ought that is not of Him by Nature should reach to an equal dignity of Godhead.

But since they hold out to us as an incontestable argument their saying that the Son is other than the Father, as Image to archetype, and through this subtlety think to sever Him from the Essence of Him That begat Him, they shall be caught in no slight folly, and to have studied their assertion to no purpose, of any force in truth to accomplish fairly what they have at heart. For what further are they vainly contending for, or whence do they from only the distinctness of His own Being, sever the Son from the Father? For the fact that He exists Personally does not (I suppose) prove that He is diverse from the Essence of Him who begat Him. For He is confessedly of the Father, as being of His Essence; He is again in the Father, by reason of His being in Him by Nature; and you will hear Him say, at one time, *I proceeded forth from the Father, and am come*, again at another time, *I am in the Father and the Father in Me*. For He will not withdraw into a Personality wholly and completely separated, seeing that the Holy Trinity is conceived of as being in One Godhead; but being in the Father, in mode or position undivided as to consubstantiality, He will be conceived of as likewise of Him, according to the Procession which ineffably manifesteth Him in respect of beaming forth. For He is Light of Light. Therefore in the Father and of the Father, alike Undivided and separate, in Him as Impress, but as Image to Archetype will He be conceived of in His Own Person. But we will not simply discourse concerning this, but will confirm it by example from the Law, on all sides fortifying the force of truth against those who think otherwise.

The Law then appointed to the children of Israel to *give to every man a ransom for his poll, half a didrachm*. But one stater contains a didrachm. Yea and herein again was shadowed out to us Christ Himself, Who offered Himself for all, as by all, a Ransom to God the Father, and is understood in the one drachma, but not separately from the other, because that in the one coin, as we said before, two drachmae are contained. Thus may both the Son be conceived of in respect of the Father, and again the Father in respect of the Son, Both in One Nature, but Each Separate in part, as existing in His own Person, yet not wholly severed, nor One apart from the Other. And as in the one coin were two drachmae, having equal bulk with one another, and in no ways one less than the other; so shalt thou conceive of the in nought differing Essence of the Son in respect of God the Father, and again of the Father in respect of the Son, and thou shalt at length receive wholesome doctrine upon all points spoken of concerning Him.

28, 29 *They said therefore unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the work of God? Jesus answered and said unto them,*

Not of good purpose is the enquiry, nor yet as one might suppose does the question proceed from desire of knowledge on their part, but is rather the result of exceeding arrogance. For as if they would deign to learn nought beyond what they knew already, they well nigh say

something of this sort, Sufficient, good Sir, to us are the writings of Moses: we know as much as we need of the things at which he who is skilful in the works of God ought to aim. *What* new thing then wilt Thou supply, in addition to those which were appointed at that time? what strange thing wilt Thou teach, which was not shewn us before by the Divine words? The enquiry then is rather of folly, than really of a studious will. You have something of this kind in blessed Matthew too. For a certain young man, overflowing with not the most easily-gotten abundance of wealth, was intimating that he would enter upon the due service of God. When he came to Jesus, he eagerly enquired what he should do, that he might be found an heir of everlasting life. To whom the Lord saith, *Thou knowest surely the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not bear false witness,* and the like. But he, as lacking none of these things, or even not accepting an exposition of teaching which fell far short of his existing practice, says. *All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* what then he did joining haughtiness to ignorance in his question, *what lack I yet,* the same do these too through their over much arrogance alike and self-conceit, saying, *What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*

A good thing then is a low conceit, and it is the work of a noble soul, to commit to her teachers the thorough knowledge of what is profitable, and so to yield to their lessons, which they think it right to instil, seeing they are superior in knowledge. For how shall they be accepted at all as teachers, if they have not superiority of understanding above what the mind of their pupils hath, since their advance will scarcely end at the measure of their masters' knowledge, according to the word of the Saviour, *The disciple is not above his Master,* and, *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master?*

This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom HE sent.

Most severely doth the Lord, even though secretly as yet and obscurely, attack the folly of the questioners. For one would suppose, looking merely at the simple meaning of the words, that Jesus was commanding them nothing else, save to believe on Him: but on examining the intent of the words, he will see that they refer to something else. For full well does He arrange His discourse suitably to the folly of the questioners. For they, as though they learnt sufficiently through the Law how to work what was well-pleasing to God, blasphemously neglect the teaching of our Saviour, saying, *what shall we do, that we might work the work of God?* But it was necessary that He should shew them, that they were still very far removed from the worship most pleasing unto God, and that they knew no whit of the true good things, who cleaving to the letter of the law, have their mind full of mere types and forms. Therefore with some great emphasis does He say, opposing the fruit of faith to the worship of the Law, *This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom HE sent.* That is, it is not what YE supposed (He says) looking to the types alone; but know ye, even though ye *will* not learn it, that the Lawgiver took no pleasure in your sacrifices of oxen, nor needest thou to sacrifice sheep, as though God willed and required this. For what is frankincense, though it curl in the air in fragrant steam, what will the he-goat profit (saith He) and the costly offerings of cinnamon? God eateth not *the flesh of bulls,* nor yet drinketh He *the blood of goats:* He knoweth *all the fowls of the Heaven,* and *the wild beasts of the field* are with Him. But He hath *hated and despised your feasts,* and *will not smell in your solemn assemblies,* as Himself saith: nor *spake He unto your fathers concerning whole burnt offerings or sacrifices.* Therefore not *this is the twork of God,* but rather that, *that ye should believe on Him whom He sent.* For of a truth better than the legal and typical worship is the salvation through faith and the grace that justifieth than the commandment that condemneth.

