

**CHAPTER 1 That in nothing is the Son inferior to God the Father, because He is of Him by Nature, although He be said by some to be subject.**

38, 39 *Because I have come down from heaven, not to do Mine Own Will but the Will of the Father That sent Me. And this is the Will of Him which sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose none of it, but should raise it up at the last day.*

This passage will seem hard to a person who considers it superficially, and not far removed from offence regarding the faith, so that they even expect us hence to fall into difficulties hard to be overcome, which come from our opponents. But there is nothing at all hard herein, for *all things are plain to them that understand*, as it is written, *and right to them that find knowledge*, that is to those who piously study to interpret and understand the mysteries contained in the Divine Scriptures. In these words then Christ gives us a kind of proof and manifest assurance that he that cometh to Him shall not be cast out. For for this cause (saith He) *I came down from Heaven*, that is, I became Man according to the good pleasure of God the Father, and refused not to be employed in all but undesired works, until I should attain for them that believe on Me eternal life and the resurrection from the dead, having destroyed the power of death. What then was this that Christ both, willed and willed not? Dishonour from the Jews, revilings, insults, contumelies, scourgings, spitings, and yet more, false witnesses, and last of all, the death of the Body. These things for our sakes Christ willingly underwent, but if He could without suffering them have accomplished His Desire for us, He would not have willed to suffer. But since the Jews were surely and inevitably going to adventure the things done against Him, He accepts the Suffering, He makes what He willed not His Will, for the value sake of His Passion, God the Father agreeing with Him, and co-approving that He should readily undergo all things for the salvation of all. Herein specially do we see the boundless goodness of the Divine Nature, in that It refuseth not to make that which is spurned, Its choice for our sakes. But that the suffering on the Cross was unwilled by our Saviour Christ, yet willed for our sakes and the Good Pleasure of God the Father, you will hence understand. For when He was about to ascend thereunto, He made His addresses to God, saying, that is, in the form of prayer, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as THOU*. For that in that He is God the Word, Immortal and Incorruptible, and Life Itself by Nature, He could not shudder at death, I think is most clear to all: yet made in Flesh He suffers the Flesh to undergo things proper to it, and permits it to shudder at death when now at its doors, that He may be shewn to be in truth Man; therefore He says, *If it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me*. If it may be (He says) Father, that I, without suffering death, may gain life for them that have fallen thereinto if death may die without My dying, in the Flesh that is, let this cup (He says) pass from Me; but since it will not take place (He says) otherwise, *not as I will, but as THOU*. Thou seest how powerless human nature is found, even in Christ Himself, as far as it is concerned: but it is brought back through the Word united with it unto God-befitting undauntedness and is re-trained to noble purpose, so as not to commit itself to what seems good to its own will, but rather to follow the Divine Aim, and readily to run to whatever the Law of its Creator calls us. That we say these things truly, you may learn from that too which is subjoined, *For the spirit indeed* (He saith) *is willing, but the flesh is weak*. For Christ was not ignorant that it is very far beneath God-befitting Dignity, to seem to be overcome by death, and to feel the dread of it: therefore He subjoined to what He had said the strongest defence, saying that the flesh was weak, by reason of what befits it and belongs to it by nature; but that the spirit was willing, knowing that it suffered nought that could harm. Seest thou how death was unwilled by Christ, by reason of the Flesh, and the ingloriousness of suffering: yet willed, until He should have brought unto

its destined consummation for the whole world the Good Pleasure of the Father, that is, the salvation and life of all? For doth He not truly and indeed signify something of this kind, when He says that *this is the Will of the Father, that of those who were brought to Him He should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day?* For as we taught before, God the Father in His Love to man brings to Christ as to Life and the Saviour, him that lacketh life and salvation.

But I perceive that I am saying what pleases not the enemy of the truth. For he will by no means agree to the things which we have just said: but will cry out loudly, and will come with his shrill cry, Whither are you leading astray (you sir) our line of thought and are devising intricate inroads of ideas and drawing away the passage from the truth? You blush I suppose (says he) to confess the involuntary subjection of the Son. For is it not hereby also evident to us, that He will never command and bear rule in the management of affairs, but is subject rather to the Will of the Father? For He is conscious of so coming short of Equality with Him, that He is constrained in some sort to make what He wills not His Will, and to do not altogether as seems good to Him, but rather what pleases the Father. And do not tell me (says he) dragging the expression into the Incarnation, It is as Man that He is subject. For lo, as thou seest, He being yet God and bare Word and unentangled with Flesh, *came down from Heaven*, and before He was at all clothed with the form of a servant, was subject to the Father, i. e., as His Superior and Ruler.

With dread words, good sir, as you surely deem, and swift-coursing exceedingly do you overrun us, yet are they words that go not straight forward but are scared out of the Kings beaten highway; and having left (as the Greek proverb hath it) the carriage-way, you are pressing forward upon precipices and rocks. For vainly do ye maintain against us that the Son obeys the Father, ever speaking as though any of them who deem aright thought that one ought to hold the contrary, and were not rather determined to agree with you herein. For we do not conceive of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity as ever divided against Itself, or cleft into diverse opinions, or that the Father (may be) or the Son or the Holy Ghost are severed unto what seems good to each individually, but They agree in all things, since of One Godhead, it is clear, One and the Same Will ever existeth, in the Whole Holy Trinity. Away then with a long argument with us hereon, still be the spirit that would wrangle where it least of all should, for since none is indignant thereat, it is superfluous still to press it.

But since ye, accustomed to think and to hold most perverse things, term the Son's agreement with the Will of the Father, subjection of necessity, on this matter we will discuss with you what is right. For if this statement were put forth by you in simplicity, we too would with reason hold our peace, and not too strictly test the agreement of language. But since we see that it is put forth in deep malice, we shall of necessity oppose you, trusting in the Power of the Holy Ghost, and not to our own words. For not absolutely, nor simply as His rule of conduct, nor yet for every action did. the Son affirm that He did not wholly and entirely hold by His Own Will, but He says that He kept His Father's Will in one definite act, on account of thy wresting of words (as I conceive) providing as God for our security. But He endured what He would not, and for our sakes made it His Will; I mean His Suffering upon the Cross, since so it was well-pleasing unto His Father, as we have said before. And one may see the proof straightway laid down, and the principle evidently set before us, on which (as Himself says) He left His Own Will, and fulfils the Father's. For *this (He saith) is the Will of the Father that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing but should raise it up at the last day.* And that the Suffering on the Cross was really unwilled alike and willed by the Only

Begotten, hath been clearly stated before. But we shall state it again hereafter with more accurate proofs, simplifying the truth to our readers. But I will proceed first to the examination of the subjection alleged by you, it being previously laid down and unhesitatingly confessed by you, that the Wills of the Holy Trinity ever coincide into one Will and Purpose. Let those subtle disputers tell us then, whether in the name and fact of subjection the Being of the Son consists, and this is His Nature, in the same way for instance as humanity belongs to a man, or whether He, existing before in His Own Proper Mode, is subject to the Father, as one might conceive of an angel for instance, or any other reasonable power. For these things, being and existing, are recipient of the mode of subjection.

If then ye say that the Being of the Son consists in His being subject to the Father, He will be a subjection rather and not a Son. How then (tell me) will ye not be manifest triflers? for how can this subjection be conceived to exist of itself without having its being in any of the things that are? For such things are usually the accidents of the necessarily pre-existing subjects wherein they are wont to be, and not otherwise: and are viewed as belonging to substances, or befalling them, rather than having any existence in themselves. And as lust for instance, which calls and impels us to any thing, has no existence in itself, but is conceived rather in him who is recipient thereof: so subjection pointing at some sway of the will to the duty of subjection to any, will not be conceived of in its own nature, but will rather be as passion, or will, or desire, in some one of the things that are. Besides the name and fact of subjection spoken absolutely will not be conceived of as properly predicated of any one, nor will one know whether it be good or bad, unless it be added to whom the subjection is: for a man is subject to God, but also to the devil. And as the name *wise* is a mean term (for some are *wise to do evil*, and again *the wise shall inherit glory*, having clearly their wisdom in good things), so too subjection is a kind of mean term, and not a truth definitely expressed, for it is quite uncertain to whom the subjection is. Hence also, the Nature of the Son is left in uncertainty, if It be conceived of as (according to you) a subjection. For a subjection to what, if no one were brought forward, one could not say without falsehood. But that the subjection will not exist of itself, in its own mode of being, we bringing forward some grosser and more obvious reasoning in regard to things already made, shall see: and do thou accept a demonstration besides. For if we grant that the being of a man (for example) consists in his being subject, we shall consider that his not existing consists in his not being subject. How then was it said by the Psalmist to some one, as being indeed and existing, but not yet subjected, *Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him?* Seest thou then how utterly foolish it is to suppose that subjection has any existence in itself? One must then of necessity confess that the Son was and existed previously in His Own Nature, and so say that He was subject to the Father. What then (tell me) is there to constrain that He Who is of the Essence of His Father, the Exact Impress of His Nature, should fall from His Equality with Him, on account of His being obedient? For WE who think and speak rightly, know that He is con-substantial with the Father, and give Him Equal Honour in all respects, and consider that in nought does He come short of God-befitting Divinity: but do THOU see in what manner thou canst thrust away from Equal honour with the Father on account of the alleged subjection Him who enjoys equal goods by reason of Identity of Essence.

But this very thing (says he) will make for our side of the argument, namely that the Son is obedient to the Father, and doth not overmuch consider His Own Will, but yields rather to that of the Father, as above Him and greater than He.

But this very thing according to your own word sir, which you think will aid your argument, you will find to be nothing but the fruit of your own unlearning. For if we were disputing, which was superior in dignity, and had the greater glory, your ever-repeated argument would even then scarce seem to have any seasonable ground. But since the mode of consubstantiality is being examined into, how shall ye not be caught in no slight folly attributing to God the Father superiority therein over His own offspring? For the terms 'greater' or 'less' or the like, we do not allow to be strictly essences (as we said of subjection) but they are something external, and qualities of essences. For that which already pre-existed and is, will be recipient (it may be) of 'greater' or 'less' by comparison with another thing: but if there is nought before it or pre-existent, in respect to which such things would happen, how will they exist by themselves, albeit conceived of and defined under the class of accidents? Hence in telling us of greater or less ye do not touch the Essence of the Only-Begotten, nor yet That of the Father, but only with external excellences or short-comings, embellish (as ye suppose) the Father and revile the Son, although ye hear Him openly crying aloud, *He that honoureth not the Son neither doth he honour the Father*, and *that all men ought to honour the Son even as they honour the Father*. For that things which can no way be severed into foreign alienity, but have one and the same essence must be endowed with equal glory, Christ most excellently teaches in that He accepteth not to receive *testimony* to Himself *from men*, as Himself said, but came forward as Himself unto Himself a witness credible and more worthy than all that are. And He being by Nature Truth will surely say true, as one may prove from the very quality of things. For you will probably grant that the 'greater' or 'less' belong not to the very essence of ought but to the things in respect of their essence. For instance, a man will not be greater or less than another man, in respect of his being conceived of and called a man: for neither is man less than man *qua* man, neither is he greater than man, *qua* man: for the count of nature is seen to be equal in all. And the same method of reasoning will hold, of angels too, or any thing else that is made and enrolled among creation. Therefore such things are found to be utterly without place in regard to the essences themselves, but are the accidents of the essences, or of what belongs to the essences, as we have delivered above. How then will the Father be greater than the Son, God by Nature than God by Nature? For the Son having been begotten of Him, will surely compel you, even against your own will, to grant Him Consubstantiality with Him.

It having been premised then, and unhesitatingly admitted that the Son is by Nature God, let us consider if you please, whether by paying Him equal Honour with Him of Whom He is, we shall confer honour upon the Begetter, or shall do the reverse, by insulting with less and inferior honour the Begotten, as is really and more truly the case. For it is the glory of the Father to have begotten one, such as Himself is by Nature. But the exact contrary will befall (for it is not meet to utter it), if the Son retain not the natural condition befitting Him, having inferiority either in glory or in ought else that should belong to Him, in order to be through all things manifested the All-Perfect and Very God. If then He, being thus by Nature, honour the Father, mock not thereat, O man, nor be found guilty of ignorantly finding fault, where there is least occasion for it. For it were meet (I suppose) to admire Him for this too that He honours and loves His Father: for every species of virtue has, as its source and root, the Essence that is above all; in It first good things have their rise, and flow down to us, who are made after Its Image. Wherefore us too the Lawgiver bade to honour, as was due, father and mother, yea and annexed the most noble rewards thereto (for he knew, I suppose, that it was a thing most great, and so far removed from all reproach, as to be even the giver of long-enduring life). As then WE by being subject to and obeying our parents, are not rendered other in nature than they, but being as they are men of men, and having and keeping the

definition of manhood perfect, we practise obedience as an excellent virtue; so conceive in respect of the Father and the Son. For He being what He is, God of God, Perfect of Perfect, Exact Impress of the Essence of His Father, thinketh nought else than He too thinketh, Whose both counsel and Word He is; and will wholly will the same as the Father, compelled by the same laws (so to say) of consubstantiality, to co-will all good things together with the Father.

Be no wise offended then, O man, when thou hearest Him say, *I have come down from Heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me*. For what we said at the beginning, this we will say again. Christ said this of a definite and plain matter. For He saith these words, teaching that He willed to die for all because the Divine Nature had so counselled, but willed it not by reason of the Sufferings on the Cross, and as far as pertained to the flesh which deprecates death. And we have already expended many words: but it is convenient that we should see from the very nature of things that the suffering on the Cross was unwilled by Christ, in that He was Man. We say then that it was a work of Jewish folly, that Christ should be crucified at all, and this was immediately to happen from them, who were not unpractised in boldness hereunto by means of what they had already done both to the holy Prophets, and the saints who were at that time. But since no otherwise was it possible to raise again unto life that which had fallen into death, unless the Only Begotten Word of God became Man, and it was wholly needful that made Man, He should suffer; He made what He willed not, His Will, the Divine Nature having permitted this from Love to us.

For the Artificer of all things, Wisdom, i. e., the Son, made that which was a machination of devilish perversity, I mean His Death in the Flesh;---this He made a way of salvation to us and a door of life, and the devil's hopes were overturned, and he learned at last by experience, that hard is it for him to fight against God. The Divine Psalmist too seems to agree with what I have said of these things, and to hint at something of this sort, when he says, as of Christ and the devil, *in his net shall he humble him*. For the devil laid death as a net for Christ, but in his own net itself has he been humbled. For in the Death of Christ was death undone, and the tyrant who thought not to fall was brought to nought. And *it* were not hard to add much more to these things: but what is before us, that will we say. If the Death of Christ were not really and truly the work of Jewish wills, and the fruit of their unholy daring, but the Divine Judgment were (as some deem) the sole leading spring thereto: how needed it not that that which was determined upon should of necessity be accomplished and surely by the hands of men, and not otherwise? How then (tell me) would they who subserved the irrevocable decrees of God be yet justly punished? and how would that miserable man, through whom Christ was betrayed, have been in better case, *if he had not been born*? For if the Passion be conceived of as willed by the Saviour, and not unwilled in any other sense, what penalty would he reasonably pay, who was set forth minister of his Lord's Will, and of things which should surely come to pass? will it not be evident to all, that the things which seem good unto the Divine and Ineffable Nature, must surely come to pass, and be done by some? From these things and many more one may see that since the Son of Man hath *come down from Heaven* to undergo death for all men, willing alike was He and unwilling, in order that He might *raise up all at the last day*, since so it pleased the Father Himself for the good of all: but He will not on these accounts that He be conceived of, as by any means of a different nature or in ought inferior to Him who begat Him.

I suppose then that our opponent will at length blush, and not gainsay our words on this point: but if he again oppose and have settled that it is fit to wrangle yet more, I say thus, If the Son hath *come down from heaven not to fulfil His Own Will*, as Himself says, *but the Will*

*of the Father*; and our words on the just concluded consideration thereof, haply please thee not: must not one say that Their Wills are in opposition, and that Their Counsel is divided contrarily? But this is clear to all. For if there were no hindrance, the Will in Both would be perforce wholly One: but if He put forward His Will as it were diverse from the Will of the Father, and fulfil that, how is it not foolish to say that they are One, and not other in respect of other?

Let us see then wherein is the Will of the Father; for so shall we discern the other also, whereto it tends. The Will of the Father then, as the Saviour Himself hath said, is that *of all which He hath given Him He should lose nothing but should raise it up at the last Day*. And that it is good and loving none will gainsay: but transferring our considerations to the opposing will of the Son, we shall find it neither loving nor good at all, but savouring of what is wholly contrary to the Father, and willing neither to save us, nor yet to raise us up from death. How then is He yet the Good Shepherd, how gave He us a token of the Loving-kindness that is in Him, in giving His Life for us? For if He hath *come down from heaven* to accomplish this of voluntary Purpose, how doth He fulfil *not His Own Will* in not destroying that which, is brought to Him, but in raising it up at the last Day? But if this was not His Will, but He subserves rather the Will of the Father, both in raising up and saving, i. e., those who were lost and overmastered of death, how shall we not be true in asserting that the Son is neither Good nor in any way Loving to man? Let the Christ-opposer then have done: his doubt being convicted on all sides of blasphemy, and let him not bay at us concerning these things with his bitter words.

40 *For this is the Will of My Father, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last Day.*

Having now defined the good Will of the Father, He makes it clear, and sets it forth more at large for the consideration of the hearers, through repeating it yet again. For what the mode of bringing is, and what any gain from being brought, He clearly explains. The Father then giveth to the Son Who hath Power to quicken them, things lacking life, He giveth thus, through knowledge inserting in each one, the true apprehension of the Son, and power to understand purely that He is God of Very God the Father, that he thus minded, and adorned with contemplations hereto belonging, may be brought to the reward of faith, that is a lasting and endless life in bliss. The Father then bringeth to the Son by knowledge and God-befitting Contemplation, those to whom He decreed the Divine grace. The Son receiveth and quickeneth them, and engrafting His Own Good into them who are of their own nature apt to decay, and shedding upon them as a spark of fire the life-giving Power of the Spirit, reformeth them whole wholly unto immortality. But when thou hearest, that the Father brings them, and that the Son gives the power of living anew to them that run to Him, do not go off into absurd fancies, as though Each were supposed to do Individually and severally what belongs by fitness of Nature unto Each, but rather understand that the Father is Co-worker with the Son, and likewise the Son with the Father, and that our salvation and recovery from death to life is the Work (so to say) of the Whole Holy Trinity. And know that the Father is sufficient unto all might and need, and likewise the Son, and the Holy Ghost: but through the Whole Holy Trinity come the good things to usward, and God the Father is found all things in all Entirely through the Son in the Spirit.

We must nevertheless observe this also, that great is found to be the value of belief in the Son. For it hath life as its reward. But if God the Father is known in Him Who is Son by Nature,

who will endure any longer them who exclude Him from the Essence of the Father, and have a mouth unbarred to blasphemy against Him? For wherein He says He can raise again to life that which has fallen into death, in these same words, without any distinction intervening, He mounts up to Identity of Nature with the Father. For quickening is a work proper to life, and since the Father is by Nature Life, Life surely will He too be conceived Who is of Him by Nature, i. e., the Only-Begotten.

*41 The Jews then began murmuring at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven,*

Again are they angry who of those things which are spoken by Christ understand no whit: and herein may be especially seen the uninstructed mind. For not being able to grasp the ideas, whereby they might (it is like) be trans-made unto the better, they end in unseasonable littleness of soul. For shall not we find what has been said true in respect of the Jews themselves? for why are they angry? what reason called them thereto? why do they *murmur*? Albeit they ought rather to have applied a more diligent mind to what was said, and from the very deeds wrought to have considered the truth, and by the miraculousness of what had been accomplished, to have come to most tried knowledge, whether Christ would lie, in calling Himself *Bread*, and *Bread Which* had come *down from heaven*, or whether He was true, and it was really so. For in this way might they by judging aright be led easily unto the discovery of what was profitable for them: but without any enquiry they are angry, although, in what had already passed, Christ had shewn Himself the true and Very Bread of Life, contrasting Himself with the manna, which was given typically and in shadow, to their fathers in the wilderness. For *he that cometh to Me* (He says) *shall never hunger*: whereas they who eat of that manna, obtained some little and easily-lost fleshly enjoyment; but they who come to Him by faith will not attain unto an enjoyment like theirs, but will rather have a harvest of the lasting grace of the blessing.

The mind of the Jews therefore stumbles, looking only to earthly things: and this it was that was sung of them, *Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway*, that they never turning them to the knowledge of the Divine Mysteries, may evilly perish on account of their own folly, and their most unbridled unbelief. And we calling to mind what is in the writings of Moses, shall find, that murmuring against the most excellent and good was inherent in the Jews as a sort of patrimony: but bitter its end, did experience shew both of old in the case of those and now no less with these. For those did murmur in the wilderness, and make unthankful outcry against God, but *were destroyed of serpents*, as the wise Paul too testified: and these murmur against Christ, and insult their Lawgiver and Redeemer by their so prolonged unbelief, but command shall be given to *the serpent, and he shall bite them*, as it is written: and they shall be set as a banquet before the all-devouring beast: for ever doth unbelief of necessity terminate in an all-grievous end.

*42 and said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, Whose father and mother WE know? how is it then that He saith, I have come down from heaven?*

O deep unlearning, and understanding darkened with unmixed strong drink: *the heart of this people is waxen fat*, as it is written. For indeed they perceive not a whit of those things which they ought clearly to understand, and both think and speak things worthy of laughter. For they ought rather, exercising themselves in the writing of the all-wise Moses, and delighting themselves in the preachings of the holy Prophets to have considered, that not without flesh

or bodily array was Christ expected to come to us, but in human form was it foretold that He would appear and that He should be found in this common garb of all. Therefore does the Prophet's voice tell us that the holy *Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son*: and the Lord is found to have *sworn in truth unto blessed David*, which He promised He would *no wise turn from*, that *of the fruit of his body* would He *set upon His throne*, as it is written: it was foretold too that *there should come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse*. But they rushing into so great unreason, perceive it not, supposing that since they knew the *mother* after the flesh of Him Who was foreannounced to come with Flesh, they ought therefore utterly to disbelieve that He had *come down from heaven*. For even though we do not find that this took place in regard of the Body, yet the Divine Word dwelt in His Body from the Virgin, as in His Own Temple, having come from above from the Father unto us, and for the salvation of all laid hold on *the seed of Abraham* that *in all things* He might *he made like unto His brethren*, and might call the nature of man unto sonship with God, being declared alike God and Man. But the Jews not understanding the economy with Flesh of our Saviour Christ, from knowing His *mother* and *father*, though he was not His father, are not ashamed of being annoyed, because Christ said He came *down from heaven*.

In this too ariseth to us an example of no small profit: for hence we learn in respect to ourselves, that it will do us much harm, if we do not rather with the spiritual eyes of the heart consider the virtue that dwells in the saints, and look on the glory that is hidden in them, but on account of the frequent meanness of bodily appearance hold of no value what is great before God and precious. Thus God says of the Saints in the prophets, speaking of all in the person of one, *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his hope and he shall be as a tree vigorous by the water-side, and shall throw forth his root in moist ground, in the year of drought he shall not be afraid and shall not cease from yielding fruit. Deep is the heart above all things, and there is a man and who shall know him? I the Lord Who search the heart, who try the reins*. When then WE in our arrogance depreciate him that is known of God, and admirable for the above-mentioned virtues, looking only to the outward-shewing and perishable flesh, and making meanness of body an excuse for littleness of soul towards him, how shall we not be found to be contrary-minded to the King of all, and so incur no slight doom, sometimes calling what is high low, and *putting light for darkness, and sweet for bitter?*

We must therefore keep to the saints the honour befitting them, and must look at them rather through their inward hidden glory, than what they are in the flesh. Yet most of us cannot bear to think that which is low in the world worthy at all of honour or of any glory, even though he be renowned in virtue, but looking only to the aggrandisement of riches, and beholding the perishable and even now dying glory with no righteous eyes, make no account of right judgment. Such with great reason does the disciple of the Saviour laugh to scorn, saying, *Ye hypocrites, if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, then ye tell (he saith) the rich man to sit in an honourable place, and the poor, Stand thou there or sit under my footstool, are ye not partial in yourselves?* Albeit it is meet hence to observe, to how reasonable a charge they become obnoxious who admire a man for external surroundings, and not for internal goods. For riches and the glory of riches, bring in (I suppose) some foreign and factitious glory to their possessors; but the glory in the heart, and the renown of good works, will be a genuine and native riches to the holders, not abiding with the flesh and decaying with it, but dwelling with the soul while yet abiding in this life, and removing with it on its departure, whithersoever the Ruler of all shall appoint. For *many the mansions* with the *Father*, as we heard.