*The work then of the pious soul is faith to Christ-ward, and more excellent far the zeal for to become wise in the knowledge of Him, than the cleaving to the typical shadows. You will marvel also at this besides: for whereas Christ was wont to take no notice of those who questioned Him, tempting Him, He answers this for the present economically (even though He knew that they would be nothing profited) to their own condemnation, as He says elsewhere too, *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin.**

30, 31 They said therefore unto Him, What sign doest THOU then, that we may see and believe Thee? what dost Thou work? our fathers ate the manna in the desert, as it is written, Bread from Heaven gave He them to eat.

The disposition of the Jews unveils itself by little and little, although, hidden and as yet buried in less overt reasonings. For they were saying in their folly, *What shall we do that we might work the works of God?* as if, as we said before, they held the commandment through Moses sufficient to conduct them to all wisdom, whereby they might know how to perform what was well-pleasing unto God. But their aim being such was concealed, but is now being unveiled, and by little and little comes forth more plainly. *For nothing is secret*, as the Saviour says, *that shall not be made manifest*. What then (are they saying) *What sign shewest THOU?* The blessed Moses was honoured (he says) and with great reason, he was set forth as a mediator between God and man. Yea and he gave too a sufficient *sign*, for all they that were with him *ate the manna in the wilderness*. But do THOU at length, since Thou comest to us in a position greater than his, and dost not shrink from adding to the things decreed of old, with what signs wilt Thou give us a warrant, or what of wondrous works dost Thou shewing us, introduce Thyself as the Author of more novel doctrines unto us? Hereby too is our Saviour's word shewn to be true: for they are convicted by their own words of thinking that they ought to seek Him, not to admire Him for those things which He had in God-befitting manner wrought, but because they did *eat of the loaves and were filled*. For they demand of Him *a sign*, not any chance one, but such as (they thought) Moses wrought, when not for one day, but for forty whole years, he fed the people that came out of Egypt in the wilderness, by the supply of manna. For, knowing nothing at all (it seems) of the Mysteries in the Divine Scriptures, they did not consider that it was fit to attribute the marvellous working hereunto to the Divine power which wrought it, but very foolishly crown the head of Moses for this. They therefore ask of Christ *a sign* equal to that, giving no wonder at all to the sign which had been shewn them for a day, even though it were great, but saying that the gift of food ought to be extended to them for a long time. For that even so hardly would He shame them into confessing and agreeing that most glorious was the Power of the Saviour, and His Doctrine therefore to be received. Manifest then is it even though they do not say it in plain terms, that they wholly disregard signs, and under pretext of marvelling at them, are zealous to serve the impure pleasure of the belly.

CHAPTER VI. Of the manna, that it was a type of Christ's Presence and of the spiritual graces through Him.

32 Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, not Moses hath given you the Bread from Heaven,

Now too does the Saviour most severely convict them of being without understanding, and exceedingly ignorant of what is in the Mosaic writings. For they ought to have known quite

clearly that Moses was ministering the things of God to the people, and again those of the children of Israel to God, and was himself the worker in none of the miracles, but a minister rather and under-worker of those things which the Giver to them of all good things willed to do for the benefit of those who had been called out of bondage. What they then were impiously imagining, this Christ very resolutely cuts away (for to attribute things which befit and are due to the Divine Nature Alone, to the honour of men and not rather to It, how is not this replete with folly alike and impiety?) and in that He deprived the hierophant Moses of the miracle, and withdrew it out of his hand, it is (I suppose) manifest that He rather attributes the glory of it to Himself together with the Father, even though He abstained from speaking more openly, by reason of the uninstructedness of His hearers. For it was a thing truly not contrary to expectation, that they should rage, as though Moses were insulted by such words, and should be kindled unto intemperate anger, never enquiring what the truth was, nor recognizing the dignity of the Speaker, but heedlessly going about to only honour Moses, and not reasonably as it happened, when he was compared with what excelled him.

Let us learn then, with more judgment and reason, to practise respect towards our holy fathers and to *render*, as it is written, *fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour* (for we shall in no wise injure, if we render what fittingly belongs to each, since *the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets*) but when any discourse about our Saviour Christ is entered into, then we must needs say, *Who in the clouds can be equalled unto the Lord? or who among the sons of the mighty shall be likened unto the Lord?*

33 but My Father giveth you the True Bread from heaven: for the Bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.

It was needful not only to remove Moses from God-befitting Authority, according to their conception, and to shew that he was a minister of that miraculous working, rather than the bestower of it, but also to lessen the wonder though miraculously wrought, and to shew that it was nothing at all in comparison with the greater. For imagine Christ calling out something like this, The great things, sirs, do ye reckon among the little and meanest, and the beneficence of the Lord of all ye have meted out with most petty limits. For with no slight folly do ye suppose that the manna is *the Bread from heaven*, although it fed the race alone of the Jews in the wilderness, while there are other nations besides without number throughout the world. And ye supposed that God willed to shew forth lovingkindness so contracted, as to give food to one people only (for these were types of universalities, and in the partial was a setting forth of His general Munificence, as it were in pledge, to those who first received it): but when the time of the Truth was at our doors, *My Father giveth you the Bread from heaven*, which was shadowed forth to them of old in the gift of the manna. For let no one think (saith He) that that was in truth the Bread from heaven, but rather let him give his judgment in favour of That, which is clearly able to feed the whole earth, and to give in full life unto the world.

He accuses therefore the Jew of cleaving to the typical observances, and refusing to examine into the beauty of the Truth. For not that was, properly speaking, the manna, but the Only-Begotten Word of God Himself, who proceedeth from the Essence of the Father, since He is by Nature Life, and quickeneth all things. For since He sprang of the Living Father, He also is by Nature Life, and since the work of that which is by Nature Life is to quicken, Christ quickeneth all things. For as our earthly bread which is gotten of the earth suffereth not the frail nature of flesh to waste away: so He too, through the operation of the Spirit quickeneth our spirit, and not only so, but also holdeth together our very body unto incorruption.

But since our meditations have once got upon the subject of manna, it will not be amiss (I think) for us to consider and say some little on it also, bringing forward out of the Mosaic books themselves severally the things written thereon. For thus having made the statement of the matter most clear, we shall rightly discern each of the things signified therein. But we will shew through them all, that the Very Manna is Christ Himself, understood as given under the type of manna to them of old by God the Father. The beginning of the oracles thereon, speaks on this wise, *On the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt, the whole congregation of the children of Israel were murmuring against Moses and Aaron, and the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died, stricken by the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots and were eating bread to the full, for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.* The matter then of the history is clear and very plain, and I do not think it needs any words to test the obvious meaning: but we will speak of it, looking only to the spiritual meaning. The children of Israel then, while still in the country of the Egyptians, by Divine command were keeping typically their feast to Christ, and having taken their supper of the lamb, did thus hardly escape the tyranny of Pharaoh's rule and shake off the intolerable yoke of bondage. Then having miraculously crossed the Red sea, they got into the wilderness: and there famishing craved flesh to eat, and were dragged down to the accustomed desire for food: and so they began murmuring against Moses and fall into repenting of their free gift from God when they ought to have given no small thanks for it. Egypt then will be darkness, and will signify the condition of the present life, and the worldly state, wherein we enrolled as in some state, serve a bitter serfdom therein, working nothing at all to Godward but fulfilling only the works most delightful to the Devil, and hasting down unto the pleasures of impure flesh, like clay or stinking mud, enduring a miserable toil, unpaid, profitless, and pursuing a wretched (so to say) love of pleasure.

But when the Law of God speaks to our soul, and we behold at length the bitter bondage of these things, then oh then do we, thirsting after riddance from all evil, come to Christ Himself, as to the beginning and door of freedom, and provisioned with the security and grace that come through His Precious Blood, we leave the carnal condition of this life, as it were a troublous and stormy sea, and, out of all the tumult of the world, we at length reach a more spiritual and purer state, as it were sojourning in the wilderness. But since he is not unexercised unto virtue, who is through the Law instructed thereunto, when we find that we are at length in this case, then we falling into the temptations which try us, are sometimes devoured by the memory of carnal lusts, and then, when the lust inflames us mightily, we cry oftentimes out of recklessness, albeit the Divine Law hath called us to liberty, being as it were in hunger for our old accustomed pleasures, and making slight account of our toils after temperance, we look upon the bondage of the world as no longer evil. And in truth, the will of the flesh is sufficient to draw the mind to all faintheartedness after goodness.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold I rain you bread from heaven. In these words you may very clearly see that which is sung in the Psalms, *He gave them bread of heaven; man did eat angels' bread.* But it is, I suppose, evident to all, that of the reasonable Powers in heaven, none other is the Bread and Food, save the Only Begotten of God the Father. He then is the True Manna, the Bread from heaven, given to the whole rational creation by God the Father. But entering into the order of our subject we say this: Observe how the Divine grace from above draws unto itself the nature of man even though at times sick after its wonted things, and saves it in manifold wise. For the lust of the flesh like a stone falling on the mind thrusts it down, and despotically forces it unto its own will; but Christ brings us round again, as with a

bridle, unto longing for better things, and recovers them that are diseased unto God-loving habit of mind. For lo, lo to them that are sinking down into carnal pleasures, He promises to give Food from Heaven, the consolation, that is, through the Spirit, the Spiritual Manna. Through this are we strengthened unto all endurance and manliness and obtain that we fall not through infirmity into those things we ought not. The Spiritual Manna therefore, that is, Christ, was strengthening us before too unto piety.