We must not then honour altogether or of necessity him that is renowned for wealth, and gilt over with the petty glories of earth as in a picture, but rather them to whom the splendour of their deeds begets unfading renown from God, and their inward beauty flashes on them glorified with every form of good things.

*43, 44 Jesus answered and said unto them Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come to Me, except the Father Which sent Me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last Day.*

The Jews look down upon Jesus, ignorant that His Father is in heaven, and in nowise acknowledging that He is by Nature Son of the Lord of all, but looking only to His earthly mother and Joseph. Wherefore He replies more warmly to them, and immediately to their profit hastens back to His very God-befitting Dignity, and whereby He knows as God both their secret murmuring and that which has gone up into their mind, through these very things He gives them to understand that they have fallen from the truth, and formed an exceeding mean conception of Him. For how was it not rather their duty to crown with now God-befitting Honour, Him Who throughly knows the hearts, and tries the motions that are in the mind, and is ignorant of no device that is in their souls, and to exalt Him as far above the littleness of man, as God is higher than the earth? He unveiling therefore the thought buried in yet unuttered blame, and making manifest the secretly whispered murmuring in them, for the reason already specified, says, *Murmur not among yourselves*: then shewing that the Mystery concerning Himself was a God-taught good in men, and the knowledge of Him a work of the grace from above, He says that they cannot attain unto Him, save drawn by the teaching of the Father. But this is the plan of one whose only aim is to persuade them to consider, that they ought, weeping and sorrowing for those things wherein they had already grieved Him, to seek to be made free, and to be drawn unto salvation through faith in Him, through the Counsel of the Father, and the aid from above which lighteneth to them the way and maketh it smooth, which when they sinned, had become exceedingly rugged. Profitably did He confirm the promise that He would raise from the dead him that believeth, and hereby again proves to the senseless ones that He is God by Nature and Very. For that which has the power of quickening, and of compelling to return to life him that is overmastered by death, will rightly appertain to the Nature of God only, and be ascribed to no one of things originate. For quickening is a property of the Living, and not of him who receives that grace from another.

*45 It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.*

Perceiving as God the folly existing in His hearers, He leaves not this His Word without witness, but shews already that He was of old fore-announced and fore-proclaimed by the holy Prophets, both taking away beforehand occasion from those who imagined that they ought to gainsay Him, and at the same time laying bare no less the unlearning that was in them, in that they were unable to see this, albeit instructed by the law unto the understanding of things to come. He persuades them therefore to consent even against their wills: for it was not likely that they would withstand the voices of the holy Prophets, that God the Father would instil the Mystery of Himself in those who were worthy, and would reveal His Own Son, ineffably speaking to each, and in God-befitting way implanting understanding thereof.

But having said above, *No man can come to Me, except the Father Which sent Me draw him*, He shews that it is not a compulsory nor forcible drawing, adding,

*Every man that hath heard of My Father and hath learned, cometh unto Me.*

For where there is hearing and learning and the benefit of instruction, there is faith, to wit by persuasion and not of necessity: and the knowledge of Christ is given by the Father to them that are worthy, helpful as of love, rather than constraining. For the word of doctrine requires that free-will and free choice be preserved to the soul of man, in order that it may ask the just rewards of its good deeds, and if it have fallen from right, and from heedlessness have transgressed the Will of the Lawgiver, it may receive the doom of its transgression and that most reasonable.

But we must know that even though the Father be said to instruct any in the Mystery of Christ, yet He will not work alone to this end, but will rather effect it through His Wisdom, i. e., the Son. For it is convenient to consider, that not without Wisdom will the revelation to their understanding be given to any from the Father. But the Son is the Wisdom of the Father. By means of Wisdom therefore will the Father effect the revelation of His Own Offspring in them that are worthy. And in fact to speak the whole truth, and nothing else, one would not do wrong in saying that all the operations of God the Father toward any, or His Will toward them, are those of the Whole Holy Trinity, similarly also are those of the Son Himself, and those of the Holy Ghost. For this reason, as I suppose, when God the Father is said to reveal His Own Son, and to call to Him those who are more apt to believe, the Son Himself is found doing this, and no less the Holy Ghost. For the Saviour says to the blessed Peter, who had most courageously made confession of faith in Him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood revealed it not unto thee, but My Father Which is in heaven.* But in other instances He Himself is seen, doing this. And full well doth Paul boast as to himself, crying out concerning the Mystery of Christ, *For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* And you will see that the Holy Ghost no less reveals Christ to us. And verily the most wise John writes, *And YE, the anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you, and. ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things:* and the Saviour Himself saith of the Paraclete, that is, the Spirit, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: but, when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you in all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, He shall speak: and He will declare you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall tell it unto you;* for being the Spirit of Truth, He will enlighten them in whom He is, and will lead them unto the apprehension of the truth. And this we say, not as severing into diversity and making wholly separate, either the Father from the Son, or the Son from the Father, nor yet the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, but since One Godhead truly IS, and is thus preached as viewed in the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity, the Acts belonging to Each, and which seem to be attributed to Them severally, are defined to be the Will and Operation of the Whole Godhead. For the Divine and Unsevered Nature will work through Itself, in no divided way, so far as pertains to the one count of Godhead, although Each hath Personal Existence: for the Father is What He is, and the Son likewise, and the Holy Ghost. We must besides note this also: that things which point to ought by names, are recognised in either, and one may see the one pointed out in the other. Therefore needs is there that the Son be revealed through the Father, through the Son again the Father. For Each is surely introduced with the Other, and if any know that God is by Nature Father, he will full surely conceive of the Son That is begotten of Him; and just so the reverse. For he who confesses the Son will not deny the Father.

Therefore in that God is Father, and is so conceived of and proclaimed, He implants the knowledge of His Own Son in His hearers: in that the Son is said to be, and is in truth, of Him by Nature, He proclaims the Father: therefore He says, as to Him, *I manifested Thy Name to the men*. For since the Son was known by them that believed, He says that the Father's Name has been made manifest. But God the Father will be conceived of as having implanted in us the knowledge of His Own Offspring not by a voice breaking forth from above, and resounding round the earth like thunder, but by the Divine Illumination shining forth as it were in us, to the understanding of the Divinely-inspired Scripture: but unto this again you will find the Son a co-Worker in us; for it is written of the holy Disciples, *Then opened He their eyes*, to the understanding, that is, *the holy Scriptures*.

*46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father.*

Having foreseen as God, that they would no wise receive the revelation through the Spirit, nor would take in the Wisdom from above in its illuminations, but would reject out of much ill-advisedness the very duty of seeing the Father and (so to say) of being instructed by very Vision of God, which as they supposed was once the case with their fathers, when the glory of God came down upon the mount Sinai: He first draws them back, and turns them as with a bridle to the duty of not having a gross conception of God, and of not supposing that the Invisible Nature will ever be visible: for *no one* (saith He) *hath seen the Father* at any time. But probably He was hinting at the hierophant Moses: for the Jews, in this also thinking very foolishly, supposed on account of his entering *the thick darkness*, that he saw the Ineffable Nature of God, and beheld with the bodily eyes, that which is by Nature the Untaint Beauty. But lest by saying anything more openly respecting the all-wise Moses, He should seem to be urging them to their wonted state of mind, He says indefinitely of all alike, and as of him, *Not that any man hath seen the Father*. Do not (says He) demand what is above nature, nor be ye borne in senseless course to that which is unattainable by all things that are made. For the Divine and Incomprehensible Nature hath retired and is withdrawn not from our eyes only, but also from those of the whole creation: for in the word *No one*, He comprehendeth all things, and in declaring that He Alone is of God, and hath seen the Father, He putteth Himself outside of all, whereof the 'no one' may be understood declarative. But since He is apart from all, and while none hath seen the Father, He Alone misseth not the seeing Him, how shall He not henceforth be conceived of, not among all, as one of them, but external to all, as above all? And if, whereas all things are said to be of God, and none seeth the Father (*for all things are of God*, as Paul saith), He Alone seeth *the Father* because He is *of God*: deeming aright we shall understand the words *Of God*, to be of the Essence of the Father, in respect of Him Alone. For if it be not so, why, as we said before, since all things are said to be of God, doth He Alone attain unto the Sight of Him That begat Him because He is *of God*? Wherefore it will be less accurately said of created things (for all things are of God by creation in that they are brought into being by Him): but of the Son, in another and truer sense will His being *of God*, be demonstrated, as being of Him by Nature. Wherefore He, not numbered among the *all*, but being external to all, and above all with the Father, will not share the infirmity of all, in that He is excepted from affinity with them, but mounting up unto the Nature of Him that begat Him, will surely see Him from Whom He is.

But how or in what manner, either He beholds the Father, or is seen of the Father, it pertains not to our tongue to say: we must nevertheless conceive of it in a God-befitting manner,

47 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.*

Faith therefore is the door and way unto life, and return from corruption unto incorruption. But herein no less is the economy a marvel to the learners: for when He perceived that they understood nothing at all, and saw that they did not suppose they ought to give any credence even to the words of the Prophets, He cuts off, as far as possible, their weakness unto faith by human arguments, by an oath to its truth. For setting before them which believe much to be envied prizes, with their longing desire for these as with traces. He all but constrains them against their will, and persuades them to come to what is proclaimed to them. For what would be more precious than *eternal life*, to them to whom death and the sufferings from decay are bitter? And this too will beseem a wise teacher, to re-instruct unto the better, by every way (I say) that invites unto life, them who have chosen to think foolishly. But He, being Eternal Life, promises to give Himself to them that believe: that is, that *Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith*.

**CHAPTER II. That the Holy Body of Christ is Lifegiving, wherein He speaks of His Own Body as of Bread.**

48, 49, 50 *I am the Bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and died: This is the Bread Which came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.*

Full clearly may one herein behold that which was spoken afore by the Prophet Isaiah, *I was made manifest to them that seek Me not, I was found of them that asked not for Me, I said, Behold Me, unto a nation that was not called by My Name: all the day spread I out My Hands unto a rebellious and gainsaying people*. For, removing the whole case from His speech, and having taken away (so to say) all that cloaked it. He at length reveals Himself unveiled to them of Israel, saying, *I am the Bread of life*, that they may now learn that if they would be superior to corruption, and would put off the death which from the transgression fell upon us, they must needs approach to the participation of Him who is mighty to quicken, and destroyeth corruption, and bringeth to nought death: for this verily is a work proper and most fit for that which is by Nature Life. But since they, affirming that the manna was given to their fathers in the wilderness, received not the Bread which of a truth came down from heaven, that is, the Son, He maketh a necessary comparison between the type and the truth, that so they might know that not that is the Bread which is from heaven, but He Whom the trial shews to be so by Nature. For your fathers (saith He) and ancestors by eating the manna, gave to the bodily nature its need, gaining thereby life for a season, and imparting to the flesh its daily sustenance therefrom, with difficulty effected that it should not die at once. But it will be (He says) the clearest proof of its not being the Bread which is from heaven in a truer sense, that they who partook were no way benefited thereby unto incorruption: a token again in like way that the Son is properly and truly the Bread of Life, that they who have once partaken, and been in some way immingled with Him through the communion with Him have been shewn superior to the very bonds of death. For that the manna again is taken rather as an image or shadow of Christ, and was typifying the Bread of Life, but was not itself *the Bread of Life*, has been often said by us: and the Psalmist supporteth us, crying out in the Spirit, *He gave them bread of Heaven, man did eat angels' bread*. For it seems to have been said to them of Israel by the Spirit-clad, but in truth it is not so, but to us rather is the aim of the words directed. For is it not foolish and utterly senseless to suppose that the holy angels which are in heaven, albeit they have an incorporeal nature, should partake grosser food, and need such aid in order to prevail unto life, as this body of earth desires? But I think it nothing

hard to conceive, that, since they are spirits, they should need like food, spiritual (I mean) and of wisdom. How then is angels' bread said to have been given to the ancestors of the Jews, if the Prophet speaks truly in so crying? But it is manifest, that since the typical manna was an image of Christ, Which containeth and upholdeth all things in being, nourishing the angels and quickening the things on earth, the Prophet was calling that which is signified by shadows by the name of the truth,---from the fact that the holy angels could not partake of the more earthly food, drawing off his hearers even against their will from any gross conception as to the manna, and bringing them up to the spiritual meaning, that of Christ, Who is the Food of the holy Angels themselves also.

They then who *ate the manna* (He says) *are dead*, not having received any participation of life therefrom (for it was not truly lifegiving, but rather taken as an aid against carnal hunger and in type of the true); but they who receive in themselves the Bread of Life, will have immortality as their prize, wholly setting at nought corruption and its consequent evils, and will mount up unto boundless and unending length of Life in Christ. Nor will it at all damage our words on this subject that they who have been made partakers of Christ, need to taste bodily death on account of what is due to nature; for even though they falling into this end undergo the lot of humanity, yet, as Paul saith, they that shall live, live to God. *51 I am the Living Bread Which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever.*

*To say the same things unto you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe*, writes the Divine Paul to certain, in this too (I suppose) instructed by these very words of the Saviour. For as those who are diseased with wounds, need not the application of a single plaister, but manifold tending, and that not once applied, but by its continuance of application expelling the pain: so (I ween) for the soul most rugged, and withered mind, should many aids of teaching be contrived and come one after the other: for one will avail to soften it not by one and the first leading, but through its successive coming to it, even if it come in the same words. Oftentimes then does the Saviour bringing round the same manner of speech to the Jews set it before them manifoldly, sometimes darkly, and clad in much obscurity, at other times freed delivered and let loose from all double meaning, that they still disbelieving, might lack nothing yet unto their condemnation, but being evil evilly might be destroyed, themselves against their own soul thrusting the sword of perdition.

Christ therefore no longer concealing anything says, *I am the Living Bread Which came down from heaven*. That was (He says) a type and a shadow and an image. Hear Him now openly and no more veiled, *I am the Living Bread, if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever*. They who ate of that died, for it was not lifegiving: he that eateth of This Bread, that is Me, or My Flesh, *shall live for ever*. We must then beware of and reject alike hardening ourselves to the words of piety, since Christ not once only, but oftentimes persuadeth us. For there is no doubt, that they will full surely be open to the severest charges, who turn aside to the uttermost folly, and through boundless unbelief, refuse not to rage against the Author of the most excellent things. Therefore says He of the Jews, *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sin*. For they who have never by hearing received the word of salvation into their heart, will haply find the Judge milder, while they plead that they heard not at all, even though they shall specially give account for not having sought to learn: but they who often instructed by the same admonitions and words to the seeking after what is profitable, senselessly imagine that they ought to deprive

themselves of the most excellent good things, shall undergo most bitter punishment, and shall meet with an offended judge, not able to find an excuse for their folly which may shame Him.

*And the Bread which I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.*

I die (He says) for all, that I may quicken all by Myself, and I made My Flesh a Ransom for the flesh of all. For death shall die in My Death, and with Me shall rise again (He says) the fallen nature of man. For for this became I like to you, Man (that is) and of the seed of Abraham, that I might *be made like in all things unto My brethren*. The blessed Paul himself also, well understanding what Christ just now said to us says, *Forasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*. For no otherwise was it possible that he that hath the power of death should be destroyed, and death itself also, had not Christ given Himself for us, a Ransom, One for all, for He was in behalf of all. Wherefore He says in the Psalms too, offering Himself as a spotless Sacrifice to God the Father, *Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a Body preparedst Thou Me. In whole burnt-offerings and offerings for sin Thou tookedst no pleasure: then said I, Lo I come (in the chapter of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God, was My choice*. For since *the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer* sufficed not unto the purging away of sin, nor yet would the slaughter of brute beasts ever have destroyed the power of death, Christ Himself came in in some way to undergo punishment for all. For *with His stripes WE were healed*, as saith the Prophet, and *His Own Self bare our sins in His Own Body on the tree*; and He was crucified for all and on account of all, that *if One died for all*, all we might live in Him. For it was not possible that He should be *holden by death*, neither could corruption over-master that Which is by Nature Life. But that Christ gave His Own *Flesh for the Life of the world*, we shall know by His words also, for He saith, *Holy Father keep them*; and again, *For their sakes I sanctify Myself*. He here says that He sanctifies Himself, not aiding Himself unto sanctification for the purification of the soul or spirit (as it is understood of us), nor yet for the participation of the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit was in Him by Nature, and He was and is Holy always, and will be so ever. He here says, *I sanctify Myself*, for, I offer Myself and present Myself as a spotless Sacrifice for an odour of a sweet smell. For that which is brought to the Divine Altar was sanctified, or called holy according to the law.

Christ therefore gave His Own Body for the life of all, and again through It He maketh Life to dwell in us; and how, I will say as I am able. For since the life-giving Word of God indwelt in the Flesh, He transformed it into His Own proper good, that is life, and by the unspeakable character of this union, coming wholly together with It, rendered It life-giving, as Himself is by Nature. Wherefore the Body of Christ giveth life to all who partake of It. For it expels death, when It cometh to be in dying men, and removeth corruption, full in Itself perfectly of the Word which abolisheth corruption.

But a man will haply say, fixing the eye of his understanding upon the resurrection of them that have slept: They who received not the faith in Christ, and were not partakers of Him, will not live again at the time of the resurrection. What? shall not every created thing that has fallen into death return again to life?

To these things we say, Yes, all flesh shall live again: for Prophecy foretells that *the dead shall be raised*. For we consider that the Mystery through the resurrection of Christ extendeth over

the whole nature of man, and in Him first we believe that our whole nature has been released from corruption. For all shall rise, after the likeness of Him That was raised for our sakes, and hath all in Himself, in that He is Man. And as in the first-formed we fell down into death, so in the First-born again, who was so for our sakes, all shall rise again from the dead: but *they that did good, unto the resurrection of life* (as it is written), *and they that wrought evil, unto the resurrection of doom*. And I will grant, that in no passing degree bitterer than death is the resurrection unto punishment, and the receiving life again unto disgrace alone. In the stricter sense then we must understand the Life that is really so, the life in Christ, in holiness and bliss and unfailing delight. For that this is truly life the wise John too knows, saying, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God shall abide on him*. For lo, lo, he says that he which is in unbelief shall not see life: although every creature looks to return again to life, and to rise again. It is then manifest, that the Saviour with reason called that the life which is prepared for the Saints, I mean that in glory and in holiness, which that we ought to pursue after by coming to the participation of the Life-giving Flesh, no right-minded person will doubt.

But since the Saviour called Himself Bread in many of the passages that have already been before us, let us see whether He would not hereby too bring to our mind any one of the things fore-announced and is reminding us of the things in Holy Writ, wherein He was long ago signified under the form of bread. It is written then in Numbers, *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and thou shalt say unto them., When ye come into the land whither I bring you, then it shall be, that when YE eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave-offering a separation unto the Lord: a cake the first-fruit of your dough shall ye offer for an heave-offering: as an heave offering of the threshingfloor, so shall ye heave it, a first fruit of your dough, and ye shall give unto the Lord, an heave offering unto your generations*. Obscurely then, and bearing a gross covering as of the letter, did the law typify these things: yet did it proclaim afore the true Very *Bread That cometh down from heaven*, i. e., Christ, *and giveth life unto the world*. For observe how He made Man like us by reason of His Likeness to us, a certain First-fruits of our dough and *heave offering*, as it is written, was offered up to God the Father, set forth the First-Begotten of the dead, and the First-fruits of the resurrection of all ascending into heaven itself. For He was taken of us, *He took hold of the seed of Abraham*, as Paul saith, He was offered up, as of all, and in behalf of all, that He might quicken all, and might be offered to God the Father, as it were the first handful of the floor. But as He being in truth Light, put that grace upon His disciples; for He says, *YE are the light of the world*: so too He being the Living Bread, and That quickeneth all things and keepeth them in being, by a likeness and through the shadow of the Law, was typifying in the twelve loaves the holy choir of the Apostles. For thus He says in Leviticus, *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee oil olive pure beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually without the vail in the tabernacle of the testimony*. And then He proceeds, *And ye shall take fine flour, and make twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And ye shall set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before the Lord, and shall put pure frankincense upon each row, and salt, and it shall be on the loaves for a memorial unto the Lord*.

The lamp then in the holy tabernacle, and giving light without the vail, we said in the foregoing was the blessed John, nourished with the purest oil, that is, the illumination through the Spirit: outside the vail, because his doctrine was catechetical: for he says, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God*. But the things within the vail,

that is, the hidden Mystery of Christ, he sheweth not much. For I (he saith) *baptize you with water unto repentance, but He That cometh after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* Seest thou then how he shines, as in simpler speech calling unto repentance; but the things within the veil he commits to Him That baptizeth with fire and the Spirit, to lay open? And these things we have set forth more at large, on the words, at the beginning of the book, *He was the burning and the shining light:* yet we touched on them now cursorily, since it was necessary, on John's passing away, to shew that the preaching of the holy Apostles was near and straightway present.

For for this reason, I suppose, the Scripture, having first signified him by the lamp puts before us the consideration of the twelve loaves. *Ye shall make* (it says) *twelve cakes: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.* It is the custom of the Divine Scripture, to receive ever the number ten as perfect, and to acknowledge it as the fullest, since the series and order of the consecutive numbers, receiving a kind of revolution and multiplication of the same into the same, advances and is extended to whatsoever one will. He commands then that each *cake* be of *two tenth deals*, that you may see perfection in the disciples, in the even pair, I mean both active virtue, and that of contemplation. He bids *two rows* to be made (and profitably so) well nigh indicating the very position, which it was (as is like) their custom to take, ever receiving the Lord in the midst of them, and accustomed ever to surround Him as their Master. And that we may know that, as Paul saith, *they are unto God the Father a sweet savour of Christ,* He bids frankincense to be put on the cakes, and that they be sprinkled also with salt. For it is said to them, *YE are the salt of the earth.* Yea and with reason does He bid it be offered upon the Sabbath day, for they were made manifest in the last times of the world: and the last day of the week is the Sabbath. And not only so, but because at the time of our Saviour's coming we held a Sabbath spiritually: for we rested from sin. And then were the holy Apostles also made manifest unto us, by whose Divine writings also we nourished attain unto the life in holiness. Therefore on the Sabbath day specially doth He bid the cakes to be set out upon the holy table, that is, in the Church. For the whole is often signified by a part. But what is holier than the holy Table of Christ? Therefore the Saviour was pre-typified as bread by the Law: the Apostles again as cakes by their likeness to Him. For all things were in verity in Christ, but by likeness to Him, they belong to us too through His grace.

52, 53 *The Jews therefore were striving among themselves saying, How can This Man give us His Flesh to eat? Jesus therefore said unto them,*

*All things are plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge,* as it is written, but darksome to the foolish is even that which is exceeding easy. For the truly wise hearer shuts up the more obvious teaching in the treasury of his understanding, not admitting any delay in respect of this: but as to the things the meaning whereof is hard, he goes about with his enquiries, and does not cease asking about them; and he seems to me profitably to press on to do much the same as they say that the fleetest dogs of the chase do, who having from nature great quickness of scent, keep running round the haunts of their game. And does not the wise and prophetic oracle call to some similar habit, *Seeking seek and dwell with Me?* For the seeker must seek, that is, must bring a most unflinching zeal thereto, and not go astray after empty speculations, but in proportion as anything is more rugged in its difficulty, with so much the more vigorous mind must he apply himself and carry by storm with more resolute onset of his thoughts that which is concealed. But the unpractised and unteachable mind, whatever starts up before it, rages at it with its unbelief, rejects the word 'conquering' as

spurious, from undisciplined daring mounting up to the last degree of arrogance. For that which will give way to none, nor think that ought is greater than it, how will it not at last be, what we have just said?