But since we have once, by reason of need, digressed, I think it well not to leave the subject uninvestigated, since it is very conducive to our profit. Some one then may reasonably ask, Why is God who is so Loving to man and so loveth virtue when it behoved Him to forecome their request, tardy in respect of His Promise: and He nowise punishes those so perverse men, albeit He punished them afterwards, when they were sick with the same lusting, and pictured to themselves bread to the full, and fleshpots, and admitted longing for the rankest onions. For we shall find in Numbers, that both certain were punished, and the place, wherein they were then encamping, was called *the graves of lust, for there they buried the people that lusted*. With respect then to the first question, we say that it assuredly behoved Him to wait for the desire, and so at length to reveal Himself in due season the Giver. For most welcome is the gift to those in good case, when certain pleasures appear before it and precede it, inciting to thirst after what is not yet come: but the soul of man will be devoid of a more grateful sensation, if it do not first stretch after and labour for the pleasures of being well off. But perhaps you will say that there had been no way any entreaty from them, but murmuring rather, repentance, and outcry: for this would indeed be speaking more truly. To this we say, that entreaty through prayer will befit those who are of a perfect habit: and perchance the murmuring of the more feeble from depression or whatever cause, will partake of this: and the Saviour of all, being loving to man is not altogether angry at it. For as in those who are yet babes, crying will sometimes avail to the asking of their needs, and the mother is often called by it to find out what will please the child: so to those who were yet babes, and had not yet advanced to understanding, the cry of weariness so to say, has the force of petition before God. And He punisheth not in the beginning, even though He see them worsted by earthly lusts, but after a time, for this reason, as seems to me. They who were but newly come forth of Egypt, not having yet received the manna, nor having the Bread from heaven, which *strengtheneth man's heart*, fall as might be expected, into carnal lusts, and therefore are pardoned. But they who had already delighted *in the Lord*, as it is written, on preferring carnal delights to the spiritual good things, have to give most righteous satisfaction, and over and above their suffering have assigned them a notable memorial of their fate. For *the graves of lust* is the name of the place of their punishment.

And the people shall go out and gather the day's portion each day. We will consider the sensible manna a type of the spiritual manna; and the spiritual manna signifies Christ Himself, but the sensible manna adumbrates the grosser teaching of the Law. With reason is the gathering daily, and the lawgiver forbids keeping it till the morrow, darkly hinting to them of old, that when the time of salvation at length shines forth, wherein the Only Begotten appeared in the world with Flesh, the legal types should be wholly abolished, and the gathering food thence in vain, while the Truth Itself lieth before us for our pleasure and enjoyment.

And it shall come to pass, on the sixth day, and they shall prepare that which they bring in, and it shall be double what they gather. Observe again, that thou mayest understand, that He does not suffer them to gather on the seventh day the sensible manna, but commands that

which is already provided and gathered to be prepared for their food beforehand. For the seventh day signifies the time of the Advent of our Saviour, wherein we rest in holiness, ceasing from works of sin, and receiving for food, both the fulfilment of our faith, and the knowledge already arranged in us through the Law, no longer gathering it as of necessity, since more excellent food is now before us, and we have the Bread from heaven. The manna is collected in double measure before the holy sabbath: and you will understand thence, that the Law being concluded in respect of its temporal close, and the holy sabbath, that is, Christ's coming, already beginning, the getting of the heavenly goods will be after some sort in double measure, and the grace two-fold, bringing in addition to the advantages from the Law, the Gospel instruction also. Which the Lord Himself too may be conceived to teach when He says, as in the form of a parable. *Therefore every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a wealthy man which putteth forth out of his treasure things new and old*: the old the things of the Law, the new those through Christ.

And Moses and Aaron said unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, At even ye shall know that the Lord brought you forth from the land of Egypt, in the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord, in that the Lord giveth you in the evening flesh to eat and in the morning bread to the full. Moses promises to them of Israel, that quails shall be given them by God in the evening, and declares that hereby they shall know surely that the Lord brought them up out of Egypt. *And in the morning ye shall see plainly, (he says) the glory of the Lord, when He shall give you bread to the full.* And consider, I pray you, the difference between each of these. For the quail signifies the Law (for the bird ever flies low and about the earth): thus wilt thou see those too who are instructed through the Law unto a more earthly piety through types, I mean such as relate to sacrifice and purifications and Jewish washing. For these are heaved a little above the earth, and seem to rise above it, but are nevertheless in it and about it: for not in the Law is that which is perfectly good and lofty unto understanding. Moreover it is given *in the evening*: the account again by *evenings* signifying the obscurity of the letter, or the darksome condition of the world, when it had not yet the Very Light, i. e., Christ, who when He was Incarnate said, *I am come a Light into the world.* But He says the children of Israel *shall know that the Lord brought them out of Egypt.* For knowledge only of the salvation generally through Christ is seen in the Mosaic book, while grace was not yet present in very person. This very thing He hinted at, when He added, *In the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord, in that He giveth you bread to the full.* For when the mist of the Law, as it were night, hath been dispersed, and the spiritual Sun hath risen upon us all, *we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord* now present, receiving the Bread from heaven to the full, I mean Christ Himself.