And we shall find by looking into the nature of the thing that the Jews too fell into this disorder. For when they ought to have accepted unhesitatingly the words of the Saviour, having already through many things marvelled at His God-befitting Power and His incontestable Authority over all, and to have enquired what was hard of attainment, and to have besought instruction wherein they were perplexed: they senseless repeat *How* to God, as though they knew not that it is a word replete with all blasphemy. For the Power of accomplishing all things without toil belongs to God, but they, being *natural* men, as the blessed Paul saith, *received not the things of the Spirit of God*, but the so dread Mystery seems *folly* to them.

We then ought, to derive benefit herefrom, and reestablishing our own life by others' falls, to hold without question our faith in the teaching of the Divine Mysteries and not to apply *How* to ought that is told us (for it is a Jewish word, and therefore deserving of extremest punishment). And when the ruler of the synagogue of the Jews, Nicodemus by name, on hearing the Divine words, said, *How can these things be?* with justice was he ridiculed hearing, *Art THOU a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* Let us then, found more skilful in the search after what is profitable, even by others' folly, beware of saying *How*, to what God works, but rather study to attribute to Him the knowledge of the mode of His Own Works. For as no one will know what God is by Nature, but he is justified who *believeth that He is and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him*: so again will one be ignorant of the mode of His several acts, but by committing the issue to faith, and by confessing the Almighty Power of God Who is over all, will he receive the not contemptible reward of so good a decision. For the Lord of all Himself willing us so to be affected saith by the Prophet Isaiah, *For My Counsels are not as your counsels, neither as your ways are My Ways, saith the Lord, but as the heaven is far from the earth, so are My Ways far from your ways, and your thoughts from My Mind*. But He That so greatly surpasseth us in wisdom and might, how shall He not also work wonderfully, and overpass our understanding?

I would fain introduce yet an argument besides, no mean one, as I think. For they who in this life take up the knowledge of mechanics (as it is called) often engage to perform some great thing, and the way of doing it is hidden from the mind of hearers, till they have seen it done; but they looking at the skill that is in them, even before the trial itself, accept it on faith, not venturing to gainsay. How then (may one say) will not they with reason be open to heavy charges, for daring to dishonour with their unbelief God the Chiefest Worker of all things, who refuse not to say *how* to those things which He worketh, albeit they acknowledge Him to be the Giver of all wisdom, and are taught by the whole Divine Scripture that He can do all things? But if thou persistest, O Jew, saying *How!* I too will imitate for thy sake thine ignorance, and say to thee, *how* earnest thou out of Egypt? *how* (tell me) was the rod of Moses changed into a serpent? *how* became the hand leprous, and was again restored, as it is written? *how* passed the water into the nature of blood? *how* passedst thou *through the Red Sea, as through dry land?* *how* by means of a tree was the bitter water of Mara changed into sweet? *how* too was water supplied to thee from the breasts of the rocks? *how* was the manna brought down to thee? *how* again stood the Jordan in his place? or *how* through a shout alone was the impregnable wall of Jericho shattered? And will that *how* never fail thee? For thou

wilt be detected, already amazed at many mighty works, to which if thou appliest the *how*, thou wilt wholly disbelieve all Divine Scripture, and wilt overthrow all the words of the holy Prophets, and, above all, the holy writings of thine own Moses himself. It were therefore meet far, that, believing in Christ and assenting unhesitatingly to His words, ye should be zealous to learn the mode of the blessing, and not be inconsiderately intoxicate saying, *How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?* for the word *this Man* too they say in disdain. For some such meaning again does their arrogant speech hint at.

53 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have not life in you.*

Long-suffering truly and of great mercy is Christ, as one may see from the words now before us. For in no wise reproaching the littleness of soul of the unbelievers, He again richly gives them the life-giving knowledge of the Mystery, and having overcome, as God, the arrogance of them that grieve Him, He tells them those things whereby they shall (He says) mount up to endless life. And how He will give them His Flesh to eat, He tells them not as yet, for He knew that they were in darkness, and could never avail to understand the ineffable: but how great good will result from the eating He shews to their profit, that haply inciting them to a desire of living in greater preparation for unfading pleasures, He may teach them faith. For to them that have now believed there follows suitably the power too of learning. For so saith the prophet Isaiah, *If ye will not believe neither yet shall ye understand.* It was therefore right, that faith having been first rooted in them, there should next be brought in understanding of those things whereof they are ignorant, and that the investigation should not precede faith.

For this cause (I suppose) did the Lord with reason refrain from telling them how He would give them His Flesh to eat, and calls them to the duty of believing before seeking. For to them that had at length believed He *brake bread, and gave to them, saying, Take, eat, This is My Body.* Likewise handing round the Cup to them all, He saith, *Drink of it all of you, for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is being shed for many for the remission of sins.* Seest thou how to those who were yet senseless and thrust from them faith without investigation. He explaineth not the mode of the Mystery, but to those who had now believed, He is found to declare it most clearly? Let them then, who of their folly have not yet admitted the faith in Christ, hear, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.* For wholly destitute of all share and taste of that life which is in sanctification and bliss, do they abide who do not through the mystical Blessing receive Jesus. For He is Life by Nature, inasmuch as He was begotten of a Living Father: no less quickening is His Holy Body also, being in a manner gathered and ineffably united with the all-quickening Word. Wherefore It is accounted His, and is conceived of as One with Him. For, since the Incarnation, it is inseparable; except as regards the knowledge that the Word Which came from God the Father, and the temple from the Virgin, are not indeed the same in nature (for the Body is not consubstantial with the Word from God), yet are they One by that coming-together and ineffable concurrence. And since the Flesh of the Saviour hath become life-giving (as being united to That which is by Nature Life, the Word from God), when we taste It, then have we life in ourselves, we too united to It, as It to the indwelling Word. For this cause also, when He raised the dead, the Saviour is found to have operated, not by word only, or God-befitting commands, but He laid a stress on employing His Holy Flesh as a sort of co-operator unto this, that He might shew that It had the power to give life, and was already made one with Him. For it was in truth His Own Body, and not another's. And verily when He was raising the little daughter of the chief of the Synagogue saying, *Maid, arise,* He laid hold of

her hand, as it is written, giving life, as God, by His All-Powerful command, and again, giving life through the touch of His Holy Flesh, He shews that there was one kindred operation through both. Yea and when He went into the city called Nain, and one was being carried out dead, *the only son of his mother*, again He *touched the bier*, saying, *Young man, to thee I say, Arise*. And not only to His Word gives He power to give life to the dead, but that He might shew that His Own Body was life-giving (as I have said already), He touches the dead, thereby also infusing life into those already decayed. And if by the touch alone of His Holy Flesh, He giveth life to that which is decayed, how shall we not profit yet more richly by the life-giving Blessing when we also taste It? For It will surely transform into Its own good, i. e., immortality, those who partake of It.

And wonder not hereat, nor ask thyself in Jewish manner, *How?* but rather consider that water is cold by nature, but when it is poured into a kettle and brought to the fire, then it all but forgets its own nature, and goes away unto the operation of that which has mastered it. We too then in the same way, even though we be corruptible through the nature of our flesh, yet forsaking our own infirmity by the immingling of life, are trans-elemented to Its property, that is, life. For it needed, it needed that not only should the soul be re-created through the Holy Ghost into newness of life, but also that this gross and earthly body should by the grosser and kindred participation be sanctified and called to incorruption. But let not the Jew sluggish of understanding ever suppose that a mode of some new mysteries has been discovered by us. For he will see it in the older books, I mean those of Moses, already foreshadowed out and bearing the force of the truth, for that it was accomplished in outward forms too. For what (tell me) shamed the destroyer? what provided that their forefathers also should not perish along with the Egyptians, when death, the conqueror of all, was arming himself against the firstborn? is it not manifest to all, that when they, in obedience to the Divine Law sacrificed the lamb, and having tasted of its flesh anointed the doorposts with the blood, death was compelled to pass them by, as sanctified? For the destroyer, that is, the death of the body, was arrayed against the whole nature of man, by reason of the transgression of the first-formed man. For then first did we hear, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*. But since Christ was about to overthrow the so dire tyrant, by existing in us as Life through His Holy Flesh, the Mystery was fore-typified to them of old, and they tasted of the flesh of the lamb, and were sanctified and preserved by its blood, he that was appointed to destroy passing by, by the appointment of God, those who were partakers of the lamb. Why then art thou angry, O Jew, at being now called from the types to the truth, when Christ says, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have not life in you?* albeit thou oughtest to come with more confidence to the comprehending of the Mystery, pre-instructed by the books of Moses, and by most ancient figures led most undoubtingly to the duty of faith.

54 *Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Herein too ought we specially to admire the holy Evangelist openly crying, *And the Word was made Flesh*. For he shrank not from saying, not that He was made in Flesh, but that He was made Flesh, that he might shew the Union. And we do not say either that God the Word, of the Father, was transformed into the nature of the Flesh, or that the flesh passed into the Word (for Each remaineth that which it is by nature, and One Christ of Both); but in a manner unspeakable and passing human understanding, the Word united to His Own Flesh, and having, as it were, transformed It all into Himself (according to the operation which lieth in

His power of quickening things lacking life) drove forth of our nature the corruption, and dislodged too death which of old prevailed by means of sin. *He therefore that eateth the Holy Flesh of Christ, hath eternal life:* for the Flesh hath in Itself the Word Which is by Nature Life. Wherefore He saith, *I will raise him up at the last day.* Instead of saying, My Body shall raise him up, i. e., him that eateth It, He hath put *I*: not as though He were other than His Own Flesh (and not wholly so by nature), for after the Union He cannot at all be severed into a pair of sons. I therefore (He saith) Who am become in him, through Mine Own Flesh, that is, will *raise up* him who eateth thereof, *in the last day.* For it were indeed even impossible that He Which is by Nature Life, should not surely overcome decay, and master death. Wherefore even though death which by the transgression sprang on us compel the human body to the debt of decay, yet since Christ is in us through His Own Flesh, we shall surely rise. For it were incredible, yea rather impossible, that Life should not make alive those in whom It is. For as if one took a spark and buried it amid much stubble, in order that the seed of fire preserved might lay hold on it, so in us too our Lord Jesus Christ hideth life through His Own Flesh, and inserts it as a seed of immortality, abolishing the whole corruption that is in us.

*55 For My Flesh is True Meat and My Blood True Drink.*

Again does He contrast the Mystic Blessing with the supply of manna, and the savour of the cup with the founts from rocky beds. And what He said afore in other words, this He again says here, manifoldly fashioning the same discourse. For He does not advise them to marvel overmuch at the manna, but rather to receive Him, as Bread from Heaven, and the Giver of eternal life. For *Your fathers (He says) ate the manna in the wilderness and died: this is the Bread Which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.* For the food of manna (says He) having for a very little time sported with the need of the body, and driven away the hurt of want, was again powerless, and did not engraft eternal life in them that had eaten thereof. That then was not the *true Food*, and Bread from heaven, that is; but the Holy Body of Christ, Which nourishes to immortality and life everlasting, is verily the *true Food*. 'Yea and they drank water also from the rock.' 'And what then' (He says) 'or what the profit to them who drank? for they have died.' That too then was not *true drink*; but *true Drink* in truth is found to be the Precious Blood of Christ, Which uproots from the foundation all corruption, and dislodges death which dwelt in the flesh of man. For it is not the Blood of any chance man, but of the Very Life that is by Nature. Wherefore we are entitled both the Body and the members of Christ, as receiving through the Blessing the Son Himself in ourselves.

*56 He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me and I in him.*

Manifoldly does Christ initiate us by these words, and since His Discourse is hard of attainment by the more unlearned, asking for itself rather the understanding of faith than investigation, He revolving again and again over the same ground makes it easy in divers ways, and from all parts illumines what is useful therein, fixing as a kind of foundation and groundwork the most excellent desire for it. For *he that eateth My Flesh (saith He) and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him.* For as if one should join wax with other wax, he will surely see (I suppose) the one in the other; in like manner (I deem) he who receiveth *the Flesh* of our Saviour Christ and *drinketh His Precious Blood*, as He saith, is found one with Him, commingled as it were and immingled with Him through the participation, so that he is found in Christ, Christ again in him. Thus was Christ teaching us in

the Gospel too according to Matthew, saying, *The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.* Who then the woman is, what the three measures of meal, or what the measure at all, shall be spoken of in its proper place: for the present we will speak only of the leaven. As then Paul saith that *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, so the least portion of the Blessing blendeth our whole body with itself, and filleth it with its own mighty working, and so Christ cometh to be in us, and we again in Him. For one may truly say that the leaven is in the whole lump, and the lump by like reasoning is in the whole leaven: you have in brief the sense of the words. And if we long for eternal life, if we pray to have the Giver of immortality in ourselves, let us not like some of the more heedless refuse to be blessed nor let the Devil deep in wickedness, lay for us a trap and snare a perilous reverence.

Yea (says he) for it is written, *He that eateth of the Bread, and drinketh of the Cup unworthily, eateth and drinketh doom unto himself:* and I, having examined myself, see that I am not worthy.

When then wilt thou be worthy (will he who thus speaks hear from us) when wilt thou present thyself to Christ? for if thou art always going to be scared away by thy stumblings, thou wilt never cease from stumbling (for *who can understand his errors?* as saith the holy Psalmist) and wilt be found wholly without participation of that wholly-preserving sanctification. Decide then to lead a holier life, in harmony with the law, and so receive the Blessing, believing that it hath power to expel, not death only, but the diseases in us. For Christ thus coming to be in us lulleth the law which rageth in the members of the flesh, and kindleth piety to God-ward, and deadeneth our passions, not imputing to us the transgressions in which we are, but rather, healing us, as sick. For He bindeth up that which was crushed, He raiseth what had fallen, as a Good Shepherd and One that hath laid down His Life for His sheep.

### **CHAPTER III. That the Son is not a Partaker of Life from any other, but rather Life by Nature, as being begotten of God the Father Who is Life by Nature.**

*57 As the Living Father sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, he too shall live by Me.*

Obscure is the meaning of this passage, and enveloped in no passing difficulty: but it will not entirely attain to impenetrability: for it will be apprehended and got at by those who choose to think aright. When then the Son saith that He was sent, He signifieth His Incarnation, and nothing else. And when we speak of His Incarnation, we mean that He was made Man complete. As then *the Father* (He saith) hath made Me Man, and since I God the Word, was begotten Life of That which is by Nature Life, and, made Man, have filled My Temple, that is, My Body, with Mine Own Nature; in like manner shall he also who eateth My Flesh *live because of Me*. For I took mortal Flesh: but, having dwelt in it, being by Nature Life, because I am of the Living Father, I re-elemented it wholly into Mine Own Life, I have not been overcome of the corruption of the flesh but have rather overcome it, as God. As then (for again I will say it shrinking not for profits sake) although I was made (He says) Flesh (for this the *being sent* meaneth), *I live again because of the Living Father*, that is, retaining in Myself the natural excellence of Him That begat Me, so he too who, by the participation of My Flesh, receiveth Me in himself *shall live*, wholly trans-elemented entire into Me, Who am able to give life, because I am (as it were) of life-giving Root, that is God the Father. But He says that He was Incarnate by the Father, although Solomon says, *Wisdom builded her an house:* and the

blessed Gabriel attributeth the creation of the Divine Body to the Operation of the Spirit, when he was speaking with the holy Virgin (for *The Holy Ghost*, he says, *shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*) that thou mayest again understand, that the Godhead being by Nature One, conceived of both in the Father and the Son and in the Holy Ghost,----not severally will Each in-work as to ought of things that are, but whatever is said to be done by One, this is wholly the work of the whole Divine Nature. For since the Holy Trinity is One in respect of consubstantiality, one full surely will be also Its Power in respect to every thing. For all things are of the Father through the Son in the Spirit. But what we have often said, this we will again say. For to say the same things, though it be burdensome, yet it is safe. It was the habit of our Saviour Christ for our profit to attribute those things which surpass the power suitable to man, to the Operation of the Father. For He hath humbled Himself being made Man: and since He accepted the Form of a servant, He spurneth not the measure of servants, yet will He not be excluded from doing all things with the Father. And He That begat Him worketh all things through Him, according to the Word of the Saviour Himself, *The Father* (He says) *That dwelleth in Me, Himself doeth the works*. Having then given to the dispensation of the Flesh what befits it, He attributeth to God the Father what is above man's power. For the building a Temple in the Virgin surpasseth man's power.

But our opponent will again reply: 'And in what other mode did the Son reveal what He is by Nature, or how did He shew clearly that the Father is greater, save by saying, *I live because of the Father*? For if the Father is the Giver of Life to the Son, who will rush on to so great stupidity as not full surely to conceive that that which partakes of life, will not be the same by nature as life or that which is mighty to quicken?'

To such things we too will array in turn the word of the truth, and opportunely say, *The fool will speak folly, and his heart will conceive vain things, to practise transgression, and to utter error against the Lord*. For what can be more wicked than such a conception of the heretics? How is not the deepest error uttered by them against Christ who quickeneth all things, since those most foolish ones blush not to say, that He lives by partaking of life from another, just like His creatures? Will then the Son at last be a creature too, inasmuch as it is a partaker of life, but is not very life by nature? for the creature must needs be wholly other than that which is the life in it. But if they suppose that they may be the same, let them call every creature life. But I do not suppose that any one in his senses would do that. Therefore neither is the Only-Begotten a creature, but will be conceived of as by Nature Life: for how would He be true in saying, *I am the Resurrection and the Life*? for life is that which gives life, not that which needs to receive it from another, just as wisdom too is understood to be that which can make wise, not that which receives wisdom. Therefore according to you the Truth will be false, and Christ will not be true, Who says, *I am the Life*. Yea and the brilliant choir of saints again will speak falsely, uttering words through the Spirit, and calling the Only-Begotten Life. For the Divine Psalmist is found saying to the Father, *With Thee is the Fountain of Life*. And the wondrous Evangelist John in his epistles thus says, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld, and our hands handled, of the Word of Life: and the Word was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and declare unto you the Eternal Life, Which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us*. Seest thou that the Psalmist speaks true, even by the testimony of John, when he says to God the Father of all, *With Thee is the Fountain of Life*? For the Son was and is with Him the Fountain of Life. For that the Spirit-clad says these things of Him, he will again prove by his words: for he thus writes, *And we know that the Son*

*of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him That is True, and we are in His True Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God and Eternal Life.* Then who (tell me) will any longer endure the trifling of the heretics? or who will not justly cry out against their impiety, in daring to say that the Son is partaker of life from another, albeit the holy and God-inspired Scripture says no such thing of Him; but rather openly cries aloud, that He is both God by Nature, and Very, and the Fountain of Life, and again Life Eternal. For how will He be conceived of as Very God, who needs life from another, and is not rather Himself Life by Nature? or how will He any more be called Fountain of Life, if He is holpen by another's gifts to be able to live?

But yea (says the opponent) we grant that the Son is so far Life, that He too can quicken, as having in Himself the Living Father.

Yet this will not suffice, most noble sirs, to exempt you from blasphemy against the Only-Begotten: but in this too shall your argument be proved untutored and every way falling to pieces. For to have to say that the Son is called Life, because He can quicken things recipient of life, by reason He has in Himself the Father, how is it not replete with unmeasured folly? For ye know not (it seems) what *by nature* means, or what 'being of any thing by nature means as compared with so being by circumstances'. As fire is hot by nature, and other things too are hot, by partaking of its operation, as iron or wood: but not because they are heated, are they said to be fire: for they have an external and not a physical operation in them. But our argument will proceed by means of illustrations in regard to ourselves too. Grammar for instance, or Geometry, are held to be species of reasoning science, but when any one becomes skilled in grammar or the other, he is not himself conceived of as Grammar or Geometry, but from the Grammar that is in him, he is called a Grammarian, and similarly with regard to the other: so too that which is by nature life, is something altogether different from the things wherein it is, transfashioning to itself what is not so by nature. When therefore ye say that the Father is in the Son, as He might be in matter (for instance), in order that, since He is Life by Nature, He too may be able to quicken, ye foolishly grant still that He is Life, and not rather participant of it from another, yet by relation, and not by Essence called to the dignity of a dispenser thereof. And as one would not reasonably call the heated iron fire, albeit it has the operation of the fire, in that it is heated from it: or again a man skilful in grammar is not called grammar, because he can lead others also unto the science, so I do not imagine that any man of sense would call the Son Life because He can quicken others also, though He have not by Nature, according to them, the being Life, but as from the engrafted Operation of the Father, or *by reason of the indwelling Father*. For what (tell me) is to hinder us at last from conceiving of the Son as one of us, that is, of corruptible nature, if He *live because of the Father*, that is, having received the gift of life from the Father, as they understand it? For He would perish, according to the analogy of their notions, if He had not the living Father in Himself. And if we confess that He speaks truly, *I am in the Father and the Father in Me*; He indeed has in Himself the Father Who is Life by Nature, and is Himself in the Father though not Life by Nature. I pass over the blasphemy, though one must utter it to convict the fighters against God of their impiety: for the Father will be found to have in Himself that which is destitute of Life, that is, decay, or a decaying nature. For since the nature of the matter in hand compels us so to conceive of the Son, we must investigate further, and go through various considerations, since our aim is by due precision to refine the question. You say that God the Father is by Nature Life. Well, so He is, but He is in the Son also. For this your argument too allows. I would now with reason ask you, desiring to learn it, 'What will He work in respect of His Son, being in Him? Will He impart of His Own Life to

His Offspring, as though He needed it and had not Life of Himself? how then must we not suppose the Son to be void of Life? That which is void of Life, what is it, but subject to decay? But He will not impart of His Own Life to His Offspring: for He is Life, even though He receive it not from Him.

How then do certain unguardedly babbling still accuse Him, and say that the Son therefore lives, because He hath in Himself the Father who is by Nature Life? For if He live also apart from the Father, as being Essentially Life's Very self, He will never live *because of the Father*, that is, because of participation of the Father. But if He have the Father the giver of His Own Life, manifestly He has no Life of His Own. For He borrows it of another, and is (as we said at first) a creature rather than Life, and of a nature subject to decay. How then does He call Himself Life? For either we too may safely say, *I am the Life*, or if this be no safe word (for it is not lawful for the creature to mount up to God-befitting dignities), the Son knows that He is by Nature Life: since how will He be the *Impress* of the *Person* of Him That begat Him, how the Image and accurate Likeness? or how was not Philip right in saying, *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us?* For in truth one ought to consider, that he that had seen the Son, had not yet seen the Father, since the One is by Nature Life, the Other participant of life from Him. For one will never see that which quickeneth in that which is quickened, Him That lacketh not in him that lacketh. Hence in another way too will He be untrue in saying, *He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father*.

But he who loveth the pious doctrines of the Church sees what great absurdities will follow their pratings. Let him then *turn from* them, *and pass away*, as it is written, and let him *make straight paths, and direct his ways*, and look to the simple beauty of the truth, believing that God the Father is by Nature Life, the Son Begotten of Him Life too. For as He is said to be Light of Light, so too Life of Life: and as God the Father lighteneth things lacking Light by His Own Light, His Son, and gives wisdom to things recipient thereof, through His Own Wisdom, and strengthened things needing strength, through again His Own Strength, so too He quickeneth things whatever lack the Life from Him, by His Own Life which floweth forth from Him, His Son. When then He says, *I live because of the Father*, do not suppose that He confesses that He lives because He receives Life from the Father, but asserted that because He was begotten of a Living Father, that therefore He also lives. For it were impossible that He who is of a Living Father, should not live. As though any of us were to say, I am a reasonable man on account of my father, for I was born the child of a reasonable man: so do thou conceive in respect of the Only-Begotten also. *I live* (He says) *because of the Father*. For since the Father who begat Me is Life by Nature, and I am His Natural and Proper Offspring, I gain by Nature what is His, i. e., being Life: for this the Father too is. For since He is conceived to be and is One of One (for the Son is from the Father, even though He were with Him eternally); He with reason glories in the Natural Attributes of Him That begat Him, as His Own.