And it was evening and the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning as the dew ceased round about the host, and behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small thing, as coriander seed, white. Look at the arrangement of the things to be considered. He says of the quails, that they covered the camp; of the manna again, that in the morning *when the dew was gone up*, it lay *on the face of the wilderness round about the camp.* For the instruction through the Law, I mean that in types and figures, which we have compared to the appearance of quails, covers the synagogue of the Jews: for, as Paul saith, *the veil lieth upon their heart, and hardness in part.* But when it was *morning*, that is, when Christ had now risen, and flashed forth upon all the world, and when the dew was gone up, that is, the gross and mist-like introduction of legal ordinances (*for Christ is the end of the Law and the Prophets*); then of a surety the true and heavenly manna will come down to us, I mean the Gospel teaching, not upon the congregation of the Israelites, but *round about the camp*, i. e., to all

the nations, and *upon the face of the wilderness*, that is the Church of the Gentiles, whereof it is said that *more are the children of the desolate than of the married wife*. For over the whole world is dispersed the grace of the spiritual manna, which is also compared to the coriander seed, and is called *small*. For the power of the Divine Word being of a truth subtle, and cooling the heat of the passions, lulleth the fire of carnal motions within us, and entereth into the deep of the heart. For they say that the effect of this herb, I mean *the coriander*, is most cooling.

And when the children of Israel saw it they said one to another, What is this? for they wist not what it was; being unused to what had been miraculously wrought and not being able to say from experience what it was, they say one to another What is this? But this very thing which is said interrogatively, they make the name of the thing, and call it in the Syrian tongue, Manna, i.e., What is this? and you will hence see, how Christ would be unknown among the Jews. For that which prevailed in the type, trial shewed that it had also force in the truth.

And Moses said to them, Let no man leave of it till the morning; and they hearkened not unto Moses, but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank, and Moses was wroth with them. The morning in this place signifies the bright and most glorious time of the coming of our Saviour, when the shadow of the Law and the mist of the devil among the nations, being in some sort undone, the Only-Begotten rose upon us like light, and spiritual dawn appeared. The blessed Moses then commanded not to leave of the typical manna until the morning; for when the aforementioned time hath risen upon us, superfluous and utterly out of place are the shadows of the Law by reason of the now present truth. For that a thing truly useless is the righteousness of the Law when Christ hath now gleamed forth, Paul shewed, saying of Him, *for whom I suffered the loss of all things, to wit, glorying in the Law, and do count them dung, that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ.* Seest thou then, how as a wise man he took care not to *leave of it till the morning?* They who kept of it unto the morning are a type of the Jewish multitude which should believe not, whose eager desire to keep the law in the letter, should be a producing of corruption and of worms. For nearest thou how the Lawgiver is exasperated greatly against them? *And Moses said unto Aaron, Take one golden pot, and put therein manna, an omer full, and thou shalt lay it up before God to be kept.* Well in truth may we marvel hereat, and say, *O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!* For incomprehensible in truth is the wisdom hidden in the God-inspired Scriptures, and *deep their depth*, as it is written, *who can find it out?* Thou seest then how our last comment fitted these things: For since Christ Himself was shewn to be our Very Manna, declared in type by way of image to them of old, needs does he teach in this place, of Whom and of what virtue and glory will he be full, who treasureth up in himself the spiritual Manna, and bringeth Jesus into the inmost recesses of his heart, through right faith in Him and perfect love. For thou hearest how the omer full of manna was put in a *golden pot*, and by the hand of Aaron laid up before the Lord to be kept. For the holy and truly pious soul, which travaileth of the Word of God perfectly in herself, and receiveth entire the heavenly treasure will be a precious vessel, like as of gold, and will be offered by the High Priest of all to God the Father, and will be brought into the Presence of Him Who holdeth all things together and preserveth them to be kept, not suffering to perish that which is of its own nature perishable. The righteous man then is described, as having in a golden vessel the spiritual Manna, that is Christ, attaining unto incorruption, as in the Sight of God, and remaining to be kept, that is unto long-enduring and

endless life. Christ with reason therefore convicts the Jews of no slight madness, in supposing that the manna was given by the all-wise Moses to them of old, and in staying at this point their discourse thereon and considering not one at all of the things presignified thereby, by His saying, *Verily I say unto you, Not Moses hath given you the manna.* For they ought rather to have considered this and perceived that Moses had brought in the service of mediation merely: but that the gift was no invention of human hand, but the work of Divine Grace, outlining the spiritual in the grosser, and signifying to us the Bread from Heaven, Which giveth Life to the whole world, and doth not feed the one race of Israel as it were by preference.

34, 35 *They said therefore unto Him, Lord evermore give us this Bread. Jesus said unto them,*

Hereby is clearly divulged, though much desiring to be hid, the aim of the Jews, and that one might see that it is not lawful for the Truth to lie, which said that not because they saw the miracles, were they therefore eager to follow Him, but because they *did eat of the loaves and were filled.* With reason then were they condemned for their much dulness, and I suppose one should truly say to them, *Lo a foolish people and without heart, they have eyes and see not, they have ears and hear not.* For while our Saviour Christ by many words, as one may see, is drawing them away from carnal imaginations, and by His all-wise teaching winging them unto spiritual contemplation, they attain not above the profit of the flesh, and hearing of *the Bread which giveth life unto the world,* they still picture to themselves that of the earth, having *their belly* for god, as it is written, and overcome by the evils of the belly, that they may justly hear, *whose glory is in their shame.* And you will find such language very consonant to that of the woman of Samaria. For when our Saviour Christ was expending upon her too a long discourse, and telling her of the spiritual waters, and saying clearly, *Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, hut whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life:* she caught at it through the dulness that was in her, and letting go the spiritual fountain, and thinking nothing at all about it, but sinking down to the gift of sensible wells, says, *Lord give me this water, that I thirst not neither come hither to draw.* Akin therefore to her language is that of the Jews. For as she was weakly by nature, in the same way (I think) have these too nought male or manly in their understanding, but are effeminated unto the unmanly lusts of the belly, and shew that that is true of them which is written, *For the foolish man will utter folly, and his heart will imagine vain things.*

I am the Bread of life

It is the custom of our Saviour Christ when explaining the more Divine and already foretold Mysteries, to make His Discourse upon them darksome and not too transparent. For He commits not His so dread word to lie unveiled before the unholy and profane indiscriminately at their pleasure, to be trodden down by them, but having veiled it in the armour of obscurity, He renders it not invisible to the prudent, but when He seeth among His hearers any foolish ones, and who understand no whit of the things spoken, He opens clearly what He wills to make known, and removing as it were all mist from His Discourse, He sets the knowledge of the Mystery before them bare and in full view, hereby rendering their unbelief without defence. That it was His wont (as we have said) to use an obscure and reserved method of speaking, He will Himself teach us, saying in the Book of Psalms, *I will open My Mouth in parables.* And the blessed prophet Isaiah too no less will confirm our explanation hereof, and

shew it in no wise mistaken, proclaiming, *Behold a righteous King shall reign, and princes shall rule with judgment, and a man shall veil his words*: for he says that He has reigned a *righteous King* over us who saith. *Yet was I appointed King by Him, upon Sion His holy mountain, declaring the commandment of the Lord*: and princes living together in judgment, that is, in uprightness in every thing, he calls the holy disciples who came to the Saviour Christ oftentimes veiling His words, saying, *Declare unto us the parable*. And He once on hearing the question, *Why speakest Thou unto the multitudes in parables?* is found to have declared most manifestly the cause, *Because they seeing* (He says) *see not, and hearing they hear not, nor understand*. For they were no ways worthy (it seems) seeing that God who judgeth justly, decreed this sentence upon them. The Saviour then, having devised many turns in His Discourse, when He saw that His hearers understood nothing, at length says more openly, *I am the Bread, of life*, and well-nigh makes an attack upon their unmeasured want of reason, saying, O ye who have the mastery over all in your incomparable uninstructedness alone, when God declares that He will give you Bread from Heaven, and has made you so great a promise in feeding you with manna, do ye limit the Divine Liberality, and are ye not ashamed of staying the grace from above at this, not knowing that it is but a little thing both for you to receive such things of God, and for God Himself to give them you? Do not then believe (saith He) that that bread is the Bread from Heaven. For *I am the Bread of Life*, Who of old was fore-announced to you as in promise, and shewn as in type, but now am present fulfilling My due promise. *I am the Bread of Life*, not bodily bread, which cutteth off the suffering from hunger only, and freeth the flesh from the destruction therefrom, but remoulding wholly the whole living being to eternal life, and rendering man who was formed to be for ever, superior to death. By these words He points to the life and grace through His Holy Flesh, through which this property of the Only Begotten, i. e., life, is introduced into us.

But we must know (for I think we ought with zealous love of learning to pursue what brings us profit) that for forty whole years was the typical manna supplied to them of Israel by God, while Moses was yet with them, but when he had attained the common termination of life, and Jesus was now appointed the commander and general of the Jewish ranks: he brought them over Jordan, as it is written, and having circumcised them with *knives of stone* and brought them into the land of promise, he at length arranged that they should be fed with bread, the all-wise God having now stayed His gift of manna. Thus (for the type shall now be transferred to the truer) when Moses was shrouded, that is, when the types of the worship after the Law were brought to nought, and Christ appeared to us, the true Jesus (for *He saved His people from their sins*), then we crossed the Jordan, then received the spiritual circumcision through the teaching of the *twelve stones*, that is of the holy disciples, of whom it is written in the Prophets that *the holy stones are rolled upon His land*. For the holy stones going about and running over the whole earth, are of a surety these, through whom also we *were circumcised with the circumcision made without hands* in Spirit, i. e., through faith. When then we were called to the kingdom of Heaven by Christ (for this and nought else, I deem, it pointeth to, that some entered into the land of promise), then the typical manna no longer belongeth to us (for not by the letter of Moses are we any longer nourished) but the Bread from Heaven, i. e., Christ, nourishing us unto eternal life, both through the supply of the Holy Ghost, and the participation of His Own Flesh, which infuseth into us the participation of God, and effaceth the deadness that cometh from the ancient curse.