58 *This is the Bread Which came down from heaven, not as your fathers ate the manna and died; he that eateth of This My Bread shall live for ever.*

Great (saith He) ought to be the effects of great things, and the gifts of the Grace from above, should appear God-befitting and worthy of the Divine Munificence. For if thou have wholly received in faith that *the Bread came, down from heaven*, let it produce continous life in them that long after it, and have the unceasing Operation of immortality. For this will be a clear proof of its being *the Bread from heaven*, that is from God: since we say that it befits the

Eternal to give what is eternal, and not the enjoyment of temporary food, which is barely able to last for just the least moment. For one will no longer wisely suppose that that was the bread from God and from above, which our forefathers eating, were overcome by death, and repelled not the evil of corruption, and no wonder; for that was not the Bread which availeth to render immortal. Hence neither will it be rightly conceived and said by any to be from heaven. For it was a work befitting that which came down thence, to render the partakers of It superior to death and decay. By undoubted proof again will it be confirmed, that this was *the Bread from Heaven*, that to wit through Christ, i. e., His Body. For It makes him that tastes thereof to live for ever. Herein too is seen a great pledge of the Divine Nature, Which vouchsafes not to give a little thing, but everything wonderful, even surpassing our understanding, so as for the greatness of the Grace, to be even disbelieved by the more simple. For with so wealthy a Hand how should not the Will to give largely be present? Wherefore Paul too says in amazement, *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*. By little examples was the Law typifying great ones, *having the shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things*, as it is written: as in the food of manna is seen the Blessing that is through Christ. For *the shadow of the good things to come* was prefigured to them of old.

59 *These things said He in the Synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.*

The most wise Evangelist introducing to us the exposition of marvellous mysteries, with reason attributes to our Saviour Christ, the commencement of the doctrine thereof, by the clear view of His Person shaming the gainsayer, and scaring off beforehand those who should come with a view to gainsay: for sometimes the renown of the teachers makes the hearer more ready to believe, and demands a more earnest assent on the part of the learners. Full well too does he add, *In the Synagogue*. For the expression wellnigh shews that not one chance person, or two, heard Christ say these things: but He is seen teaching openly in the synagogue to all, as Himself saith by the Prophet Isaiah too, *Not in secret have I spoken nor in a dark place of the earth*. For He was discoursing openly of these things, rendering their judgment without excuse to the Jews, and rendering the charges of not believing on Him heavier to the disobedient. For they, if not yet instructed in so dread Mystery, might reasonably have deprecated punishment, and pleading utter ignorance, have undergone a lighter sentence from the Judge: but since they knowing, and often initiated, still outraged Him with their unbelief, how will they not reasonably be punished, all mercy at last taken away, and pay most bitter penalty to Him that was dishonoured of them? some such thing hath the Saviour Himself too said of them, *If I had not come (He says) and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloke for their sin*.

We must then guard against, yea rather renounce, disobedience, as the bringer in of death, and look upon faith in what Christ teaches, as the giver of life. For thus shall we escape being punished with them. But he adds that Christ had spoken *these things in Capernaum*, that he may be proved to have remembered accurately. For he that knoweth both place and village, how shall he fail in the relation of the things taught?

60, 61 *Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard this, saith, Hard is this saying, who can hear it? When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples are murmuring at it, He said unto them,*

This is the custom of the simple: they ever find fault with the more subtle doctrines and foolishly tear in pieces any thought that is above them, because themselves understand it not: although they ought rather to have been eager to learn, and to have loved to search diligently the things spoken, not on the contrary to rise up against so wise words, and call that *hard*, which they ought to have marvelled at. For they are somewhat in the same plight, as one may see those in who have lost their teeth. For the one hurrying to the more delicate food, often reject the more wholesome, and sometimes blame the more excellent, not acknowledging the disease, whereby they are compelled to decline it: and these, the foster-brethren of unlearning and bereft of sound mind, shrink from knowledge, which they ought to have pursued with exceeding much toil, and to have attained by intent zeal. The spiritual man then will delight himself in the words of our Saviour, and will justly cry out, *How sweet are Thy words unto my throat, yea, above honey and the comb to my mouth*; while the carnal Jew ignorantly esteeming the spiritual Mystery to be foolishness, when admonished by the Words of the Saviour to mount up to the understanding befitting man, ever sinketh down to the folly which is his foster-brother, *calling evil good, and good evil*, according to the Prophet's voice. He follows again his fathers, and herein too is he detected imitating the unlearning of his forefathers. For the one on receiving the manna from God, and being made partakers of the blessing from above, were dragged down to their wonted coarseness, and sought for the unsavourinesses of Egypt, desiring to behold onions, leeks, and kettles of fish: and these on being exhorted to receive the life-giving Grace of the Spirit, and taught to feed on the Very Bread, which cometh from God the Father, turn aside after their own error, *lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*; and as their forefathers used to find fault with the very food of manna, daring to say, *And our soul is dried away with this manna*: so do these too again reject the Very Bread, and blush not to say, *Hard is this saying*.

The hearers therefore of the Divine Mysteries must be wise, they must be *approved exchangers*, so as to know the approved and counterfeit coin, and neither unseasonably to bring inextricable questioning on those things which are to be received in faith, nor to lavish a faith sometimes harmful upon those things that require investigation, but to render to every thing that is said its due, and to advance as it were by a straight path, refusing to turn aside on either hand. For by a royal road beseems it him to travel who runneth to uprightness of faith which is in Christ.

*62 Doth this offend you? what and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?*

From utter ignorance, certain of those who were being taught by Christ the Saviour, were offended at His words. For when they heard Him saying, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you*, they supposed that they were invited to some brutish savageness, as though they were enjoined to eat flesh and to sup up blood, and were constrained to do things- which are dreadful even to hear. For they knew not the beauty of the Mystery, and that fairest economy devised for it. Besides this, they full surely reasoned thus with themselves, How can the human body implant in us everlasting life, what can a thing of like nature with ourselves avail to immortality? Christ therefore understanding their thoughts (*for all things are naked and, bared to His eyes*), heals them again, leading them by the hand manifoldly to the understanding of those things of which they were yet ignorant. Very foolishly, sirs, (saith He) are ye offended at My Words. For if ye cannot yet believe, albeit oftentimes instructed, that My Body will infuse life into you, how will ye feel (He saith) when ye shall see It ascend even into heaven? For not only

do I promise that I will ascend even into heaven itself, that ye may not again say, *How?* but the sight shall be in your eyes, shaming every gainsayer. *If then ye shall see* (saith He) *the Son of Man ascending into heaven*, what will ye say then? For ye will be convicted of no slight folly. For if ye suppose that My Flesh cannot put life into you, how can It ascend into heaven like a bird? For if It cannot quicken, because its nature is not to quicken, how will It soar in air, how mount up into the heavens? for this too is equally impossible for flesh. But if it ascends contrary to nature, what is to hinder it from quickening also, even though its nature be not to quicken, of its own nature? For He Who made That heavenly which is from earth, will render it Lifegiving also, oven though its nature be to decay, as regards its own self?

Wo must observe how He doth not endure to be divided into two christs, according to the uncounsel of some. For He keepeth Himself every way undivided after the Incarnation. For He says that *the Son of man ascendeth up where He was before*, although the earthly Body was not above before this, but only the Word by Itself before His Concurrence with flesh. Well then hath Paul put in his epistles, *One Lord Jesus Christ*. For He is One Son, both before the Incarnation and after the Incarnation, and we do not reckon His own Body as alien from the Word. Wherefore He says that the Word which came down from above from heaven is also Son of Man. For He was made Flesh, as the blessed Evangelist saith, and did not pass into flesh by change (for He is without turning and Unchangeable by Nature as God) but as it were dwelling in His own Temple, I mean that from the Virgin, and made Man in very deed. But by saying that He will *ascend up where He was before* also, He gives His hearers to understand that He hath come down from heaven. For thus it was like that they understanding the force of the argument, should give heed to Him not as to a man only, but should at length know that He is God the Word in the Flesh, and believe that His Body too is Life-giving. 63 *It is the Spirit That quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.*

It is not unreasonably (He says) that ye have clothed the flesh in no power of giving life. For when the nature of the flesh is considered alone and by itself, plainly it is not life-giving. For never will ought of things that are, give life, but rather it hath itself need of Him who is mighty to quicken. But when the Mystery of the Incarnation is carefully considered, and ye then learn who it is who dwelleth in this Flesh, ye will then surely feel (He says) unless you would accuse *the Divine Spirit* Itself also, that It can impart life, although of itself *the flesh profiteth* not a whit. For since it was united to the Life-giving Word, it hath become wholly Life-giving, hastening up to the power of the higher Nature, not itself forcing unto its own nature Him who cannot in any wise be subjected. Although then the nature of the flesh be in itself powerless to give life, yet will it inwork this, when it has the Life-working Word, and is replete with His whole operation. For it is the Body of that which is by Nature Life, not of any earthly being, as to whom *that* might rightly hold, *The flesh profiteth nothing*. For not the flesh of Paul (for instance) nor yet of Peter, or any other, would work this in us; but only and specially that of our Saviour Christ in whom dwelt *all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. For verily it would be a thing most absurd that honey should infuse its own quality into things which naturally have no sweetness, and should have power to transfer into itself that wherewith it is mingled, and that the Life-giving Nature of God the Word should not be able to elevate to Its own good that Body which It indwelt. Wherefore as to all other things the saying will be true, that *the flesh profiteth nothing*; but as to Christ alone it holdeth not, by reason that Life, that is the Only-Begotten, dwelt therein. And He calls Himself Spirit, for *God is a Spirit* and as the blessed Paul saith, *For the Lord is the Spirit*. And we do not say these things, as taking away from the Holy Ghost His Proper Existence; but as He calls Himself Son

of man, since He was made Man, so again He calls Himself Spirit from His Own Spirit. For not Other than He is His Spirit.

*The words that I have spoken unto you, they are Spirit and are life.*

He filleth whole His Own Body with the Life-giving operation of the Spirit. For He now calls the Flesh *Spirit*, not turning It aside from being Flesh: but because by reason of Its being perfectly united to Him, and now endued with His whole Life-giving Power, It ought to be called Spirit too. And no wonder, for be not offended at this. For if *he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit*, how shall not His Own Body rather be called One with Him? Something of this kind then He means in the passage before us: I perceive from your reasonings within you (saith He) that ye foolishly imagine that I am telling you, that the body of earth is of its own nature life-giving: but this is not the drift of My words. For My whole exposition to you was of the Divine Spirit and of Eternal Life,. For it is not the nature of the flesh which renders the Spirit life-giving, but the might of the Spirit maketh the Body life-giving. *The words then which I have discoursed with you, are spirit*, that is spiritual and of the Spirit, *and are life*, i. e., life-giving and of that which is by Nature Life. And not as repudiating His Own Flesh does He say these things, but as teaching us what is the truth. For what we have just said, this will we repeat for profit sake. The nature of the flesh cannot of itself quicken (for what more is there in Him That is God by Nature?) yet will it not be conceived of in Christ as Alone and by Itself: for it has united to it the Word, Which is by Nature Life. When therefore Christ calls it life-giving, He does not testify the Power of quickening to It so much, as to Himself, or to His Spirit. For because of Him is His Own Body too Life-giving, since He re-elemented It to His Own Power. But the 'how,' is neither to be apprehended by the mind, nor spoken by the tongue, but honoured in silence and faith above understanding.

But that the Son too is often called by the name of Spirit by the God-inspired Scriptures, we shall know by what is subjoined. The blessed John then writes of Him, *This is He That came by water and Spirit, Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and the Spirit* <sup>5</sup>: *and it is the Spirit That beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth*. Lo, he calleth the Spirit Truth, albeit Christ openly crieth out, *I am the Truth*. Paul again writes to us saying, *They that are in the flesh cannot please God: but YE are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness*. Lo again herein having proved that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us, he hath said that Christ Himself is in us. For inseparable from the Son is His Spirit, according to the count of Identity of Nature, even though He be conceived of as having a Personal Existence. Therefore He often names indifferently, sometimes the Spirit, sometimes Himself.

*64, 65 Yet there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they are that believe not, and who should betray Him: and said, Therefore have I said unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it have been given unto him of My Father.*

Herein again one may clearly see fulfilled that which was fore-heralded by one of the holy Prophets, *With your hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and looking shall look and shall not see. For the heart of this people is waxen fat, and they have weighed down their ears and closed their eyes, lest they should at all see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and should convert, and I should heal them*. For they being themselves ear-witnesses of the doctrines of the Saviour, and from none other of the saints learning them, but

rather instructed in the mysteries by the Voice of the Lord of all, yea even seeing Him with their bodily eyes, waxed gross in their folly, and having closed the eyes of their understanding, turned them away from the Sun of Righteousness, not admitting the illumination of the gospel instruction. For evil were they, and guilty of many past offences. Wherefore also the wise Paul testified to us that *hardness in part is happened unto Israel*. But since it was the work of no common wisdom to acknowledge that He Who was veiled in human form is God, He saith that he *cannot come to Him* who has not yet received, i. e., understanding from God the Father, and with reason. For if *every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights*, how much more will not the acknowledgement of Christ, be a gift of the Father's Eight Hand, and the apprehension of the truth how will it not be conceived to be beyond all grace? For in proportion as it is shewn to be the Giver of the highest goods, so much the more befits it that it depend upon the Divine Munificence. But not to the unclean does the Father grant the knowledge of Christ, nor to those accustomed to stray unto extravagant unbelief doth He infuse the most helpful grace of the Spirit: for not on mud is it right that the precious ointment be poured forth. And verily the blessed prophet Jeremiah commands that they be first purged by desire unto every good work, who desire to draw near unto Christ through faith, crying out, *Seek ye God and when ye find Him call on Him; when He shall be nigh to you, let the ungodly man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his counsel, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, for He will abundantly pardon your sins*. Thou seest how he says that he must first depart from his old way, and remove from unlawful devices, that he may obtain remission of sins, i. e., through faith in Christ. For we are justified *not by the works of the law*, but by the grace that is from Him, and the forgiveness granted us from above.

But some one may say, Therefore what hindered Him from pardoning the Jews also, and from pouring out remission on Israel together with us? for this too would befit Him That was perfectly good. And how too (says he) will He speak truly when He saith to us, *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance?*

What shall we say then to these things? For them of Israel alone at the first was the grace of the Saviour devised. For He was sent, as Himself affirmed, *only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. And in truth they who will believe may yet attain unto life everlasting. But some, living in a nobler course of life, and searchers of the truth, received the grace of God the Father co-working with them unto salvation through faith and were saved: but the haughty Pharisee, and the hard-hearted high-priests with them, and the elders of the people, would not believe, though fore-instructed by Moses and the Prophets. But since through their own ill-counsel, they at length shewed themselves *unworthy of everlasting life*, they received not the illumination which is from God the Father. And you have the type of this too in the elder writings. For as to them who disbelieved God in the wilderness, entry into the land of promise was not given; so to these who by their unbelief dishonour Christ, entrance was not granted into the kingdom of heaven, whereof the land of promise was the type. And *God is not unrighteous Who bringeth His wrath upon each*. For He being Just by Nature, will discriminate altogether rightly, and will direct His Own Judgment agreeably to His Own Nature, even though we understand not the mode of the economy which is above us.

Profitably does the blessed Evangelist tell us that Jesus knew all things, and was not ignorant *who* should disbelieve, *and who* was the minister of impiety against Him, that He might again be conceived of as God, as *knowing all things before they are*.

66 *From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.*

Hard indeed is ever wisdom to the unwise, and what one thinks will yield them no slight profit, is often seen to be even hurtful. For as to them who are diseased in their bodily sight, the light of the sun is an enemy, and it is pleasant to them to sit in dark places; so to the sick in mind, the more difficult doctrines are hateful, and those that are obscured by hard meanings are an abomination, even though the benefit be great: and petty things are pleasant, and more acceptable, even though sometimes no advantage accrue. Shall we not find this true in the present case? when Christ was laying before them the great and Divine Mystery, and through varied thought was laying open the understanding of it, and all but gathering up now the veil of the temple, and unveiling the inner tabernacle, they loath the so wise and heavenly word, they turn aside again to their brutish unlearning, and *went bade*, as the Evangelist saith, and refuse to *walk any more with Him*. For this is in truth, falling back. Wherefore by the Prophet Jeremiah He says again to the senseless and obstinate Jerusalem, the nurse of unbelievers, *THOU forsookest Me, saith the LORD, and shalt go backward*. For of a truth backward falling follows the rejection of good things: and God is All Good. Therefore the miserable men *went back*, and have fallen backwards, not walking with the Saviour any more, but turning as it were to other paths, and dragged down to their wonted passions.

But let us see again, whether we do not find the type of this too in the books of Moses. When then they had travelled through long ways and traversed that wild desert and were now at the very land of promise, Joshua the son of Nun and certain others with him were sent by Divine command to espy it. But when they had spied out the whole land and were returned again to Moses, some of them began speaking bitter things to the synagogue. For the land (said they) which we spied hath fierce inhabitants, and we saw the sons of the giants there, and concluded by adding such things as would strike terror into the hearers. But Joshua after them tried to adorn the land with many praises, and besought them saying, *The land which we searched is an exceeding good land: if the Lord delight in us, He will bring us thereinto*. But the forefathers of the Jews maintained that they ought to stone Joshua: and having condemned of powerlessness God Who is mighty to all things, *they sat down and wept*, as it is written, and hereby with reason provoke the Lord of all. But since they were thus faithless and outrageous, they fell from the promise: for He says, *As I swear in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest*. And what besides? God commands them to return and go back again. For He saith to Moses, *To morrow do YE strike your tents and return by the way of the Red sea*. For since they would not enter into the land whereinto they were called, they are sent to turn round, and are compelled to retrace the same way again. For they would not follow after the words of Joshua, nor on hearing of the good land, did they honour the adviser with their assent. What therefore those then suffered, this do these too now. For taught the way of everlasting life, and exhorted to hasten unto the kingdom of heaven, they outrage Him with their unbelief: wherefore justly did they *go bach*, losing by their own perversity the proceeding onward with their Guide unto salvation.

67 *Jesus therefore said unto the twelve, Would YE also go away?*

Our Lord Jesus Christ doth not exhort the holy Apostles to leave Him, nor doth He offer them free and unfettered liberty of doing so, nor yet doth He permit them readily to turn aside as though they would get no harm from doing so: yea, rather He threatens them well, that if they be not found superior to the undisciplined conduct of the Jews, they too shall be sent *away*, and go no more with Him, but depart unto perdition. For it is not at all the number

of worshippers that is precious in the sight of God, but the excellent in the right faith, though they be few. Therefore the Divine Scripture says that many are they that have been called, but that only the chosen will be received, and those that are approved, being very few. And this the Divine Word Himself testified to us. It is therefore as though the Saviour said to His disciples, If ye unhesitatingly believe My words, if letting go wavering in ought, ye with simple faith receive the Mystery, if it seem bitter to you and fall of intolerable infamy that My Words are accused of being hard, if ye refuse to say in Jewish fashion, *How can This Man give us His Flesh to eat*, I will gladly see you with Me, and will rejoice in living with you, and will love you as Mine Own, but if ye choose to think with them who have fallen back, I both enjoin you to run away with them, and do justly drive you away. For worshippers will not fail Me, seeing the Gospel message shall be spoken not in Judaea alone, but now goeth about into the whole world, and calleth men together from all parts as it were into one company, and gathereth them together with ease unto the acknowledgment of the truth. *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God*, as Paul saith; *severity* towards the unbelievers, *goodness* again towards them who shall acknowledge Him, *if they continue in His goodness*, as Paul again affirmeth, *elsethey too shall be cut off*. For He That *spared not the natural branches*, neither shall He spare them that were grafted in. Let him then that of folly halteth concerning the faith know and be taught by these things, that if he will not cease from such a disease, he will go back, and having no longer any Guide unto eternal life, will go down wretched into hell, and there bewail his own miscounsel. For *there* (He saith) *shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*.

It is probable however that some other profitable lesson is conveyed to us, by Jesus saying to His disciples, *Would YE also go away?* for lest they too should be thought to have been carried off by Jewish folly, and to have stumbled together with the unbelievers, or in any other way to cry out against Him with them, as though He taught hard things and tried to instruct His hearers in the knowledge of impossibilities, profitably did He enquire of them if they desired to depart with them, that hereby He might invite them to confession of the right and untaint faith, which indeed also came to pass.

**CHAPTER IV. That a type of Christ was the holy Tabernacle which led the people in the wilderness, and that the ark that was in it and the lamp and the altar, as well that of incense as that of sacrifice, signified Christ Himself.**

*68 Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go away? Thou hast the words of eternal life.*

By the mouth of one the chief do all speak, preserving the knowledge that is in truth most well befitting saints, that in this too they might be found an ensample to those who should come after them, to wit of sober and admirable reasoning. For it was meet that they should speak in the ears of their Master, not all confusedly hurrying to get before the rest, and unmeetly seize on speech, but wisely to be ready to give way to those who had the first place, both in wisdom and rank. Wherefore Paul too saith, *Let the prophets speak two or three, and by course*. For not because they were honoured with the grace of prophecy, was it therefore decreed that they should speak in a disorderly manner; but because they were wise, therefore were they commanded to speak the more wisely to their hearers. It was then an act of wisdom befitting saints, to leave it to him alone to answer for all, who had the preeminence in place. *To whom therefore shall we go away* (he says) instead of, who shall instruct us in like wise? or, to whom shall we go, and find what is better? *Thou hast the words of eternal life*: not hard

words, as those say, but words which bring us up to the chiefest of all, to unceasing, endless life, and removed from all decay. It is (I suppose) perfectly clear to us from these words that we must sit by One only Teacher, Christ, and cleave unceasingly and indissolubly to Him, and make Him our Master, who knoweth well to guide our feet into the unending life. For thus, thus shall we mount up to the Divine and heavenly courts, and hastening into the church of the first-born, shall feast on the good things that pass man's understanding. For that it is a good thing and salutary to desire to follow Christ Alone and ever to be with Him, the very nature of the thing will indubitably prove: yet no less shall we see it from the elder Scriptures.

When therefore they of Israel having put off the tyranny of the Egyptians were pressing forward to the land of promise, God suffered them not to make disorderly marches, nor did the Law-giver let each go where he would. For there is not a doubt that having no leader they would have gone utterly astray. Wherefore it is written again for our ensample, in the book called Numbers, *And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely the tent of the testimony; and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud went up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents: at the commandment of the Lord shall they set forth, and the children of Israel shall keep the charge of God and shall not rise up. By the voice of the Lord shall they pitch and by the command of the Lord shall they journey.* Thou seest how they are bidden to follow, and to journey with the journeying of the cloud, and to halt again with it and with it to rest. For the being with their guide was salvation both then of them of Israel, and to us now the not departing Christ is so. For He was with them of old under the form of tabernacle and cloud and fire. But the order of the narrative shall be transferred (as far as we are able) to the spiritual interpretation, for when *Wisdom*, as it is written, *buildd her an house*, and pitched the truer tabernacle, that is, the Temple of the Virgin, God the Word, Who is in the Bosom of God the Father, came down thereinto in a manner incomprehensible and God-befitting, and was made Man, that to those who are already enlightened, and *walk as in the day*, as Paul saith, He might be a cloud overshadowing them, and put an end to the heat of our passions from infirmity: but to those who are still ignorant, and straying, and living as it were in night and darkness, a fire to give light and transform to fervency of spirit. For we believe that those who are good are warm through the Spirit. For I think that for no other cause did the cloud appear over the tabernacle by day and the fire by night, than for that given above by us. But He enjoined those who were appointed to follow, not to set out of their own accord on their journey, but to set out with the tabernacle and with it to halt, that in type again you may understand what is said by Christ, *He that ministereth to Me, let him follow Me: and where I am, there shall My minister also be.* For steadfastness in following, and constancy in cleaving, is signified by his accompanying Him, uninterruptedly. And the accompanying the Saviour Christ and following Him, is not to be understood at all of the body, but is attained rather by virtue in action, in regard whereof the most wise disciples having fast fixed their mind, and having refused as leading to destruction, to go back with them that believed not, with reason cry out, Where can we go? as though they said, With Thee will we abide and will ever cleave to Thy commands, and will receive Thy words, not finding fault with ought, nor with the uninstructed ones, think that hard which Thou sayest in Thine instruction, but think rather, *How sweet are Thy Words unto my throat, above honey and the honeycomb unto my mouth.*

Such then is the meaning of this passage. But that the tabernacle was to them of old a type of Christ we shall know, by applying a subtle mind to the things said respecting it unto the holy Moses. Our discourse on these matters may haply seem discursive to some, but it will produce no slight advantage. For we ought (I deem) zealously to refine on these points, repudiating the censoriousness of those who unreasonably blame us. The Divine oracle then is on this wise: for we will set it forth in order, refining the shadow of the letter, as far as we can. *And the LORD spake (it says) unto Moses, saying, On one day of the first month at new moon, shalt thou rear the tabernacle.* What induced the Lord of all (one more diligent in learning may reasonably ask) to order the tabernacle to be set up in *one day*, and not in two, or three, and in the new moon, and that not simply of any month, but of the first. Such things may reasonably cause us a long investigation, since nought of the things said in the Scriptures is for nothing. Therefore (for we will follow up our own discourse on these things) the tabernacle that was reared signifies the Holy Body of Christ and (so to say) the pitching of His Precious Tabernacle, wherein *it was well pleasing that all the fulness of the Godhead should dwell bodily.* Moreover He commands it to be pitched in one day, and this most wisely and economically, in order that by the one day you might understand the existing life, in which alone He became Man. It is fit that we understand by the new moon, nothing else save the sojourn of our Saviour which reneweth us, by which *old things are passed away, all things are become new.* For a new season was manifested to us in Christ, thrusting away the oldness of the legal worship, and re-ordering us unto a new and fresh life through the Gospel teachings, yea and renewing unto the beginning of righteousness them which had waxen old from sin, and were *ready to vanish away*, and undoing the oldness of the corruption that had been brought in, and beautifying with the newness of incorruption those that through faith had hastened unto eternal life. *For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, as it is written.