He that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.

There is herein again something concealed which we must say. For it is the wont of the Saviour Christ, not to contend with the praises of the saints, but on the contrary to crown them with glorious honours. But when certain of the more ignorant folk, not perceiving how great His excellence over them, offer them a superior glory, then does He to their great profit bring them to a meeter idea, while they consider Who the Only-Begotten is, and that He will full surely surpass by incomparable Excellencies. But not over clear does He make His Discourse to this effect, but somewhat obscure and free from any boast, and yet by consideration of or comparison of the works it forcibly takes hold on the vote of superiority. For instance, He was discoursing one time with the woman of Samaria, to whom He promised to give living water; and the woman understanding nought of the things spoken said, *Art THOU greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well?* But when the Saviour wished to persuade her that He was both greater than he, and in no slight degree more worthy of belief, He proceeds to the difference between the water, and says, *Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water syringing up into everlasting life.* And what thence does He give to understand but surely this, that the Giver of more excellent gifts must needs be surely Himself more excellent than he with whom was the comparison? Some such method then of leading and instruction He uses now too. For since the Jews were behaving haughtily towards Him, and durst think big, putting forward on all occasions their Lawgiver Moses, and often asserting that they ought to follow his ordinances rather than Christ's, thinking that the supply of manna and the gushing forth of water from the rock, were most reasonable proof of his superiority over all, and over our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself, needs He did return to His wonted plan, and does not say downright, that He is superior to Moses, by reason of the unbridled daring of His hearers, and their being most exceeding prone to wrath; but He comes to this very thing that is marvelled at, and by comparison of it with the greater, proves that it is small. For *he that cometh to Me* (He says) *shall never hunger and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.* Yea (saith He) I too will agree with you that the manna was given through Moses, but they that did eat thereof hungered. I will grant that out of the womb of the rocks was given forth unto you water, but they who drank thirsted, and the aforesaid gift wrought them some little temporary enjoyment; but *he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.*

What then doth Christ promise? Nothing corruptible, but rather that Blessing in the participation of His Holy Flesh and Blood, which restoreth man wholly to incorruption, so that he should need none of the things which drive off the death of the flesh, food (I mean) and drink. It seems that He here calls water, the Sanctification through the Spirit, or the Divine and Holy Ghost Himself, often so named by the Divine Scriptures. The Holy Body of Christ then giveth life to those in whom It is, and holdeth them together unto incorruption, being commingled with our bodies. For it is conceived of as the Body of none other, but of Him which is by Nature life, having in itself the whole virtue of the united Word, and inquality, yea or rather, fulfilled with His effectuating Might, through which all things are quickened and retained in being. But since these things are so, let them who have now been baptized and have tasted the Divine Grace, know, that if they go sluggishly or hardly at all into the Churches, and for a long time keep away from the Eucharistic gift through Christ, and feign a pernicious reverence, in that they will not partake of Him sacramentally, they exclude themselves from eternal life, in that they decline to be quickened; and this their refusal, albeit seeming haply to be the fruit of reverence, is turned into a snare and an offence.

For rather ought they urgently to gather up their implanted power and purpose, that so they may be resolute in clearing away sin, and essay to live a life most comely, and so hasten with all boldness to the participation of Life. But since Satan is manifold in his wiles, he never suffers them to think that they ought to be soberminded, but after having denied them with evils, persuades them to shrink from the very grace, whereby it were likely, that they recovering from the pleasure that leads to vice, as from wine and drunkenness, should see and consider what is for their good. Breaking off therefore his bond, and shaking off the yoke cast upon us from his tyranny, let us *serve the Lord with fear*, as it is written, and through temperance shew ourselves superior to the pleasures of the flesh and approach to that Divine and Heavenly Grace, and mount up unto the holy Participation of Christ; for thus, thus shall we overcome the deceit of the devil, and, having become *partakers of the Divine Nature*, shall mount up to life and incorruption.

36 *But I said unto you that ye have both seen Me and believe not.*

By many words doth He struggle with them, and in every way urge them to salvation by faith. But He was not ignorant, as God, that they would run off to unbelief, as their sister or intimate foster sister, and would regard as nought, Him who calleth them to life. In order then that they might know that Jesus was not ignorant what manner of men they would be found, or rather, to speak more fittingly, that they might learn that they were under the Divine wrath, He charges them again, *But I said unto you that ye have both seen Me and believe not*. I foreknew (says He) and clearly foretold, that ye would surely remain hard, and keeping fast hold of your cherished disobedience, ye would be left without share in My gifts. And when did Christ say any thing of this kind? remember Him saying to the blessed prophet Isaiah, *Go and tell this people, Hear ye in hearing and understand not, and looking look and see not, for the heart of this people is waxen fat*. Will not the word be shewn to be true by these things also which are before us? for they saw, they saw that the Lord was by Nature God, when He fed a multitude exceeding number which came unto Him with five barley loaves, and two small fishes, which He brake up. But they *have seen and believe not*, by reason of the blindness which like a mist hath come upon their understandings from the Divine wrath. For they were (I suppose) without doubt worthy to undergo this, for that they, caught in innumerable stumblings, and fast holden in the indissoluble bands of their transgressions, received not when He came Him who had power to loose them. For this cause was the heart of this people made fat.

But that the multitude of the Jews saw by the greatness of the sign that Jesus was by Nature God, you will understand full well by this too. For marvelling at what was done, as the Evangelist says above, they sought *to seize Him to make Him a King*. No excuse then for their folly is left unto the Jews. For astonished (and with much reason) at the Divine signs, and coming from the works proportionably to the Might of Him Who worketh, they wellnigh, shudder at their readiness to believe, and spring back from good habits, readily making a summerset as it were into the very depths of perdition.

37 *All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me,*

It did not behove the Lord simply to say, *Ye have both seen Me and believe not*, but it was necessary that He should bring in besides the reason of their blindness, that they might learn that they had fallen under the Divine displeasure. Therefore as a skilful physician He both shews them their weakness, and reveals the cause of it, not in order that they on learning it

may remain quiet in it, but that they may by every means appease the Lord of all, Who is grieved at them, i. e., for just causes. For He would never be grieved unjustly, nor would He Who knows how to give righteous judgment have given any such judgment upon them, were not reason calling Him thereto, from all sides hasting unto the duty of accusal. The Saviour hereby affirmed that everything should *come to Him*, which God *the Father* gave Him; not as though He were unable to bring believers to Himself, for this He would have accomplished very easily if He had so willed, *according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to Himself*, as Paul saith: but since it seemed somehow necessary and more fit, to say that they who were in ignorance were illumined by the Divine Nature, He again as Man attributes to the Father the operation, as to things more God-befitting. For so was His wont to do, as we have often said. But it is probable that when He says that *all that He giveth Him* shall be brought to Him by God the Father, He points to the people of the Gentiles now about full soon to believe on Him. It is the word of one skilfully threatening, that both they shall fall away from grace, and that in their stead shall come in all who of the Gentiles are brought by the goodness of God the Father, to the Son, as to Him Who is by Nature Saviour and Lifegiving, that they, partaking of the Blessing from Him, may be made partakers of the Divine Nature, and be thus brought back to incorruption and life, and be reformed unto the pristine fashion of our nature. As though one should bring a sick man to a physician, that he might drive away the sickness that has fallen upon him, so we say that God the Father brings to the Son those who are worthy salvation from Him. Bitter then and full of destruction is hardness of heart to them that have it. Therefore doth the word of prophecy chide the Jews, crying aloud, *Be ye circumcised to God, and circumcise the hardness of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem*. Yet not for them, but for us rather hath God the Father kept the *circumcision in the heart*, namely that which is through the Holy Ghost, wrought according to the rites of him who is a Jew *inwardly*. It is then right to flee from their disobedience, and with all zeal to renounce hardness of heart, and to reform unto a more toward disposition, if we would avert the wrath that was upon them unto destruction.

and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.

He says that conversion through faith will not be profitless unto them that come to Him. For He had to shew that the being brought by God the Father was a most desirable thing, and productive of ten thousand goods. Things most excellent then (saith He) shall be theirs, who through the grace from above are called to Me and come. For *I will not cast out him that cometh*, that is I will not discard him as an unprofitable vessel, as is said through one of the Prophets, *Jechonias was despised, as a vessel whereof there is no use, he was cast away, and cast forth into a land which he knew not. Earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord, write ye this man a man proscribed*. He shall not then be proscribed (saith He) nor cast forth, as one despised, nor shall he abide without share of Mine regard, but shall be gathered up into My garner, and shall dwell in the heavenly mansions, and shall see himself possessed of every hope beyond understanding of man. For *eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God prepared for them that love Him*. It is probable that the word?, *I will not cast out him that cometh to Me* signify moreover, that the believer, and he that cometh to the Divine Grace, shall not be delivered over to the judgment. For you will find that the word *out*, has some such meaning, as in that parable in the blessed Matthew. For (saith He) *the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind, which having brought up and dragged to the shore, they gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away*. For that the good are gathered into the Divine and heavenly Courts, we shall understand by His saying that the *good* were *gathered*

into vessels: and by the unprofitable being *cast away*, we shall see that the ungodly shall fall away from all good, and go away into judgment. When then Christ says, *Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out*, let us understand that the people which cometh unto Him through faith shall never fall into torment. Most wisely does He seem to me in these words to veil a threat against those most abandoned men, that if any will not turn with all speed to obedience, they shall be deprived of all good, and be excluded even against their will from His Friendship. For wherein He promises *not to cast out him that cometh*, He in the same signifieth that He will surely cast out him that cometh not.

Cyril Archbishop of Alexandria on the Gospel according to John, Book the third.