But He commands the Divine tabernacle to be reared in the first month, when the beauty of spring-time shines forth, washing away (as it were) the dejection of winter, and the earth is softly cherished by now brighter and purer suns, and *the vines bloom*, and the husbandman revels in the sweet odours of the flowers, and the plains bear grass, and whole fields bristle with the ears of corn, as certain of the Greek poets say, when *the winter is past*, as it is written, *the rain is over and gone, when the time of pruning is come on.* All these you will understand spiritually, that the winter at its end and the rain passing away, are the temptations that fall on us of devilish tyranny, and his ambitious usurpations over all; for the might of the devils was brought to an end in the days of Christ, and the bright Sun rose upon us, to wit, that whereof God the Father says, *And the Sun of Righteousness shall arise upon you*, warming with fervency of the Spirit, those who were swooned in sin, unto righteousness. The spiritual vines again and flowers and ears of corn, you will understand to be the Saints which excel in manifold piety towards God, and shoot forth the many-hued fruit of virtue. And (we must speak briefly) the spring brings forth flowers and prepares the whole earth to bear grass, and crowns the meadows with new bloom, and brings into fresh youth the trunks long dry with the intolerable violence of the winter, and brings them to a goodlier appearance, and makes them bud around with their wonted leafage, and prepares the husbandman who owns them to glory in their natural fruits. Some such thing shall we find happen as regards ourselves too. For we who have long been withered by reason of the sin that reigneth over us, and destitute of fruit unto virtue, have revived unto righteousness through Christ, and do now yield the fresh and new fruit through faith to the Dresser of our spirits. And thus do we fitly understand that which is spoken by one of the holy Prophets as in the Person of Christ, *I who*

*speak, am at hand as the spring upon the mountains.* But what the spring, i. e., the season of spring, worketh upon the mountains, we have already spoken of.

Profitably then does He command that the tabernacle be set up *in one day*, holding out a type of Christ, that you may understand thereby His Death once for all in this one present time. For He will not be born again hereafter, nor yet will die, having once for all been born and died and risen from the dead. For the Resurrection, which is as it were, a pitching of the holy tabernacle, must of necessity follow His Death. But it is in the new moon, because in Christ we have a new age: for what is in Him, are a new creature. And the first month is taken, signifying the renewal of human nature from death and decay to life and incorruption, and its passing at length from barrenness to fruitfulness, and its escape from the tyranny of the devil, like the winter now passed away and come to its close. Again in another way does he shew us Immanuel in type and figure saying, *And thou shalt place the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail.* For in the preceding the Word was limned in the complete tabernacle (for it was the House of God indwelling therein, to wit, the Holy Body of Christ) but no less is the same signified to us by the ark individually <sup>6</sup>. For it was constructed of undecaying wood, that you might understand His Body incorruptible: it was overlaid *with pure gold within and without*, as it is written <sup>7</sup>; for all belonging to Him is Precious and royal, both the Divinity and the Humanity, and *in all things* He hath *the preeminence* as Paul saith. And the gold is taken as a type of honour and excellence above all things. The ark then was fashioned of undecaying wood, and overlaid with gold, and had the Divine law deposited therein, for a type of God the Word indwelling in, and united to, His Holy Flesh (for the Law too was the Word of God, although not the Hypostatic Word, as the Son is). And it is covered by the veil. For God the Word Incarnate was unseen of the many, having His Own Body as a covering, and lying hid within His Own Flesh as with a veil, so that thence certain not knowing His God-befitting Dignity, at one time endeavoured to stone Him, imputing it to Him, as a crime, that He being Man, said He was God, at another time, they blushed not to say, *Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother WE know? how doth He now say, I have come down from heaven?* The veil then cast upon the ark, signifieth that Jesus will not be known by the many. The ark too was therefore a type of Him, wherefore also did it precede them of Israel in the wilderness, filling the place of God: for He was the leader of the people. And the Psalmist is a witness of this, saying, *O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, when Thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shoooh, the heavens also distilled.* For in that the ark ever marched before and preceded, God is openly declared to have gone before. You may have a clearer proof of this, considering this. God once commanded to them of Israel by Moses to go up boldly unto mount Seir, and to besiege the Amorite, but they who were so commanded having fallen into feeble cowardice, and attributing success to their own strength, and not rather trusting to the succour from above, sat and began weeping by the mountain, as it is written, whereat the Law-giver was justly provoked, and threatened that He would not bring them into the land of promise. They cut at last by the threat, and urged to an unseasonable repentance, attempted to go up, by a second disobedience, and snatched up arms against the Amorites. But God foretold them the result by Moses: for He said *unto them Ye shall not go up* (it says) *and ye shall not fall before your enemies for I am not among you.* But they every way diseased with disobedience, forced themselves and went up unto the mountain, as it is written. *Nevertheless* (it says) *the ark of the covenant of the Lord went not up with them, for it remained in the camp.* Seest thou that upon God's saying, *I am not among you*, the ark goeth not up with the disobedient, shewing clearly to them of more understanding that it held the place of their leader God? Yea and it was borne around Jericho by the priests, and the lofty wall thereof fell down, not by applying engines and rams, but rather by trumpets and

shouting: and this again we shall find to be true in Christ. For He it is Who is borne by saints and holy men and overturns the whole might of the devil, not by arms, but by a shout and a trumpet, that is by Apostolic and Evangelic preaching, and the assent of all the people, confessing their own Lord in uprightness of faith. This too we see accomplished in the Mystic doxologies, the priestly trumpet, that is, the voice of the minister, preceding the people, and thus falls and is shattered the power of the adversaries, for our *weapons are not carnal*, as Paul saith, *but mighty to God*. That Christ is after a sort borne and rests on His saints, both the prophet Habakkuk will declare saying, *Thou wilt ride upon thine horses and Thy chariots are salvation*, and the Saviour Himself no less will teach us, saying to Ananias concerning Paul, *Go thy way, for this man is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before all the Gentiles*.

*Yea and thou shalt bring in the table (it says moreover) and set in order what layeth thereon and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and set thereon his lamps*. You will understand Christ by both, for He is co-figured under the form of a table having bread set upon it, because in Him are all nourished unto life Eternal, according as He says, *I am the Bread; Which came down from heaven and giveth life unto the world: if any man eat of This Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world*. That then, which is set forth upon the table, i. e., the loaves, signifies the Holy Body of Christ, which nourisheth all men unto Eternal Life. But since the blessed David, and they that were with him, being an hundred, as it is written, did eat the shewbread, let us see whether something mystical be not hereby too recorded. It was not lawful to taste of the shewbread, save by the Priests alone, by appointment of the Law: but David and they that were with him, being not of the priestly tribe, took of the most holy food, that hereby again might be signified the faith of the Gentiles, and in part of them of Israel. For Christ was due to them of Israel, as to them who were more holy *by reason of the fathers*, and the Law: but the multitude of the Gentiles although they were, by reason of their straying, profane, somehow entered in too, and did eat the Bread of life, David accompanying them and as it were filling up a type of the preserved of Israel, which the blessed Isaiah too calls *a remnant*. For many of them have believed on Christ.

Thus therefore will Christ be conceived of through the holy Table: but He is again the candlestick, as giving light to the whole house, that is, the world (for *I am the Light of the world*, He says) but it holdeth seven lamps and not one: for manifoldly doth He illumine and by diverse graces enlighten the souls of the faithful: again it is of pure gold, in that it is above all and Precious: moreover it has a solid stem (for so is written) for there is nothing empty nor yet light in Christ. It has lilies too by reason of its good savour of holiness, according to, *I am a flower of the plain, a lily of the vallies*. Its feeders again signify the ministrations of Divine graces. Moreover the prophet Zechariah testified that two olive branches are round about it, that you may understand that the people compassionated are two, whom he called *sons also of fatness* and says that they *stand by the Lord of the whole earth*, although in that the olive branches are seen by the lamp, he hereby gives the clearest demonstration that Christ is the candlestick, Who through obedience and faith set by Himself both the people of the Gentiles and that of the Jews.

He proceeds, manifoldly pointing Him out to us, *And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark and put the hanging of the veil at the door of the tabernacle of witness, and the altar of burnt offerings thou shalt set at the door of the tabernacle of witness and shalt cover the tabernacle, and all things that are therein shalt thou hallow all*

*round.* For we must observe how Christ is represented to us in both altars. For after He had ordered the golden altar to be laid by [8](#), whereon was the incense before the ark, and had said that hangings should be put across before the doors of the tabernacle, that the interior might not be seen, He commands the altar of burnt-offerings to stand at the door of the tabernacle of testimony, not invisible, nor hidden: for it was without the veil. Behold Him then, by the altar of incense ascending up as an odour of a sweet smell to God the Father (for this the incense signifies), by the altar of burnt offering, offered up as an Offering and a Sacrifice in our behalf. But the golden altar was hidden by the veil (for hidden was the glory of Christ), the other, that of burnt offerings, whereon are the sacrifices, was visible, for manifest was the Death of Christ and known to all. Their position is not without a distinction, for the one was over against the ark, the other by the doors of the tabernacle. And the position of the golden altar in front of the ark, as it were in the Presence of God the Father, darkly hints that marvellous is the glory of the Son, as it is said, *No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father.* But the position of the altar of burnt offering at the very doors of the tabernacle, holding out a type of His Death and of His Sacrifice for all, again signifies, that no otherwise can we come to God the Father, save by the Sacrifice of Christ, as He says, *I am the Door,* and *No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.* Further, He commanded the tabernacle to be pitched round about, comprehending all things that were therein, that it might be seen to be one, and not many. For One is Christ among us, even though He be manifoldly conceived of, a tabernacle by reason of the veil of Flesh, an Ark holding the Divine law as the Word of God the Father, a table again as Life and Food, a candlestick as spiritual Light, both altar of incense, as an odour of a sweet smell in sanctification, and altar of burnt offering, as a Sacrifice for the Life of the world. And all things that are therein are sanctified; for Christ is holy All of Him and howsoever He be conceived of.

Since the holy tabernacle then was their leader, they of Israel are commanded with it to set out and with it to rest: God again instructing us and teaching us to our profit, to take as our Leader and. Guide in the way unto salvation, God the Word Who for our sakes was Incarnate, and by obeying unhesitatingly His Commands, to mount up unto eternal life. And this they who had been instructed in the mysteries in many words not chusing to do, *went back and walked no more with Him.* But most wisely does the blessed Peter say to the Saviour, Where can we depart? for in no way to go astray from God, but rather to strive to be with Him spiritually, is in truth most comely for saints.

*69 And WE have believed and know that THOU art the Christ, the Holy One of God [9](#).*

Marvellous is the faith of the holy Apostles, fervent their manner of confession, most loveable and pre-eminent their understanding. For not like certain of the more ignorant, or like them who used to call the Word of the Saviour hard, did they rightly go back and fall, nor of lightness readily caught were they called to belief, but being fully assured beforehand and persuaded of a truth that their Instructor was full of life-giving Words, the Teacher of heavenly doctrines. Exceeding stable is such faith, but that which is not so, is (as is like) easily spurned, and having no root as its assurance, is very readily worn away out of the mind of man. And verily the Saviour Himself in Parables, when He was discoursing of the sower, that which fell upon the rock (He says) and hath no root withered away, darkly saying that the mind which is dried up and can in no wise receive the Word once cast into it, is a rock. For the wretched Jews being now in this case from their utter ignorance, were being taught by the Prophet's voice, *Bend your hearts and not your garments.* For as before the casting in of the seed, the custom of husbandry advises that the ground should first be cleft with the plough: so

I deem ought they who approach to receive the Divine Words in some sort to open out aforehand their hearts by desires thereunto: and thus receiving it, do they render the soul travailing like fruitful soil. Therefore in full assurance of faith do the most wise disciples say that they know and are confident that He is *Christ the Son of the Living God*. And with great wisdom will you find their speech constructed as to this again. For they say they *believe* and *know*, joining both together. For one must both believe and understand: nor, because the more Divine things are to be received in faith, ought we therefore completely to depart from all investigation respecting them, but rather we should try to attain even so unto a moderate knowledge, as *in a glass* and a *riddle*, as Paul saith. Well again do they not say first that they *know*, then *believe*, but putting faith first, they bring in knowledge, and not before faith, as it is written, *If ye will not believe, neither shall ye understand*. For simple faith having been fore-laid in us, as a kind of foundation, knowledge is afterwards built up upon it by degrees, and brings us up *to the measure of the mature age* that is in *Christ, to a perfect* and spiritual man. Wherefore God also somewhere says, *Behold I will lay for the foundations of Sion a stone, choice, a corner stone, precious*. For Christ is to us a Beginning and foundation unto sanctification and righteousness, through faith, that is, and not otherwise: for thus He dwelleth in us.

But observe how they say throughout in the singular number, and with the article prefixed, *THOU art the Christ, the Son of the Living God*, removing from the many who are called in grace unto sonship, as One and Special, Him who is truly *Son*, in Whoso likeness WE too are sons. Again they call Him *the Christ* as One: but we must know that He is not called Christ on His own account, or as being so Essentially just as He is Son, yet is He One in truth and specially (for none among anointed ones is as He is) yet in respect of His likeness to us is He called Christ. For His Own Proper and specially distinct Name and Reality in truth, is SON; but that which is common with us is *Christ*. For since He was anointed in that He was made Man, therefore is He Christ. If then we attribute the being anointed to the need of human nature, He will be conceived of as Christ in respect of His likeness to us, and not in the same way as He is Son, nevertheless One Only by Nature and Specially, both before Flesh and with Flesh, and not two, as some suppose, who (it seems) understand not the depth of the Mystery. For not into a man hath the Word of God the Father come down, as the grace of the Spirit upon one (for example) of the holy Prophets, but Himself *was made Flesh*, as it is written, to wit Man. Indivisible therefore is He after the Union, and is not severed into two Persons, even though we conceive of the Word of God as something other than the Flesh wherein He hath dwelt. And since the whole choir of the holy Apostles confirms to us the faith herein, in that they say they know (and that peculiarly) that He is *the Christ the Son of God*, we shall not, if we deem aright, admit those who shrink not of their folly from making innovations on these things.

70, 71 *Jesus answered them, Did not I choose you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve.*

He continues His reproach, and clenches them with severer words, cutting off that which is slack and fallen into negligence in their desire to be wise. For He almost seems to say somewhat of this sort, "O My disciples, this is the time for heed and wit and a mind braced unto the desire of salvation. For most slippery is the way of perdition, which drags downwards not only the feeble mind, but also that which already thinketh it standeth fast. Very perilous and of many forms is sin, which bewitches the mind of man by its manifold pleasures and

most smooth lusts, dragging it to what it ought not. Your own case (He saith) shall be an example of what I say. For I will tell you; none of those who from lightness have now fallen back, did I choose as I have done you who were good (for as God, I knew what was in you) yet did Satan get hold of one of you through greed of gain, and My Judgment was surely not deceived. For in man is free-will and choice to go to both, either to the right hand, or to the left, i. e., to virtue or vice." Therefore at once by His severer chiding, does He both rouse unto becoming watchfulness, and render each one more steadfast regarding himself, for He does not yet say clearly who shall betray Him, but laying the burden of iniquity upon one alone and indefinitely, He was bringing them all to the contest, and inviting them to more careful circumspection, each one dreading the loss of his own soul, and at the same time was He working another thing for the benefit of His disciples' faith. For when they confessed that they knew, and firmly believed, that He is *the Son of God*, He shews that He fore-knows things to come, by this too shewing as it were that their confession regarding Him was sure. For the knowledge of things to come becometh none save One Alone, Him That is by Nature God, of Whom it is also written, *Who knoweth all things before they be*. But He called the worker of the Devil's will *a devil*, and not untruly. For as *he that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit*, so is the reverse also true.

**CHAPTER V. On the feast of Tabernacles, that it signifies the restitution of the hope due to the Saints, and the resurrection from the dead; on the words, *Now the feast of the Jews, that of Tabernacles was at hand*.**

Chap. vii. *And after these things Jesus used to walk in Galilee, for He would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.*

After *these* both words and deeds (he says) Christ again more gladly made His sojournings in Galilee: for this, I suppose, is the meaning of *used to walk*, yet he shews that His being with them was not of His Own choice, but rather happened of necessity, adding the reason. For *the Jews* (he says) wished *to kill Him*. Wherefore He gave Himself over for a long time to the aliens, refusing to *walk in Jewry*. But I suppose again that in these words no less is Israel found fault with for its extreme perverseness, if indeed the being found among the Gentiles was shewn to be far better than living with it. And this it was that was uttered by the prophet Jeremiah, *I have forsaken Mine House, I have left Mine heritage; I gave My loved Soul into the hand of her enemies*. For Christ's being made an outcast because of the impiety of them that persecute Him, and going away among the Galileans, how is it not plainly the giving up of His Own Soul into the hands of her enemies? For the Gentiles are Christ's enemies, in that they do service to another and worship the creature instead of the Creator, because they had not yet received the faith in Him. And this Himself will teach us clearly, saying, *He that is not with Me is against Me*. But I suppose every one will say that the Gentiles were not *with* Christ, previous to their true knowledge of God and faith; they were therefore *against* Him, and hence in the rank of His enemies. This being so and clearly acknowledged, so great abomination was practised among them of Israel, that He was in better case, living among His enemies, and making His abode with them with whom He least ought was pleasanter, than what was meet far and more congenial, to be among them who are His kinsmen after the flesh and, on this ground, bound to love Him. With greatest reason then did Christ depart unto the Gentiles, and by the very act of doing so did He in a manner say, that if they did not desist from persecuting Him, and from destroying with their mad folly their Benefactor, Christ would wholly give Himself to those without, and remove unto the

Gentiles. As then we said that He hinted this by this act, so again we shall find that by a figure of old did He threaten His departure from Jerusalem.

When then He was ordering the laws about sacrifices, as is written also in Leviticus, having fore-appointed, as for an image of Christ, that a bullock should be brought as a gift and a whole burnt-offering to the Lord, he again outlines Him in another way, saying, *If his gift to the Lord be of the sheep, of the lambs and of the kids, for a whole burnt sacrifice, he shall bring a male without blemish, and shall lay his hand upon the head thereof and they shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the Lord.* How then the Mystery of Christ is shaped unto us by these things, we must needs enquire. And first I think we ought to speak of the situation both of the Temple itself at Jerusalem and of the Divine altar, that so we may understand, what is the meaning of that the sheep is not to look straight before it, but rather to be turned toward the north. The territory of the Jews therefore lies in the more southern quarters of the earth, and the temple faces eastward and opens its doors toward the first rays of the sun; yea and the Divine altar itself, reared over against the holy, as it were in the sight of God, shewed its front to those who enter from the East, its two sides looking one south, the other north. That it actually is as we have said, you may have full proof from the passage of the Prophet Ezekiel. For when he was being taught about the death of Phaltias <sup>10</sup>, i. e., in spiritual vision, he says thus, *And I saw, and lo about five and twenty men, their backs towards the temple of the Lord and their faces right away, and they were worshipping the sun toward the east.* But if a man worshiping the rising sun have the temple behind him, how must one not suppose that the front of the temple was turned eastward? But in the same position was the Divine altar itself, as we have said. Therefore the front giving entry both of the temple itself and of the Divine altar was to the east: the two sides, one to the south, the other to the north; and the side yet remaining, which is conceived of as the back, looking westward. The things therefore we have said being thus, we shall find that north of it lies the neighbour of Judaea, Galilee, that is, the country of the Gentiles, as it is written, *Galilee of the Gentiles*, Since then our Lord Jesus Christ was about, after His saving Passion, to depart out of the country of the Jews, and go into Galilee, that is, to the church of the Gentiles, the sheep that was taken in type as a sacrifice, was slain at the side of the Altar so as to look northward, according as it is spoken by the Psalmist of Christ, *His eyes look unto the nations.*

But since the blessed Evangelist says that He refused His Presence to the Jews, because they were plotting to kill Him, we will add this to what we have said, that we do not consider the withdrawal of Christ as an imputation of cowardice, nor yet will we therefore accuse of weakness Him That is mighty unto all things, but we will accept the mode of the economy. For it beseeemed Him not before His time, but in His own time to endure the Cross for all.

*3, 4, 5 His brethren therefore said unto Him, Depart hence and go into Judaea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest (for no man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly); if Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world.*

*For neither did His brethren believe on Him.*

The reputed brethren of the Saviour not yet recognizing God the Word indwelling in His Holy Flesh, nor knowing at the time when they are saying these things, that He was made Man, have still petty conceptions of Him and think far too little of the grace and excellence that is in Him, seeing nothing more than the rest, deluded by the common opinions of Him, thinking that He too was in truth begotten of their father Joseph, and not seeing the hidden provision of the Mystery. For when many (as is like) miracles were being wrought secretly by Christ in

Galilee, they persuade Him to seek after vain glory, and advise Him to receive the wonder of the spectators, as though it were some great thing, as though for the sake of this alone, He were willing to perform the several miracles He had wrought, in order that He might just seem an object of wonder to the beholders, and might revel in the praise of men, after the fashion of some whose habit is to seek for glory. For see how they counsel Him to go up to *Judaea*. and to work miracles there rather, not in order that His *disciples* might believe on Him, but that they *might see the works which He doeth*. For (say they) if Thou wilt be known (for this is the meaning of "openly") be not a worker of marvels in secret, nor, since Thou art preeminent in Thy Power of doing all things, shun publicity: for so shalt Thou be renowned to *the world*, and more illustrious among beholders. This then is their address here. And profitably does the most wise Evangelist note that *not yet had His brethren believed on Him*. For it would indeed have been one of the strangest things, that they who through faith had already taken hold of God-befitting acknowledgment of Him, should be guilty of such cold expressions. But at that time having not as yet believed they speak wisely, but when they understanding the great mystery concerning Him had believed, they hasten on to such a height of piety and virtue, as both to be called Apostles, and to attain illustrious piety. This too you have, fore-sung by the voice of Prophets. And verily the blessed Jeremiah says, as to our Lord Jesus Christ, *For both thy brethren and the house of thy father, they too despised Thee, and they cried out; of thy followers were they gathered together: believe them not, for they will speak fair words unto Thee. For His brethren* who before the faith thought little of Him, and in the words just spoken, all but attempt to cry out against Him, were gathered together through faith, and have spoken fair words unto Him, both aiding others, and striving with words in behalf of the faith. Very watchfully did the Prophet, having named His brethren, profitably add, *The house of Thy father*, lest they too should be supposed to have been of the blessed Virgin, rather than of His father Joseph alone.

*6 Jesus saith therefore unto them, My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready.*

The Saviour's discourse is always overshadowed, for so is it written of Him, *And He shall be a Man That hideth His Words*. And that this too was contrived to their profit, who that is wise will not say? *Not yet* therefore is the time (He says) for unrestrained publicity, nor yet of manifestation unveiled unto all, since the mind of the Jews is not yet ripe unto understanding, so as to be able to receive My words without wrath and anger: nor yet doth fit opportunity summon Me now to be altogether made known unto the world, since the Jew's have not yet wholly fallen from grace, nor yet so raged against Me, that I must needs at length depart unto others. For this reason then does He say that *not yet is His time come*, but says that theirs is come, and is always ready. For we say that men of the world may do as they list, no necessity hampering them, or calling them to an opportune economy which avises them whether they ought to do any thing or not, as was the case with Christ. On the contrary, the manner of living of those who have chosen life in the world, is remiss and free from more laborious care, bringing in opportunity ever ready and unfolded unto what likes them best and readily permitting those who practise it, to go whithersoever they list.

When therefore things are necessarily subjected to economies, not every time is fit for doing what has to be done, but that which fits each several duty, according as the nature of the thing demands: but on one who has chosen to live unbound is no such thing imposed: but rather, the path to wherever they would go, is ever most ready and wholly unlet.

7 *The world cannot hate you, but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that its works are evil.*

Very kindly now also doth the Saviour reprove His brethren, who are still too worldly-minded and disposed, and brings forward a second defence, mingled with skill, whereby He shews that not only are they ignorant Who He is by Nature, but are still so far removed from love to Him, as to choose to live in a way not unconformed to them who admire living in the world, and not rather in virtue. For it would have been verily most absurd to say to everybody else what would be of use, having laid aside all disguise about it, yet not to bestow on His reputed brethren, in far greater measure, things wherewith they, having now the Giver of wisdom, might learn with no slight profit. And this is the custom of our Saviour Christ. For He sometimes seizing favourable opportunity fashioneth great instruction unto His hearers. Ever dear therefore (saith He) to each is that which is akin to it, and identity of habit wondrously bringeth together unto agreement. *The world doth not hate you* (for ye savour yet that which is of it) *but Me it hateth*, taking not kindly its being accused by Me for its unseemly deeds. Therefore with safety will YE go up to the feast, *I* not. For I shall surely dispute and being present tell them what is for their good; but bitter to lovers of pleasure is reproof, and meet for kindling unto wrath him that receives it not in due sobriety of mind.

But in these words again doth the Lord profit us too. For it is profitable not to make one's reproofs inconsiderately, nor to give to all instruction through reproof, but to know what is written, *Rebuke not the bad lest they hate thee* (for hatred is not unharmed to us) but rather to be zealous to *speak in the ears of them that hear*, as it is written. For the world loveth sin, the Lord is a corrector of them that act not rightly: and correction must often be attained by reproof. For the mere enumeration of sin, is a rebuke to those who love it, and the reproof of iniquity, is blame to those who have it. When therefore necessity calls the teacher to administer reproof, and the mode of cure requires this to be gone through, and he that is being against his will instructed by rebuke is exceeding angry, then must the ills of hatred surely arise. Therefore does the Saviour say He is hated by the world, in that it cannot yet bear exhortation with rebuke, when it ought to do so for profit sake. For the mind that is in bondage to evil pleasures, is quite angry with the advice that would persuade it to due sobriety. And these things the Saviour says, not altogether saying that He will not go to Jerusalem, nor refusing to give the reproofs which may be profitable to the sinners, but minded to do this too and every thing else at the fit time. And we must observe that He says something of the same kind to His own disciples also. For when He was encouraging them, and teaching them not to be too indignant at the things that should come to pass, when they should preach Him to the world, and fall into a thousand trials in consequence, He says, *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you*; calling the world here not the visible creation, but rather they who savour the things of the world, by whom one who loves not the same as they and that exceedingly is deemed an hard man and an adverse and an enemy: but akin and dear is he who consents with them, and by sameness of life is entangled together with them in congeniality in baseness.

8 *Go YE up unto this feast, I go not up unto this feast, for My time is not yet fulfilled.*

The Lord now says clearly that He will not feast with the Jews, or go with them, to partake with them in their rejoicing in shadows. For that which is once said to a few, albeit reputed His brethren, will be extended in its force to the whole race of Israel. For no one will say that Jesus refused to be with His brethren on their own account in particular, seeing He was

plainly with them in Galilee, and we must suppose that not without a purpose by reason of His generally supposed relationship after the flesh, did He also dwell with them. It is manifest then, that the whole multitude of the Jews being introduced in a type by His brethren, Christ declines feasting with them, according to that which is said by one of the holy Prophets, *I have hated, I have thrust away your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies: for even though ye offer Me whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, I will not accept them, and will not look at your assembly of thanksgiving: take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs and the psalm of thine instruments I will not hear. For God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth*, as the Saviour Himself saith. But being a Spirit, He would (one may think) take pleasure in spiritual honours and offerings, for a type too whereof by command of the law, were the sacrifices of oxen and sheep, oblations moreover of frankincense, of fine flour and wine and oil, duly appointed, signifying by more visible forms the many hues of the virtue of them that worship in spirit. Do YE then (He says) who still love the shadow, and are more grossly and Jewishly affected concerning these things, *go up* to the assembly that is in shadows and types; Me it pleaseth not so to feast; *to this feast I go* not up, that, namely, in type and outline: for I have no pleasure in it, but rather I await the time of the true assembly, which *is not yet full come*. For then, then (He says) shall I be together with My company rejoicing in the brightness of the saints, in the glory of the Father, flashing forth extreme brilliance. But He says *His* and calls the *time* His own. For His is the feast, He the Master of it. For to Him did the blessed Jeremiah ascribe it, saying to those who have neglected piety to God-ward, and held for nought the desire to excel in goodness, *What will ye do in the day of the Assembly, and in the days of the feast of the Lord?* For ye (He says) who totally reject all toil for virtue, and have not the bright robe of the love of God, *what will ye do in the day of the assembly*, how shall ye come in to the Divine and Heavenly Feast, or how shall not the master of the Feast with reason thrust you forth from the most glorious choir of them that were bidden, saying, *Friend, how earnest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?* Akin to this, and bringing us the same meaning, is that in the Prophet Zechariah, *And it shall come to pass* (he says) *that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles*. He says that they which are left shall go up to worship the great King, and to accomplish the feast of tabernacles. For whereas many have been called by grace, not many are they who go up to the city above; for *few* are the *chosen*, as the Saviour saith, taken to wit out of every nation. But in saying that they shall go up to worship, he shews that they no longer perform the worship of the law, but rather that in spirit, and keep the feast of tabernacles in truth, well-nigh with clear voice singing that verse of the Psalms, *Blessed be the Lord, because He hath heard the voice of my supplication: on Him trusted my heart, and I was holpen, and my flesh revived*. For the flesh revived, and will live again, and that not apart from Christ: for He hath been made to us the First-fruits of the resurrection, and the door of the truer feast of tabernacles. And this it was that was said by one of the holy Prophets, *I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen*. For the tabernacle that fell, of Christ Who is of the seed of David according to the flesh, was first raised to incorruption by the Power of God the Father, according to what is said to the Jews by one of the Apostles concerning Him, *This Man delivered up by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye took by hand of ungodly men and crucified and slew: Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it*, and again, *This Jesus God raised up, whereof all WE are witnesses*. For that it is the custom of the Divine Scripture, to call Christ, Who was of David after the flesh, David, is not at all hard to see.

9, 10 *When He had said these words unto them, He abode in Galilee: but when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.*

Christ dwells gladly in Galilee, and banished from the country of Judaea, takes up His Abode more peaceably and securely, that again the multitude of the Gentiles albeit exceedingly uninstructed, by reason of the error that yet holdeth them, might be shewn to be nobler than those who seemed to be skilled in the law. By this He shewed both His just love for them, and most reasonable hatred of them of Judaea. For how would not He *Who knoweth all things before they be*, be so affected, as to deem the church of the Gentiles already worthy of the Divine Love, since it was so easily called to believe on Him; and at length to cast off and justly loathe Jerusalem as senseless, He who even before the times of His coming is said to have *desired her beauty*, according to the voice of the Psalmist, but called the stiff-necked Jerusalem an harlot and an adulteress, and of the like of this what did He not call her? Most clearly in truth doth He by the Prophet Ezekiel say to her, *Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord*, and by the voice of Jeremiah accuseth her as an adulteress, calling out, *As a wife rejecteth her husband, so the house of Israel rejected Me, saith the Lord*. As having then according to the fore-knowledge of God-befitting Counsel, surveyed the beauty of the Church of the Gentiles, and the baseness of the synagogue of the Jews in its wicked ways, He already before-loveth the one and goeth in unto her, as to a bride in the chamber, but fore-hateth the other, reserving for the fit time what was due in full measure to each. For He neither brings wholly upon them of Israel punishment before the time, nor gives Himself wholly to Galilee before the saving cross: for then He could with justice and on reasonable causes, withdraw from His Love to them. Having then said that He would *not go up to this feast*, and having permitted His brethren to do so, if they would; by Himself (for He affirmed that His time was not yet come) does He go up after them, not saying one thing and doing the contrary to what He says (for that would be lying, albeit guile, that is, falsehood is said not to have been found at all in His Mouth) but minded to what He promised. For He goeth not up to feast with them, but rather to admonish them, and (since He came to save) to say and teach the things which lead to life everlasting. For that this was His aim, His not wishing to go with them that were going up, and going up hardly and secretly, not openly and with the joy of those who go to a festival, will clearly shew.

And verily, when at length He was going up to his saving Passion, He went up not in secret, but borne upon an ass's colt, as a type of the new people, with an almost innumerable company of children preceding Him, fulfilling the part of the people that should be born, of whom it is written, *And a people which is created shall praise the Lord*. And the children going before were shouting, *Blessed is He That cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest*. Therefore by coming up in secret, He shews that Christ came to Jerusalem by no means to feast with them, but rather to dispute against them: for as we have before said, He doth not wholly depart from Israel, till on being delivered up to death, it is clear that He deservedly did so.

But as to His saying that He would not go up, and afterwards not refusing to go up, you will find the type of it fulfilled long ago in the book called Exodus. For the Divine and most holy Moses was making long stay in the Mount with God, awaiting the law that was to be given by Him. And Israel disregardful of piety towards God, was making a calf in the wilderness. But the Law-giver is justly angered at these things, and having cried out against the lightness of those who so readily turned aside to what they ought not, and having threatened to utterly destroy them at once, at last He says to the holy Moses, *Depart and go up hence, THOU and*

*thy people which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt unto the land which I sware to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, Unto your seed will I give it: and I will send an angel before thee.* Then Moses says to Him, *If Thyself go not with me, bring me not up hence, and how shall it be truly known that I have found grace in Thy Sight, I and Thy people, is it not in that Thou goest with us? And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken, for thou foundest grace in My Sight.* Seest thou how He, grieved at the apostasy of Israel, affirmed that He would not go up with them into the land of promise, but said that He would send an Angel, yet out of respect to Moses and the remembrance of their fathers, He granted them pardon and promised again to go with them.

Having then said that He would not feast with the Jews as being haughty and violent, as dishonouring God by their denial of Him, as these did by making the calf, yet being very slow to anger towards the offences of those who grieve Him, and rather fulfilling His Promise to the holy fathers, He goes up to teach and to set before them the doctrines of salvation, not committing such a ministry to an Angel, just as He did not then, but rather being Himself the worker even for the salvation of the unthankful.

11 *The Jews therefore were seeking Him at the feast, and said, Where is that Man?*

The Jews seek Jesus, not that they may believe on Him when they have found Him (for surely would He preventing their search, have offered Himself, according as it is said of Him, *I was found of them that sought Me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me*) but of their exceeding transgression falling into the vain toil of the Greeks, and emulous of their habits rather than of those things whereby it was like that they should be enlightened by the grace from above. For those of the Greeks who seem to be wise, filled with worldly and devilish wisdom, expend long and subtle discourses, and revolve cycles of vain propositions, and *weaving the spider's web*, as it is written, make feint to investigate what is the nature of truth or goodness or justice, and, moulding to themselves a shadow only of the true knowledge, abide wholly untasting of the virtue that is in deeds, and remaining destitute of the *truewisdom* which is *from above*, make their exercises about words alone to no profit. The Jews again, brothers and neighbours of their unlearning, seek for Jesus, not that they may believe on Him when they have found Him, as the nature of things proved, but that they hitting Him with their many revilings, might bring the fire unquenchable upon their own heads. And in another respect we shall suppose they made most idle search. For they only pretend to seek Him, because He is not present. For (says one) 'the Wonder-worker ought to be present with the feasters,' seeking rather pleasure in the enjoyment of it, and not at all the profit from the marvel; but wrapped round in conceit of knowledge of the law, and thinking that they were to no slight degree instructed in the sacred writings, they are unmindful of the Prophet's voice thus speaking, *Seek ye God, and in finding Him call upon Him; when He shall draw nigh you, let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his counsel, and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy.* Seest thou how it will not suffice unto salvation to seek only, but when we have found, to turn to also, i. e., by obedience and faith? So might the foolish and refractory people of the Jews have been saved: but since in this too they are found exceedingly unwise, they will at length with reason hear, *How do ye say, WE are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us? in vain to the scribes was their lying pen. The wise men were ashamed, dismayed, taken: what wisdom is in them? because they rejected the Word of the Lord?* For how did they not reject It, who received It not? how did they not despise It, who in boorish wise refused not to say of It, *Where is That Man?* For the expression *That Man*, belongs to the abandoned, and them

who no longer deem fit to wonder at Him, although from His so marvellous working, they ought to have had the most exalted conception of Him.

12 *And there was much murmuring of the people concerning Him. Some said, He is good, others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people.*

Ever hard of attainment and difficult of acquirement is goodness, and the power of tracking the beauty of truth is hard of accomplishment to the many, specially the more unlearned and those who have no acuteness of understanding, who from most foolish swayings of thoughts without understanding turn aside to what seems to them easier, and not enduring to prove the nature of whatever offers itself, will never attain to the true quality of things, albeit Paul says, *Be ye approved bankers*, and persuades us to *prove all things*, so as by accurate investigation to arrive at the attainment of what is profitable. Let them hear then, who of their exceeding folly marvel not at Jesus but think that it is fit to condemn Him without enquiry, *Taste and see that the LORD is good*. For as they who prove choice honey by the taste, and from the merest taste perceive what they are in search of, so they who make even a little trial of the words of the Saviour, will acknowledge that He is good, and will marvel in learning it. The wiser then among the Jews plead Christ's cause, and give right judgment concerning Him, consenting to Him as Good, considering (as is like) this above all, that it would not be possible for one to accomplish the things which God evidently works, unless He were by Nature God, or partaker of God, and therefore Good, to Whom would befit the approval of all, and to be instrengthened with grace from above, even though this were not so in Christ, for Christ is Himself the Lord of powers. But they wade in most absurd imaginations, and go astray far from the truth, who shrink not from calling Him a *deceiver*, who directs unto the unerring path of righteousness. Let the foolish Jew then hear, *Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil, that put darkness for light and light for darkness*. For along with approving wickedness, ranks the finding fault with good, and keeping back from evil its most deserved reproof, and casting upon them that are ranged on the side of good the blame which is no wise due unto them. But the charges against them for these their revilings were foretold also, for *Woe (He says) unto them, for they swerved from Me, wretched are they because they transgressed against Me: I redeemed them, THEY spake lies against Me*.

13 *Howbeit no man was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.*

There was murmuring among the Jews, and *for fear of the Jews*, he says that no man could *speak openly*. The Divine Evangelist then is calling the rulers of the Jews emphatically *Jews*, not deigning (as seems to me) to call them elders or priests, or the like, kindled with pious jealousy unto grief to themward, whom with reason does God accuse of destroying His spiritual vineyard, saying in the prophets, *Many pastors destroyed My vineyard, they defiled My portion, they gave My longed-for portion for an impassable wilderness, it hath become a vanishing of perdition*. For how shall we not suppose that the Lord's vineyard hath in truth been destroyed by their abominations, when they shewed that even to agree with the good, and only to marvel at that which is worthy of marvel is hazardous? But that this too works a sorer punishment for the rulers of the Jews and the rest of them, what wise man will doubt? Lo, for lo, the whole people fear and tremble before them, yet are not instructed in the law, nor yet taught to live in a fitting manner, although very zealously subjected to their injunctions. For fear is a proof of the very highest subjection. They were compelled then to transgress rather than wisely to look into the purpose of the Law-

giver, and (in that they dare not so much as praise what is good) to give by no means a voluntary, but a constrained, judgment of evil against whosoever the others choose, and to condemn as base, Him That is worthy of praise and admiration. Just as a man therefore who has good skill in sea-faring matters, and sits at the ship's helm, and having her at his command dashes her against the rocks, would be himself held guilty of the wreck: or as if one accustomed to drive, were borne along by swiftest ponies, and being able by the checks of the reins to hold their easily-directed flight whithersoever he would, were to dash the wheels against a stone, not to the ponies would he reasonably attach the blame of the misfortune, but rather to himself:---in like manner, I deem, the rulers of the Jews, having the people of the Jews not only honouring them, but even serving them by fear as well, if they manage them contrary to Divine Commands, shall justly themselves incur responsibility for the loss of all. But that themselves were the cause of the perdition of the people, the prophet Jeremiah will testify, saying, *For the pastors became brutish,, and sought not out the LORD: therefore the whole flock understood not and were scattered.*

14 *When it was now mid-feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching.*

Temple-befitting is the teaching of our Saviour: for where else should we rather hear the Divine Voice, save in the places where the Divinity is believed to dwell? For God tendeth all things, and will not be conceived of as circumscribed by space, in respect of His Own Nature, but is wholly uncontained by things that are, yet is it more meet that we should suppose that He dwells in the holy places, and we most reasonably deem that the will of the Divine Nature will specially be heard by us in sacred places. But what again was pictured to them of old in type and shadow this now Christ transforms into truth: for God says to the hierophant Moses, *And thou shalt set the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimonies that I shall give thee; and there will I be known to thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, in respect of all things which I shall command thee unto the children of Israel.* But our Lord Jesus Christ, *when it was now the middle of the feast*, as it is written, having entered as God into the holy places dedicate unto God, there speaks to the multitudes, although He went up in secret. As therefore upon the mercy seat in the tabernacle, God's descent was secret, and then scarcely perceived, when the time for His speaking was come, and to one then also, to the blessed Moses, did God talk, speaking to none other:---so did Christ too instruct the one race of the Jews; and converse with one people, having not yet unfolded His grace as common to the Gentiles. And exceeding well does the blessed Evangelist say, not simply, *Entered*, but *Went up into, the temple*. For a high thing, and very far surpassing our grovelling baseness, was His entry into the Divine school, and sojourn in the holy places. But the type of the act is true as to us. For it was Christ who sanctifieth the temple, and of this Moses of old was a type anointing *the tabernacle* with the hallowed oil, and sanctifying it, as it is written: albeit it needed rather that man should be sanctified by the holy places, than sanctify them: but there is no account taken of things done in a type for the truth's sake, for the sake of which the things in shadows were moulded, as one may see in the holy Prophets also. For one was commanded against his will to go in unto an harlot, another to walk naked, yea, also to lie upon his right side for many days. These things were performed for the sake of their meanings, and not surely for their own sakes. Thus then, the blessed Moses too was bidden to sanctify the tabernacle, albeit he needed rather to receive sanctification from it, that Christ again may be understood in him, sanctifying His Own Temple, although He lived with flesh among the Jews, and in it spake to the multitude, as did God of old from the mercy seat.

15 *The Jews therefore were marvelling, saying, How knoweth This Man letters, having not learned?*

Not unreasonable is the wonder of the Jews, but there is something subtle in their argument. For it was likely that they would be astonished at seeing Him strangely excel both in word and knowledge, Who could not have been rich from instruction. For the mind of man is recipient of wisdom, and even though one do not as yet seem wise, yet is his nature exceedingly well adapted to the attainment of wisdom and knowledge on some subjects. But in the case of those who are not well exercised in learning, the natural advantage gets somehow stopped up and dulled; in that of those who are accustomed to go through such toils, and to revel in literary exercises, it is very clear, and apt for good practice, and is found to have no mean store of letters and wise contrivances. The Jews then are astonished, giving heed to the Saviour Christ, not yet as being by nature God, but still as a mere Man, and they marvel that He abounds in wisdom, not having the provider hereof, i. e., practise in reading, for that He knows letters untaught. This too then with the rest is a charge of Jewish folly: for it should have seemed nothing wonderful to them, that Wisdom, the Artificer of all things, that is, the Only-Begotten Word of God, Which was among them lying hid in the form of a Man, should not need letters.

This again must be observed for our profit. For above when they were seeking for Jesus they say, *Where is That Man?* (as though they knew Him by His miracles alone: not yet knowing accurately, Who, or of Whom, or whence He was) but here not as though ignorant of ought respecting Him, but as knowing all things clearly, they say that He also *knoweth letters not having learned*. The more obscure enquiry therefore respecting Him of the common people and of those who had no accurate knowledge of Him, uttered *Where is That man* contemptuously, that of those who knew Him the other. More severe punishment then shall they undergo who were not ignorant than they who were: for to the one their ignorance is an excuse, to the other their knowledge condemnation. Therefore is it said that to some it is *better not to have known the way of truth*. For in knowledge there is greater punishment, because men are *lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*. Jesus then, according to the difficulty of the Jews, knew *letters, having not learned, Moses was learned* (as it is written) *in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*: yet as knowing nothing at all, albeit exceeding wise among those, was he instructed unto better knowledge by the oracles from God, the wisdom of the world being convicted as feeble, through the Diviner and more excellent, in which or through which we are instructed in the things of Christ, receiving the understanding which is truly from above and from God. Christ then is the in all things perfectly Good, the one of all things both Wisdom and Understanding, in respect whereof He has the excellency not by teaching, but innate. And verily the Prophet Isaiah saith of Him, that *before the Child shall know good or evil, He shall refuse evil to choose good*. And let us not foolishly suppose, that the Divine and Heavenly Offspring, in discernment of reasonings or by the choice of the better turneth away from evil, and applies Itself rather to good: but as if one should say of fire, that it refuses cold; its not admitting the being cold does not indicate choice of wills in it, but rather most steady adherence of nature to what is its own, so is it in respect of Christ. For all good things are in God of Nature, and are not introduced from without; and so wisdom too was in Him, yea rather, Himself is properly and specially the Fount of wisdom, through which He gives wisdom in part to those in participation thereof, both Heavenly and earthly reasonable beings.

16 *Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His That sent Me.*

We shall find that indeed true that is written by one of the wise men, *The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the world, and the ear of hearing heareth all things.* But to those who of utter folly, yea rather of blasphemy, suppose that ought they utter will escape the Divine Mind, the Godlike Psalmist says, *Understand, ye brutish among the people, and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, heareth He not?* for how could it possibly happen that He should not surely hear all things, who implanteth the sense of hearing into them that were made by Him?

See therefore in this too again that the Lord is by Nature God. For the secret whispers of the Jews in the crowd He is not ignorant of; He receives them into His Ears in God-befitting way, albeit from fear of the rulers they say nothing openly concerning Him. And when on one occasion certain of those who had rushed together into the temple, marvelled and were reasoning (as is like) or gently saying one to another, *How knoweth This Man letters not having learned?* needs does He again shew Himself Equal to God the Father Who learneth nothing at all, but hath the knowledge of all things by Nature and without learning, because He surpasseth all understanding and soareth above all wisdom that is in things that are. It was then possible for Him from other things too, to shew and to assure His hearers, that whatsoever things are in the Father, these also are in Him, by reason of Identity of Nature: which thing also He used to do in other things also, from being able to do the same things and having like Operation unto all things, mounting up unto Equal Dignity: *for what things soever the Father doeth, these (He saith) doth the Son too likewise, and again, For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son too quickeneth whom He will.*

But here it was (I suppose) seasonable and most suitable, to make a demonstration of the most necessary points. For His discourse about wisdom and learning without letters was made with those who had been considering these things. It behoved Him then to shew that this existed in Him, just as in the Father. What then is the mode of proof? From His having Equality of wisdom with Him, even though according to true and wise reasoning, He most surely is Himself Wisdom and of God the Father, to Whom in all things like, He says He teaches the same things with Him, without any distinction. For either on account of the exact likeness of His *doctrine* to that of the Father, does He say that it is the Father's, or because He is Himself the Wisdom of the Father, through Which He speaketh and ordereth all things, does He say that the *doctrine* too is His: yet something else besides doth He dispense, contributing not slightly to the salvation of His pupils. For since they seeing a Man, on account of the flesh which was of earth received not the word as being of God, and therefore seemed to be sick of a plausible unbelief, profitably doth He attribute the teaching to God the Father, yet saying what was true, and from fear of their being fighters against God, if they held out any longer against the decrees from above, persuading them to receive His words.

But we must know that by His saying again that He was sent, He does not shew that He is second in Dignity to the Father. For we must not imagine a mission befitting a servant, even though because clad in servant's form He might rightly say even this of Himself. But He was *sent* as Word from Mind, as the Sun's radiance from itself. For these I suppose are processions from those things in which they are, from their appearing to issue forth, yet exist they naturally and immovably in those things whence they are. For we ought not, because word issues forth from mind, and radiance from the sun, therefore at all to suppose that the things which produced are left of those which have gone forth of them, but rather we shall see

both those in these, and these again existing in the former. For mind will never be word-less, nor yet word again without the mind fashioned therein. Analogously to this, shall we conceive of the other also.

17 *If any man do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I am speaking of Myself.*

We ought uncritically and without all doubt to receive the words of the Truth, and to believe that a thing once said, cannot be otherwise than as it was declared to be. But He permits not His saying to be without proof, on account of the unbelievers, but introduces a most evident and exceeding clear solution, tempering with much skill the fashion of His words. And what the skill is, what the order of the economy, we will again say. They were seeking to kill Him on account of the paralytic, him (I mean) that was healed on the sabbath day. Gently then does He alike scare them from their dreadful purpose against Him, and clearly does He convict those who are travailing with their blood-thirsty purpose against Him, that they were choosing to fulfil their own lust rather than the will of the Law-giver. For then (saith He) shall ye know perfectly *of My doctrine*, that *it is of God* the Father, when ye shall choose to follow His Will rather than your own. But *the Will* of the Law-giver and of God, is to abstain wholly from murder. Then, then (He saith) *shall ye*, not holden beforehand by unjust hatred, nor thrust forth in brutish guise to no seasonable anger, *know* clearly, *whether* the word of *My teaching is of God, or whether I am speaking of Myself*. Having therefore interwoven reproof with profit, He with justice accuses them, for that they unreasonably mock at what He teaches, though God the Father consenteth and co-willeth, or what also is true, co-teacheth and co-interpreteth. But He puts *Of Myself*, for, Privately and wholly severed from being after the Co-Will and Purpose of the Father. And I do not suppose any person of sound mind will think that He accuses His own words of being spurious, but says that they will never be otherwise than in accordance with the Will of God the Father. For He speaks by His own Word and Wisdom, His Own Offspring; but That speaks not at all diversely from Himself, for how could It?

18 *He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory.*

He giveth this evident proof that He doth not labour for His Own glory by His teaching, that He does not use any strange words and foreign to the law (for this were *to speak of Himself*), but that He is exhorting them rather to be obedient to the former oracles, while He removes only the unprofitable and gross shadow of the letter, and transforms it persuasively unto the spiritual sense, which already lay hid in types. What then He says in the Gospel according unto Matthew, *I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil*; this again He indirectly intimates here. For the Gospel polity hath but the transformation of the letter into the truth, and having transfashioned the Mosaic type unto what is more fitting, hath the knowledge of the worship in spirit. Christ therefore speaketh and not of Himself, that is, nothing diverse from the things already foretold. For He doth not put away Moses, nor doth He teach us to reject the instruction of the law, but over what had been shadowed out in type, as it were some brighter tint to overlay the Truth. Very skilfully acquiring the good will of the Jews, does He offer the honour and glory to God the Father. For since the Jews knowing not the Word that had appeared from God the Father, were supposing that the Law had been given by the Father only, with reason did He affirm that He was glorified by the keeping of the Law, and endured the contrary if it were not kept as it ought. But even though the Son is partaker of the glory of the Father, and through Him had God the Father spoken to Moses, He yet assents to their

opinions economically. But in that He *speaks* nothing of *Himself* that does not agree with the law, He confesses that not surely His own glory is it that He is zealous to build up, but that due to the Law.

Besides this, this too must be observed. For indirectly and darkly, He finds fault with the Jews who are falling into those very things which they ignorantly blame, and are accustomed to snatch at glory for themselves rather than God the Lord of all: and how, I will tell. For they falling away from the commandments of the law, were borne each to what liketh him, *teaching*, as it is written, *for doctrines the commandments of men*. For this again well does Christ convict them as transgressors, and as sinning against the very Law-giver, in that they persuaded their hearers not to live after His ordinances, but rather to give heed to their doctrines. Therefore, albeit Christ says still indefinitely and absolutely, *He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory*, He is reproving the disease of the madness of the Pharisees, in that through their chusing to speak rather their own words, they are stealing the glory of the Lawgiver, and transferring to themselves the things due to God, they thence shun not at length to seek to kill Him. On which account specially convicts He them of transgressing, excusing themselves duly under the pretence that: they were zealous to keep the law, and thereby honour God the Father.

*But he that seeketh* (saith He) *His Glory That sent Him, This one is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him*. As he who doth not seek rather the honour of God but his own, is not true, but most exceedingly unjust: for he is not *true*, seeing he slandereth the Law, and bringeth in his own will in its place; most unjust too, in that he thrusteth aside the righteous judgment of the Lawgiver, and putteth his own above his Lord's. Righteous then and *true* is Christ, obnoxious to none of the aforesaid charges.

19 *Hath not Moses given you the law, and no one of you keepeth the law? why are ye seeking to kill Me?*

By many devices cometh about the discourse of the Saviour to one aim. For having in the preceding, indirectly blamed (as was meet) the Pharisees who supposed that they ought not to obey the commands from above, but to introduce their own opinions, and were zealous rather to gain honour from those under them, and did not offer it to the Lord of all, but diverted it to their own persons, that thence they were daring to transgress more freely:---He again, in other and severest wise, prepares for them open at length and unveiled reproof. For He being condemned for breach of the sabbath, and enduring the most unjust accusation of lawlessness for this, convicted them not of individually transgressing *the law*, but that the whole nation of the Jews had made the law of Moses of no account. For tell Me (He saith) ye who condemn the man who is zealous to shew mercy on the sabbath day, who have passed foulest censure upon those who do well, and freely condemn the compassionate, hath not the commandment not to murder been delivered you by Moses, whom ye admire? did ye not hear him say, *The innocent and righteous slay thou not?* why then do ye grieve even your own *Moses*, by so readily transgressing *the Law* that was appointed through him? An argument and clear proof of this, is that ye persecute Me who have done no wrong, and are unjustly eager to slay Him who can never be accused of that whereby He should suffer this.

Very pointed then is the Saviour's discourse and most severely herein does He attack the mad folly of the Jews, and shew that they who fall as it were with unbridled course unto condemning Him for His transgression of the sabbath, shew themselves transgressors, and

chusers of murder, and for this cause alone fall into the worst of all sins. He all but cries aloud, The paralytic who had fallen into a bitter and incurable complaint, and who was spent with weakness at length intolerable, I have healed on the sabbath day: but for My well-doing, I am condemned as though I had been taken in the worst of crimes, and for this ye determined murder against Me. What manner of punishment then (He says) shall be devised for you commensurate with such monstrous deeds? for lo, yourselves too are transgressing *the law*; but the mode of your transgressions, is not of like nature with the charges against Me. For not as well-doers, like Me, are ye persuaded to do this, but with a view to murder, which is worse than all transgression. How then is *Moses* with you in these things, on whose account *I*, though a Preserver, am condemned? did not he appoint you the law concerning this? do not ye again, while trampling on My Word, ignore its transgression, by devising murder unjustly? Such things then might Christ well say to the ungodly Pharisees. But He abstracts the Law for the present from His Own Person, although He is Himself the Lawgiver, and attributes it as it were to the Father Alone, by Him specially shaming into silence the shameless Jews, among whom He was considered greater than He. For, as we have often said, they did not yet acknowledge that He is God by Nature, nor did they yet know the deep mystery of the economy with Flesh, but admired rather the glory of Moses.

20, 21 *The people answered, Thou hast a devil; who is seeking to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them*

They feel the charges, and hit by the bitter words thence proceeding, they betake themselves to denial, not actually repudiating their murderous design, but only with all diligence putting from them the appearance of breaking the Law, the boast of the Pharisees in appearance only. Therefore was Christ wont to call them *whited sepulchres* also, outwardly clad in the beauty of the ingenuity of art, but *within full of the uncleanness* of the dead. But I suppose that they say these things to take away fear as to His expecting to suffer anything, not truly giving Him an assurance that He will not suffer, but drawing Him forth unto a hazardous confidence, and thinking to persuade Him not to be zealous to be hid from them. For then it would be no hard matter to plot against Him, at least as they supposed. For they ignorantly deemed, not knowing Him That was persecuted, that He would be obnoxious to their perverseness, even though He willed not to suffer, and would be caught, like one of those who knew not the thought that lay hid in their minds. The fruit then of their stubbornness is their denial, and another kind of blasphemy against Christ. For by what things they endeavour to repel His words, as untrue, they condemn Him as a Liar, *adding iniquity to their iniquity*, as it is written.

*One work I did, and do ye all marvel?*

We will read the verse, as a question, with a comma, and a full stop. But we will not be ignorant of the subtle meaning of the word, replete with a most wise economy. For observe how on relating to the Jews His Loving-kindness to the impotent man, He does not say unguardedly, I have healed the man on the sabbath day, and do ye therefore marvel? but more cautiously and far more heedfully, He says, *One work I did*, soothing the unseasonable anger of the multitude; for it was not unlikely, that they, cut by the transgression against the sabbath, would even now attempt to stone Jesus. For indiscreet of counsel, according to the Greek poets, and prone to anger is ever the multitude, both applying gentlest accord to whatsoever it is minded to, and easily excited like a bull unto intolerable daring, it is caught more apt than it ought in daring undertakings to dreadful ends. Having therefore put away all

boast for their profit's sake, He makes use of the gentlest words and with exceeding moderation He says, *One work I did, and do ye all marvel?* On account of this one work (He says) although it was wrought for the salvation and life of the prostrate, do ye condemn the mighty Worker thereof, as though for offences truly heinous, and looking only to the honour of the Sabbath, accord not wonder to the miracle? (for this indeed would have been more fitting) but because the commandment of the law has been broken according to your foolish imagination, for no slight or worthless reasons, but for the salvation and life of a man, ye are unreasonably angry, when ye ought rather to praise Him Who is clad with so great and God-befitting power. Untutored then by these things also are the people of the Jews proved to be, expending undue astonishment upon the man that was healed, and not rather offering it to Christ Who miraculously preserveth.

But we must know, that He, in addressing them of Israel and saying, *One work I did, and do ye all marvel?* again indirectly reproves and makes known something of this kind. For on account of this one (according to you) offence of Mine (He says) ye marvel at My purpose, as though I were bold to thrust aside the Lawgiver: then how deem ye that God feels towards you, who not once merely offend against the Law, but make nothing of transgressing it, in matters for which ye judge others?

*22 Therefore hath Moses given you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man.*

Of deep meaning is the word, and hard to be reached the purpose of the text, but it will be manifest through the grace of Him That illuminateth. Defeating then by many words the uninstructedness of the Jews, and manifoldly teaching them that they ought not to go off to unseasonable wrath on account of the breach of the sabbath, by reason *the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath day*: but having at length attained no good effect by reason of the ill-counsel of the hearers, He passes on to another mode of economy, and endeavours to shew clearly that the hierophant Moses himself, the minister of the Law, brake the Law of the sabbath on account of *the circumcision*, which had extended from the custom of the fathers even unto his own times, that he too might with reason be shewn to be an observer of the custom of the fathers, and since God works on the sabbath, therefore He revealing Himself too as a worker holds that it is in no wise a transgression of the sabbath, by reason of His being ever like minded with the Father. Wherefore He also said, *My Father worketh hitherto and I work*. In order then (He saith) that ye, beholding Me working on the sabbath day, may not marvel as at some strange and most monstrous thing, *Moses hath given you circumcision* on the sabbath, and he was beforehand in breaking the Law respecting it. And why? He did not think he should be doing right, in dishonouring the Law given to the Fathers, and their custom, on account of the sabbath day. Therefore *a man is circumcised on the sabbath day* too. But if Moses considered that he ought to honour the custom of the fathers, and made that superior to the honour of the sabbath, why are ye vainly troubled at Me, and marvel at Me, as though I were one of those wont heedlessly to transgress the Law, out of contempt for the Law? albeit (He says) I work equally with the Father, and ever agree with Him in every purpose: and since He works on the Sabbath day, well do I refuse to be idle thereon. He says that *Moses gave them, circumcision*, although it was not of him according to what has been just said, *but of the fathers*, because the ordinance of circumcision was given to the fathers, but its rites were more definitely and clearly ordered by Moses. For our forefather Abraham was circumcised, but not on the eighth day, nor was a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons offered for him, in accordance with the rites of Moses.

## CHAPTER VI. A dissertation upon the rest of the Sabbath, manifoldly shewing of what it is significant.

23 *If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at Me, because I made a whole man well on the sabbath day?*

The verse is unintelligible to the many and not very clear as to its subdivisions; we will therefore speak of that first. We will therefore read it bit by bit, changing the structure of the verse; for thus you will clearly understand the meaning. *If then (He says) a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, are ye angry at Me, that the law of Moses should not be broken, because I made a whole man well on the sabbath day?* For a man does not receive circumcision on the sabbath day, *that the Law of Moses be not broken:* for it is broken when the sabbath is made void by circumcision. For as we taught before, yea rather as the Saviour Himself said, *circumcision is not of Moses but of the fathers.* So that by reason of the circumcision from the fathers, the Law of Moses is broken, I mean that respecting the sabbath. Therefore we must connect the words, *that the Law of Moses should not be broken,* to our Saviour's words: for He says, *are ye angry at Me, that the Law of Moses should not be broken, because I made a whole man well on the sabbath day?* The case of the sub-division then has been now herein settled, we must go to the interpretation of the things signified too, even though they are exceedingly hard to understand. Circumcision, then (He says) is a way of taking care for a man, and it surpasses the ordinance itself of the sabbath. For it was of necessity that the suffering should be made whole. What then is the hindrance, or how will the ordinance of the sabbath reasonably stand in the way of healing the whole body, since it permits already without blame its breach by a partial and slight healing? for a man is circumcised and healed of the wound without blame on the Sabbath day. Vainly then (He says) are ye indignant, to the Worker of the better things objecting the transgression of the Law, when the law is not grieved at being put aside by Moses for a petty circumcision. By these things is enwoven an argument, persuading them to agree that they ought not vainly to be annoyed, since Moses had already been a type thereof, whom they foolishly thought they ought to take the part of, and making no account of his law, were being hurried off to the duty of committing murder.

24 *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*

The Law (He says) which ye are so zealous to take the part of, and for the sake of which ye were kindled even unto fierce wrath, openly cries aloud, *Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, for the judgment is God's.* Ye then who condemn Me as a transgressor on account of the sabbath, and decide that it is most fitting to be angry at this, do ye care for the honour of the Law, take shame at the message, *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.* For if ye put Moses forth from transgression, and rightly consider that he has no portion of condemnation for this, albeit he breaketh the ordinance of the sabbath on account of circumcision [which is] of the fathers, do ye free from blame the Son too Who ever agreeth with the mind of the Father, and approveth His will, and whatsoever things He doeth, these likewise is He too wont to do. But if ye condemn the Son only, and do not condemn Moses, although he is involved (He saith) in equal blame to that wherein ye suppose that I too am involved on account of the sabbath, how will ye not be found to be trampling on the Divine Law, and be taken insulting the decrees from above, out of respect to some corrupting the command to judge righteousness, and rendering superior to the Divine commands him to whom ye transgressing pay reverence from respect of persons?

Let the wise hearer observe again the wondrous skill of our Saviour Christ. When accused of the breach of one Law, He convicts them as transgressors by very many arguments, all but uttering the Gospel words. *And why lookest thou at the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* An evil thing then is it to condemn others. *Forwherein a man judgeth another, he condemneth himself,* as it is written. Wherefore by the Saviour too Himself was it said, *Judge not and ye shall not be judged, condemn not and ye shall not be condemned.* And this we say in respect of ourselves: for Christ will never become a transgressor by changing His own Laws to whatsoever He will, and overlaying with the fair beauty of truth the shadows of the Law: that at length, the things enjoined in a more carnal sense to them of old, may be changed into a spiritual interpretation.

But since our discourse, which was upon the mention of the sabbath, hath flowed into that of the circumcision, I think that not less profit than is due will accrue to the true searcher after wisdom, through his clearly beholding, what the seventh day rest means, what again is signified by the circumcision on the eighth day, and by his learning in addition, why circumcision is received on the sabbath itself, not enduring to keep the legal-rest: rightly examining each point, as well as I can, I will endeavour to make it clear. The first consideration will be that of the seventh day, or sabbath, and its rest. For so will the enquiry into what follows be most convenient. Therefore let us enquire into the first appointed law on this subject, how and in what manner it arose.

For when God brought Israel out of the bondage in Egypt unto their original and ancient freedom, by the hand of the all-wise Moses, and having miraculously brought them through the midst of the sea, with foot somehow dry and unwetted, commanded them to hasten on unto the land of promise, at length, accustoming them of necessity to purify themselves beforehand and cleanse themselves, He called them to an assembly in mount Sinai: and having descended upon it in the likeness of fire, He gave them decrees unto salvation, saying, *I am the LORD thy God, Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods but Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any image nor any likeness that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth, thou shalt not worship them nor serve them, for I am the LORD thy God, a jealous God.* For it was fitting, it was fitting thence to commence the ordinance of what was profitable, and first to fore-initiate with the doctrines of Divine knowledge, them who had once given themselves to the service and obedience of God. For knowledge of God is the root of all virtue, and the foundation of piety is faith. Having therefore revealed Himself, and as it were made Himself manifest by saying, *I am the LORD thy God,* and having first wrought in them faith by knowledge, and having wholly interdicted the making of an image and the worship of falsely-called gods, He shews that their transgression will not be unpunished, and sets before them the punishment of turning aside, crying, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain,* that is, thou shalt not put about a vain idol the Divine and most dread Name: *for the LORD (He says) will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain.* Having then said that he shall be guilty of no slight transgression, who shall please to worship another, and to enrol himself under a false god, and having threatened them accordingly, as people newly brought to the faith and having a feeblener understanding, He adds in order, and as it were establishes a second law, saying, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work.* Then profitably shewing Whom they will imitate in so doing, He says, *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth and the sea*

*and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.*

What then (will a man say) did the ordinance of the Sabbath purport? Or why, after the threatening against transgressions was a second and similar Law straightway introduced? To this we say, that it was right not only to threaten transgressors that they should undergo dreadful sufferings, nor by fear alone to stablish Israel unto piety (for the service of fear is of a more slavish sort) but to shew of what they will be partakers and to what end they will come, who are firmly fixed in love to Him. He defines therefore, and gives them as in type the promise of the future good things. *For the law hath a shadow of the good things to come*, as it is written, and its form is shewn to be an exercise preparatory to the truth. For He commands them to rest on the last day of the week, that is, the sabbath, and to cease from all work, and give it over, and to practise rest thereon, signifying thereby the rest and enjoyment that should be to the saints at the completion of ages, when they having ended their life in the world, and having cleansed away the sweat of their good works, they who are in Christ shall live the life without toil and free from all weariness, according to that which is spoken concerning them by the mouth of the prophet: *for they shall forget their former tribulation, and it shall not come into their heart, but everlasting joy shall be upon their head, for upon their head praise, and joy shall take hold on them, sorrow and grief and sighing are fled away*. They too imitating the Creator who ceased and all but rested from the toils of creation, will cease from their labours in this life, attaining unto the delight to be given by Christ at the end of ages. And to this end I think that the appointed rest on the sabbath tends.

But note how the Law-giver says negatively, Thou shalt not worship any other gods, but on giving the kindred commandment about the sabbath which follows it, He says, *Remember*, and why? Because the time for not worshipping other gods was now gone by (for therefore He immediately commanded them to be diligent about this) but by means of memory it was possible to behold things to come, and to see aforehand in thought what was already limned in types. We must moreover notice this too. For when He had well enforced our position with regard to our faith, He straightway adds the memorial of the promise at the end of ages <sup>12</sup>, and then ordains the remaining laws, *Honour thy father and thy mother, thou shalt not kill*, and so on: that we may not think we are justified by works, nor look for the ungrudged bounteousness of God as the fruit of our own toils, but that we shall have it of faith. Therefore before the laws of godly conversation, grace hath straightway entered in as the next neighbour to our faith of the good things in hope.

The sabbath rest then signifies the life of the saints in rest and holiness, when they, having at length put off all that is troublous, and ceased from every toil, shall delight in the good things from God. And verily the blessed Paul, when he discoursed to us of these things, and most excellently essayed to enquire into the mode of the rest of the people, saith thus, *And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? And we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief*. For since certain were supposing that that was the land of rest, whereinto they came that came forth out of Egypt, albeit that is taken as a type of the one which shall be given to the saints by Christ, which David called *the land of the living*, the most wise Paul endeavours to shew, that that which was then given for an inheritance to the children of Israel by the command of Joshua was a type of that which is looked for. For that these things are taken as a type of the truth, he diligently proves, bringing an argument demonstrative of what has been said. For he saith thus, *Seeing therefore it remaineth that some enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in*

because of unbelief, He again limiteth a certain day, saying in David, *To-day, after so long a time: as it is foresaid To-day if ye will hear His Voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation; for if Jesus had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day.* Seest thou how diligently he overthrew the apparent objection? For one striving with Jewish arguments might straightway have said, "What then art thou saying most excellent Sir? hath not Joshua brought the people into the land of promise? did they not rest and keep sabbath in it?" "yea." (he saith) "but in type and imitation of the true." For if in these things only the grace of God and the measure of His Promise is marked out, and in them have been fulfilled to Israel their hopes, and the letter of the law signifies nothing else besides, how, as though Joshua had not given them rest, is again another period of rest marked out by blessed David although he was so long after? Wisely then and very skilfully does he, after having shewn that the historical incidents are a type and image of spiritual things, reveal the still concealed and hidden interpretation of the sabbath, adding. *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.* How then will it not be hence at length clearly confessed, that the mind of the saints knows that the resting from toils, i. e., those of our labours, is the sabbath-keeping, when the bright band of the saints shall delight in their good deeds before wrought in this life, after the likeness of the Creator of all things, Who rested and rejoiced on the seventh day, as Wisdom saith in the book of Proverbs, *I was she in Whom He delighted: daily rejoiced I before Him at every-time, when He was rejoicing on having completed the earth, and was rejoicing in the sons of men?* Therefore (for I will return again to the original subject, and will recapitulate the bent of the whole discourse), the rest of the sabbath denotes the toilless life of the saints. For without toil shall all good things be given at that time to the saints by God, nor shall we then work sin the foundation of ills, because it shall perish root and branch from us, together with him who was wont to sow it in us, according as it is said, *No lion shall be there, nor shall ought of evil beasts go up thereon, but a pure way shall be there, and it shall be called, An holy way.* Yea, and the mind of the saints will retain all good things without toil. Therefore he too who gathered sticks on the sabbath day died by stoning, as having wronged the truth in the type. For after having ceased, and arrived at that rest, we shall never go forth of that habit both admirable and illustrious in virtues, as they did from their tent, nor shall we any more collect sin, which is the food and mother of fire, as did that man the wood, through his exceeding senselessness, not understanding the types which point to the truth. Therefore also with senseless stones, as himself taken in much senselessness, was he stoned by the avengers, having the character of his manners inscribed in his punishment. That we shall not then commit any abominable sin, is therefore manifest, nor yet shall we by sweat attain what is profitable; and this again we shall see shewn as it were darkly in the books of Moses. For God showered down the Manna like dew upon the sons of Israel in the wilderness, and gave them *angels' bread*, as it is written, and then He appointed a law too respecting it by the all wise Moses. For thus did- he make proclamation, *Eat to-day: for to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord, ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather, but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.* For he hints that before the completion of the ages it is convenient that we collect with toil that which profiteth and nourisheth us unto everlasting life, as they traversing the wide wilderness, gathered together from all quarters manna for their food; but on the seventh, that is, in the final end, the time for collecting what is profitable is gone by, and we shall delight ourselves in the things already provided, according as it is said by the Psalmist, *Thou shalt eat the fruit of thy toils.*

God the Lawgiver then, not taking pleasure in the shadows, but looking beforehand to the very image of the things, issued proclamation that we ought not to labour on the sabbath. But

certain men having despised the Law given them about this, and not shrinking from foolhardily offending the Lord of all, determined that they ought to go out to gather manna even on the sabbath, and not in counsels only was their daring endeavour, but in very deed they accomplished what seemed them good. The Law-giver therefore for this again finds fault with them, and says, *How long chuse ye not to keep My commandments and My law? See, for that the LORD gave you this day for a Sabbath, therefore He hath given you on the sixth day the bread of two days, abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.* Seest thou how He forming beforehand for us life free from all sweat and toil, in the typical rest, enjoins them to do nothing at all on the sabbath? For He does not permit them to gather, and enjoins them besides, not to leave their house and go anywhither, nor to go forth from their own place. And what again He wills us to learn by this, we will set forth, bringing forward a kindred and similar command. The blessed Prophet Jeremiah spake then to the Jews on this wise, *Thus saith the LORD, Keep your souls, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, and go not forth of the gates of Jerusalem, neither carry forth burdens out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work: hallow the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.* And what thence? Urging as aforesaid to a watchful habit, he bids us keep our own soul, for thus will our duty of hastening unto the hoped-for Sabbath-keeping be easily accomplished. But how many good things shall be revealed to those who possess this, He beautifully makes known by the introduction of the other things. For He does not suffer any to be laden with a burden, since no one at that time will take up the heavy burden of sin. For it is the time of holiness, when our old sin having departed to utter destruction, the soul of each is renewed to a habit of virtue unwavering. Yea and He does not suffer them to go forth of the gates of Jerusalem. For according to the true and orthodox doctrine the glorious choir of the saints shall dwell securely in the heavenly Jerusalem, and shall not go forth of the holy city, but rather shall be therein for ever, held fast by the Divine power so as never to be able to run away from the good things once for all given them. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,* according to S. Paul. But in saying again, *Ye shall not go forth every man from his place,* He seems to imply this most clearly. For *many* in truth are the *mansions* with God the *Father* according to the Saviour's word (and of this was the holy tabernacle in all glory fulfilling the type, which had ten chambers) and to each shall be given according to his deserts and proportionately to his good deeds, his abode. But they that are wholly in possession of their tabernacles there, they shall dwell there for ever, and will never come to fall from the things allotted to them by the Divine free gift. And a true witness hereof shall be introduced by us. For the Prophet Isaiah having clearly stated these things, speaketh thus, *Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a wealthy city, tabernacles that shall not be shaken nor shall be removed for ever:* for in saying that the tabernacles in the wealthy city shall not be shaken, he shews the immutability of the abode and habitation therein. Yea, he says moreover, and *Neither do ye any work thereon, but hallow ye the sabbath day.* As we have already often said, the time of rest and refreshment belongs to both, and it is wholly kept holy as a feast to Christ.

Again that we ought to do no work on the sabbath day, but to rest as it were and cease from every thing that inviteth to sweat and toil, we shall know from other sources also. For He says in Exodus, *Six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof, but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still.* And in Leviticus, *When ye come into the land which I give you, the land which I give you shall keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof, but in the seventh year shall be a rest unto the land, a sabbath to the LORD.* For it is not the land which is insensible to toil that He releases, nor yet to it doth He in reality give

this law, but He brought it about to those who possessed it, that they should not toil, through His giving a release to the land. For in many ways did He point out our feast in Christ, in which they who have lived in the Divine fear shall hasten unto the perfect and complete liberty which is in holiness, and to the most wealthy grace of the Spirit. And this again we shall know from the Mosaic commands themselves. For it runs thus, *When thy brother, an Hebrew man or an Hebrew woman, is sold unto thee, six years shall he serve thee, in the seventh year a release.* For we who were of old slaves to sin, and by taking pleasure in evil had in some sort sold ourselves to the devil, being justified in Christ through faith, shall mount up to the true and holy sabbath-keeping, clothed with the liberty which is through grace, and glorified with the good things from God.

#### **CHAPTER VII. A dissertation upon the circumcision on the eighth day, manifoldly shewing of what it is significant.**

Having now sufficiently (as I think) and according to the power of my understanding, unfolded the purpose of the sabbath, we will transfer the labour of investigation to circumcision which is akin thereto, resolving from all quarters to hunt out as befits, what is of use. For it were most absurd and not free from the extremest ridicule, that one should not gladly give all toil in exchange for the knowledge of these things. What then was by it also typically expressed to them of old, we considering the subject spiritually will set forth according to the measure of the gift of the God of all Who maketh dark things manifest, and openeth to us hidden and invisible treasures. For they who have already attained unto habit undefective, and have their understanding maturer, may both conceive and utter things far superior to these, but WE will set before our hearers what comes into our mind, though it seem to come far short of what is fitting, not sinning against brotherly love by fear of seeming inferior to any, but rather knowing the scripture, *Give occasion to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will receive yet more.* The first law then respecting circumcision was ordained, when God said to Abraham, *THOU shalt keep My covenant and thy seed after thee in their generations; and this is My covenant, which I will covenant, between you and Me and thy seed after thee in their generations: every man child among you shall be circumcised, and ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin: and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child.* But when He had appointed the law as to this, and had decreed that they should surely circumcise the flesh of their foreskin, He shews that the transgression of the law will not be without harm, shewing that it is the type of a most essential mystery: for He subjoins as follows, *And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant: and the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the eighth day <sup>14</sup> that soul shall be cut off from his seed; he hath scattered My covenant.* The Divine Paul then affirmed that *circumcision* had been given to the patriarch as *a sign and a seal of the faith which he had in uncircumcision.* For it was his aim (it seems) and zealous endeavour to shew that the calling and righteousness which are through faith surpass and are elder than every command of the law. For thus hardly did he shame them of Israel, and persuade them not to esteem the righteousness of faith a transgression of the law, but rather a return to that which was from the beginning and before all law; yet is he, seasonably bringing round the force of his subject to what is immediately profitable and of use for the present time, found to know of another kind of circumcision. For wishing to unteach the Jews their delight in glorying in the flesh, he writes again, *For not he is a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose*

*praise is not of men but of God.* Does he not hereby persuade them to change at length to other thoughts respecting this, and would not have them look on circumcision, as merely the gift of *the seal* to our forefather *of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised*, but conceive of it as something greater and spiritual?

We must then investigate and examine not remissly what the circumcision in the spirit is, of what that which is accomplished in the flesh is a symbol, and why, not on any day indifferently, as it might happen, but only on the eighth, man is circumcised. It is then obvious to every man, that since our aim is intent to be united to God through Christ the Mediator, therefore it surely befits those who mount up by faith to intimate nearness with the all-holy Lord, to first purify and sanctify themselves in every way. We will take as a most excellent image of this kind of thing, that which was spoken by God to the holy Moses, *Go down protest unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes and be ready against the third day; for the third day the LORD will come down upon the mount Sinai.* In that they were to sanctify themselves beforehand, He would have them attend to fitness of habits; in that they were to wash their clothes, He points to purity of the body itself. For the body is as it were the garment and array of the soul.

Since then (for I will go up to the first and most necessary beginning of the subject) they who are hastening to an intimate nearness to the holy God must surely first purify themselves, according to what is said by Him, *Holy shall ye be, for I am holy*, He ordained a symbol of sanctification to them of old through the circumcision in the flesh, and how, we will say. On examining into the nature of things among us, we shall find pleasure taking the lead of all sin: and some hot lust ever preceding in its working, invites us to transgression, and first taking captive the prudence of the understanding, thus at length persuades us to come by a most smooth way unto the attainment of the things desired. And the disciple of Christ shews that what we have said on these matters is true, for thus proclaims he, *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then lust when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Seest thou then how in lusts toward anything the birth of evil is first formed, and the seed of sin is first conceived in forbidden pleasure? God the Lawgiver then commands the circumcising steel to be applied to that part of the body, wherein and whence is the birth of pleasures, that thou mayest learn, as it were darkly, that it is impossible for us ever to appear pure, unless, by receiving the most sharp working of the Divine Word in our heart, and admitting into our mind the sword of the Spirit, we drive away lusts after all the basest things, never doing after our own wills, even though they pretend to have the sweetest enjoyment, but persuaded only to love and do the Will of God. Seeing that the truer circumcision brings unto us such power, well may it be said to those who are accustomed to glory in the flesh only, *Circumcise yourselves to God, and circumcise the hardness of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem.* For he that is circumcised in the flesh, is circumcised to the flesh only, but he that hath received the circumcision in the Spirit, through faith to Christward, is circumcised *to God* only and truly.

But we receive the circumcision in the Spirit which bringeth us up to an intimate nearness to God, on the eighth day, that is the day of the resurrection of the Saviour, taking this as a sign that the circumcision of the Spirit is the giver of Life, and agreeing in some sort through the thing itself, that we shall live with Christ, according to what is said by Paul, *For ye died, and your life hath been hidden with Christ in God: when Christ shall appear, your life, then*

*shall YE also appear with Him in glory.* For will not one say (and that with truth) that one dies to the world, by refusing the world's pleasures for God's sake? Such an one did the Divine Paul too manifest himself to us, saying, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by Whom the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world:* for made partakers of Him through the Spirit, which circumciseth without hands all. the impurity that is in us, we become dead to the world, and live a most excellent life to God. Therefore circumcision is on the eighth day by reason of the resurrection of Christ, and not before the eighth; for not before the Resurrection was the gift of the Spirit, but after it, or at the very time of the resurrection, when He breathed on His disciples also, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* To the Jews then the circumcision by the knife was more fitting, for they were yet slaves and under the avenging law (and the iron is the symbol of punishment), but to us as free and spiritual belongs the purification through the Spirit, banishing all pollution from our souls, and bringing in perfection in the brightness of godliness through faith.

For that through the truer and spiritual circumcision, is accomplished the boast of perfection in godliness, we shall perceive, by considering what is written respecting the Patriarch Abraham. It is written then of our forefather Abraham, that his years were ninety and nine in number, and then did God serviceably ordain him circumcision, making this too as it were an evident sign, that circumcision is as it were a vestibule and approach to perfection in virtue, or rather clearly signifying that no one will ever arrive at this, who has not the purification which is shadowed forth by circumcision. For the number 100 is the symbol of perfection. Circumcision then precedes perfection. For it when it precedes easily brings us to that. But not to these things are limited the benefits of circumcision, I mean of circumcision in the Spirit, but we shall find that it too belongs to those only who are free in Christ. But wholly free (I think) in Christ, is the man who hath shaken off the bondage of the devil and the yoke of sin, and hath broken *asunder their bonds*, as it is written, and hath bound upon him the glorious and untyrannical boast of righteousness, I mean the righteousness which is in faith of Christ.

But that we shall find circumcision on the eighth day befitting the free, but by no means those who are slaves, we on traversing the holy and Divine Scripture, shall in nowise doubt. Ishmael then, the son born to the patriarch of the handmaid Hagar, was circumcised, but not on the eighth day, but rather in his thirteenth year: for so is it written, that Abraham circumcised Ishmael his son at *thirteen years old*, in order that the Divine word may shew us that the son of Jerusalem which is in bondage, that is Israel, hath fallen both from the eighth and from the twelfth. For it falleth from the eighth, as not choosing to receive the saving preaching of the Resurrection, which took place on the eighth day, that is the Gospel of Christ, whereby there is no doubt that we aided unto faith, are circumcised in spirit. But it falleth again from the twelfth too, as it were in figure thrusting away by their unbelief the holy choir of the Apostles, and desiring to abide entirely without taste and experience of their doctrine. Herein then is the servant, but Isaac the free son of the free is circumcised on the eighth day. For the free children of the free, I mean Jerusalem which is above, are enriched receiving the eighth, that is the Resurrection of Christ, and the circumcision in spirit which freeth them from all sin, and releaseth them from death, because from sin too, whence and on account whereof is death, and transbringeth them unto the Life of Christ.

But that in addition to what we have already said, both undoing of death and the overthrow of corruption, are found through the circumcision in the spirit, we shall easily see, by studying the book called Exodus. For the blessed Moses was sent by divine command to Pharaoh the

tyrant of the Egyptians, to tell him that it behoved him to let Israel go from that great bondage. And indeed he was setting out, to meet with those things we spoke of, but *it came to pass* (it says) *by the way in the inn, that the angel met him and sought to kill him: and Zipporah took a sharp stone and circumcised the foreskin of her son, and said, The blood of the circumcision of my son hath stayed, and he departed from him, because she said, The blood of the circumcision of my son hath stayed.* Here listen to me carefully. The so-called angel seeks to lay hands upon and to slay Moses, but hardly withdraws from him and departs, shamed by the circumcision of the child, which Zipporah performing with a stone, says that she has accomplished what is necessary. For scaring away the destroyer of Moses, she cries out, *The blood of the circumcision of my son hath stayed.* But unless some mystical meaning were hidden in these words, what mind (tell me) would be assured, that the hierophant Moses was saved by the circumcision of his son, and that the destroyer making an onset like a wild beast desisted from his onslaught at the appearance of blood, and drew back and turned away? Then (for I will come to this point first) the benefit or glory of his own circumcision did not suffice the blessed Moses unto salvation. For I think I ought rather to speak thus. The might of the circumcision which is after the law, will not overthrow death which cometh indifferently to every one, evil and good. But the circumcision in the Spirit of the new people, that is, of those who have believed in Christ, most excellently performed by Zipporah, that is the Church, both scares it against its will, and puts it to flight when raging.

How then, may some one with great reason say, is Israel too preserved in the spiritual circumcision of the new people, though he hath no share of it? To this we say, that as far as concerns Israel's not choosing to receive the Resurrection of our Saviour Christ, death would have reigned even for ever; but since they which believed received it, the grace of the Resurrection on their accounts passed into the whole nature, extended in some sort to the whole through the circumcision in the Spirit, even though a considerable difference of resurrection be seen in the one and the other. For they who thrust from them belief in Christ, and by their unbelief insult the Giver of life, will gain power from the Resurrection merely to live again (for they will live again unto doom, not having loved Christ who justifieth), but they who are admirers of the Resurrection of the Saviour, and true keepers of the commandments, shall go forth of that land wherein they are, *unto the resurrection of life*, as it is written. The people then which is circumcised in spirit will transmit his own good even unto the unbelieving. For his of right is the grace of the Resurrection, but he will transmit it unto the rest also, God desiring of His skill to preserve the whole nature. For as Paul saith, as WE in times past disbelieved the mercy of Israel, that through their obedience we may gain the grace through Christ, *so they too have now disbelieved our mercy that they too again may obtain mercy*, our Saviour Christ transmitting to them also through our faith, the benefit of the Resurrection. For the things which are due to them that believe, are more suitably given to the whole nature. Therefore the Divine Apostle Paul also revealing to us the mystery concerning the Resurrection that shall be says that Christ will rise *the First fruits*, for verily He also was first raised from the dead, but *afterwards* (he says) *that they are Christ's at His coming.* For he says that they who were intimately connected with Him by faith must be raised before all the rest, shewing that the resurrection is strictly and properly due to them above all, even though it have reached the whole nature, God being pleased of His Goodness (that is) and Loving-kindness wholly to abolish death.

But observe how not with iron does Zipporah circumcise the child (for the iron is an avenger, and beseems them that are under the law which punisheth) but with *a stone*, as it is written, understood as a type of Christ. For the indestructibility and stability in all respects of the

Nature of the Only-Begotten is hereby signified. Wherefore God the Father in the holy Prophets called Christ an adamant too, saying, *Behold, I am setting an adamant in the midst of My people Israel.* The adamant signifies to us as in a figure, that the Divine and Ineffable Nature of the Word can never yield to those which oppose it. Thus the Divine Joshua too after Moses' leadership and death being called to the command, purified the children of Israel with a Divinely appointed stone, and since he was to withstand the hand of the enemy, right well was he commanded to arm them first in some sort by circumcision, knowing that no otherwise would they who were on the very verge of fighting be above falling and superior to death.

And thus it is written concerning him, *And the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee knives of rock, of the sharp rock, and sit down, circumcise the children of Israel. And Joshua made him knives of flints, and circumcised the children of Israel.* For herein the name *rock* signifies to us as it were the fixed and indestructible Word of God, the expression *sharp* points out the power of subtly penetrating into things, and its keenest energy, since Paul too, who was nourished up in the holy and Divine writings, calls the Divine Word *quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword*, and says that it pierces *even to the parting of soul and spirit*. But the Word so subtle and piercing entering our hearts through His own Spirit frees them from all uncleanness, and circumcising in an expressible manner the things in respect whereof we are full of the deepest abominations, it renders us both holy and undefiled. For see herein most translucent the image of the truth. For Jesus is he who circumciseth, and they who undergo it of him, are every *fresh young child*, as it is written, *who this day knoweth not good or evil*. For they who came forth out of Egypt had the Divine wrath as the wages of their unbelief, and manifold punishment overtook them in the desert, it having been with reason determined by the all-holy God that He would not bring them into the land which He swore to their fathers. But they who came after them being free from the charges of unbelief, fulfilled the type of the new people, so as even to receive the circumcision in the spirit through Christ, the old and first people, that is, Israel, having gone to perdition, as we have just said. Nevertheless the noble and new people are circumcised, under the command of Joshua, the other side Jordan, as it is written. For the considerations that spring from the truth are thus; we shall never receive the circumcision through the Spirit in the heart, as long as we have not yet been brought over the mystic Jordan, but are still on yon side of the holy waters. But when all the people were circumcised by command of Joshua, straightway the Lawgiver makes known the utility of the thing, and says to the holy Joshua, *This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you*. Wherein then shall we grant that Israel received benefit from circumcision or what reproach do we say was rolled away? Their bondage, their exposure from weakness to be tyrannized over, and yet more their hard labours, in clay and brick. Seest thou from how great evils the might of the circumcision in spirit delivers? For it delivers the soul of man out of the hand of the devil, renders it free and let go from the sin which tyrannizes in us, and maketh it superior to all the arrogance of wicked devils. Yea it frees from both clay and brick, for no longer does it suffer one denied with the pleasures of the flesh, nor that he be intermingled with the toils of earth, but frees both from death and corruption: nor are these all the benefits which arise from circumcision, but it also renders us *partakers of the Divine Nature* through the participation of our Saviour Christ.

For the compiler of the book adds to what has been said, *And the children of Israel kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month and did eat of the corn of the land bread unleavened and new*. For no otherwise may one partake of the Very Lamb That taketh away the sin of the world, nor yet find the unleavened and new food of the Gospel preachings,

unless one have first passed the mystic Jordan, received the circumcision from the Living Word, and rubbed off after some sort, as it were a spot on the soul, the reproach of Egypt, in the manner we have just expounded.

For that God loatheth, as full of reproach and all uncleanness, him that is not yet circumcised, not as holding in abomination the flesh which He disdained not to create, but [as hating] him that is yet (so to say) in full vigour and complete, as respects pleasures in evil, by reason of his having lost nothing, we shall know when we find Him saying to holy Moses and Aaron, *This is the ordinance of the Passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof but every man's servant that is bought for money, thou shall circumcise him, and then shall he eat thereof.* For He wholly excludes the stranger, thereby signifying him who is not yet joined to Christ through faith: but him that is in bondage to sin, and is in some sort sold to the devil, He very seasonably commands to be first circumcised, and purified, and then to taste the most holy Flesh. For we being pure purely shall we partake of Christ, according to that which is orderly proclaimed in our churches, Holy things to the holy. For in truth it were just and meet, since our Saviour Christ died for us, and cleansed us not with the purifications of the Law but with His Own Blood, that we too should offer to Him our own life and as a just debt pay that we live no more to ourselves, but repay as it were the complete consecration unto holiness of our own souls. For that the Precious Blood and Death of Christ Who died for all, both saved us from all evil, and was the Giver of the spiritual circumcision, whereby we gain that we are joined to God Who is over all, in this too shall we see. For thus it is written in respect of him who was captain after Moses, I mean Joshua the son of Nun, *And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance: there they buried with him, in the sepulchre wherein they buried him, the knives of flints wherewith he circumcised the children of Israel.* For the blessed Joshua died and was buried, and profitably were the knives affixed to the sepulchre, which ministered to the type of circumcision, that we again might understand by this that the grace of circumcision in spirit the wooer for us of all heavenly goods, is bound up in the death of our Saviour Christ.

We will then understand that the circumcision on the eighth day, taking it in no Jewish sense, is the purification through the Spirit, in faith and the Resurrection of Christ, the casting away of all sin, the destruction of death and corruption, the bestower of holiness and oneness with Christ, the image of freedom, the way and door to close friendship with God.

Abundance then of spiritual considerations then having been now contributed by us from all parts to these things, and the two chapters divided as was meet, and we having concluded for each the discussion suiting it: it remains and is due to say, why the spiritual circumcision prevails over even the honour of the sabbath. For circumcision is to be received even on the sabbath day, unheeding the Law of not working thereon. Since then the rest on the seventh day signifies freedom and rest from all wickedness, and cessation from sin, and circumcision in spirit means nothing different from these, as it were in another way (for I think that the being freed from superfluous lusts, and overmuch pleasure, clearly results in rest from evil), we shall find not only that circumcision in no way breaks the law respecting the sabbath, but even aids it and all but coincides in one and the same language with it, openly proclaiming that one ought to rest and to desist from evil: so that they both are the same, I mean both circumcision and the rest of the sabbath (as one will most rightly deem), according to the concurrence of both in one aim. For we will not adhere to the gross type of the history, but will rather spiritually go to the oracles of the Spirit. Unblameably therefore will the profit

of circumcision on the sabbath too be brought in, since as the Saviour saith, *The priests in the temple profane the sabbath* by ministering thereon and not ceasing from their ordinary occupations, *and are blameless*, as the Judge Himself hath testified to them, with greatest reason. For what time is there wherein we ought to desist from works of holiness, and those wherein the Deity delighteth? at what time is it not hurtful to slacken zeal in piety? The rest then on the sabbath day hath a most praiseworthy ceasing and staying from wickedness only and from abominable sin, but by no means hinders us from taking pleasure in holy deeds, and whatsoever any one supposes will be of profit to his own soul, this too it enjoins him unblamed to take all pains rightly to perform. This same profitableness you may see introduced also in the force of circumcision. For in cutting away pleasure in the direction of evil, is perceived a birth of resting from sin, and a beginning of worship in spirit and most holy conversation; and the difference between them is slight, nevertheless a needful one. For in that He does not command both to be observed on the seventh day, nor yet on the eighth; the plan of each gives us to understand that there is a distinction. And this too has a meaning, and no inelegant one, as seems to me. For resting from wickedness is not yet the utter casting off also of wickedness. For oftentimes our passions are quiet within us, yet are not wholly cast out of our mind, but are by sober reasoning, as it were with a bridle, forcibly brought to the rest which is uncongenial to them, yea and give way even against their will to the toils of discipline also. But shaking off one's passions, as far as a man can do, is I suppose a wholly different thing and far greater than resting from passion.

Having thus arranged our arguments on these matters, we must finally consider, that we shall not attain unto the casting away of our passions or stumblings arising from pleasure, which is the meaning of circumcision, unless we first cease from sin which goes forth into action, and hold as it were in rest the motions of our mind which run unto transgression. For by using some step of this kind, we shall easily attain what is yet greater and higher, I mean the total casting off of our passions. But the rest from passion, seems to lie in some degree in our own power (for we shall cease from evil, by giving the force of our wills to what is better), but to be released from our passions is surely not in our own power, but is verily the fitting work of Christ who suffered for us, that He might remodel all to newness of life. Therefore meetly did circumcision obtain the eighth day, introducing the renewing (so to say) time of the Resurrection, while the rest had the seventh day, its neighbour and a little behind. For rest for a season and at will, falls and comes a little short of the entire cutting off of the passions.