

## THE FRAGMENTS WHICH ARE EXTANT OF BOOK VIII.

Chap. xii. 3. *Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

While Martha was serving, Mary anointed the Lord with ointment, thus accomplishing her love towards Him; and by the actions of both, the measure of love was filled up and made perfect.

4, 5, 6, 7, 8 *Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, which should betray Him, saith, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief and had the bag, and took away what was put therein. Jesus therefore said, Let her alone: against the day of My burying hath she kept this. For the poor ye have always with you; but Me ye have not always.*

The traitor rebukes the woman who had shown her devotion towards Christ, and attacks the admirable deed, and affects to blame it out of love towards *the poor*, because ointment was brought and not money. But it was out of ignorance as to what is really excellent that Judas said this. For the bringing of presents unto God ought to be honoured more than the poor. The Evangelist however sets forth the reason, on account of which Judas said this: it was not that he felt any concern for the poor, *but because he was a thief* and a sacrilegious person, stealing the money which was dedicated to God. And the Lord also makes it clear that the woman was free from any blame, whereby He covertly rebukes the traitor; not in His good judgment finding fault with things that were worthy of praise, but saying: *Let her alone*. And He said in defence of the anointing with the ointment, that it had been done, not out of luxuriousness, but because of a certain mystery which had reference to His burying; although she who did it was unaware of the design of the mystery. For many things have been both said and done with, reference to a mystical type, when they who spoke and acted were unaware of it. Yet here again the Lord rebukes Judas, because he said this not out of piety, but because he was greedy of base gain, and was going for a little gain to betray his Master. For the *burying* and the allusion thus made to His death indicate this plainly. And the Lord also brings forward an argument which convinces us that nothing is better than devotion towards Him. For, He says, love for the poor is very praiseworthy, only let it be put after veneration of God. And what He says amounts to this: The time, He says, which has been appointed for My being honoured, that is to say, the time of My sojourn on earth, does not require that the poor should be honoured before Me. And this He said with reference to the Incarnation. He does not however in any way forbid the sympathetic person to exercise his love towards the poor. Therefore when there is need of service or of singing, these must be honoured before love towards the poor; for it is possible to do good after the spiritual services are over. He says therefore that it is not necessary always without intermission to devote our time to honouring Himself, or to spend everything upon the priestly service, but to lay out the greatest part upon the poor. Or thus: As He bids His disciples to fast after He had ascended to the Father, so also He says that then they may more freely give attention to the care of the poor, and exercise their love for the poor with less disturbance and more leisure: which indeed was the case. For after the Ascension of the Saviour, when they were no longer following their Master on His journeys, but had leisure; then they eagerly spent all the offerings that were brought to them upon the poor.

9 *A great multitude therefore of the Jews learned that He was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead.*

Through the strangeness of the sign the multitude are astonished; and that which they heard to have been done they wished also to behold with their eyes, that they might believe it more confidently. And they not only wished to see Lazarus, but also the Christ, the doer of the sign; not then seeing Him for the first time, for they had often seen Him and companied with Him; but inasmuch as He had gone into retirement, that He might not suffer before the proper time, they were seeking again to see Him: and the more reasonable among them even admired Him, as they recognised no fault in Him. With a settled purpose therefore the Lord did not immediately enter into Jerusalem, but remained outside, in order that by the report [which would reach the city] He might draw the common people to a desire of wishing to see Him.

10, 11 *But the chief priests took counsel that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

See now how frantic the rulers seem to become, wildly rushing hither and thither under the influence of their envy, and saying nothing coherently. They seriously meditate murder upon murder, thinking to remove the force of the miraculous deed at the same time with their victim, that they might stop the people running to believe Christ.

12,13 *On the morrow a great multitude that had come to the feast*

*when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm-trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried out, saying: Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the Name of the Lord.*

The multitudes, being more obedient and yielding to the effect of the sign, went to meet the Christ, hymning Him as One Who had conquered death, and carrying palm branches. And they do not praise Him with ordinary language, but quote from the inspired Scripture that which was beautifully spoken with regard to Him; confessing that He was indeed *King of Israel*, Whom also they called specially their own King, accepting the lordship of the Christ. And the Son, they say, is *Blessed*: not because He Who blesseth all things and guards them from destruction, and Who is of the ineffable Essence of the Father, receives the blessing which comes from the Father; but because the blessing which is due to One Who is God and Lord by Nature is offered to Him from us, inasmuch as He came *in the Name of the Lord*. For all the saints did not come with the authority of lordship, but as trusted servants; This One, on the contrary, as Lord. Wherefore the prophetic language was quoted very suitably with regard to Him. For indeed some are called lords, who are not such by nature, but have the honourable name granted to them by favour. As also, to take another case, men are called "true," when they abstain from falsehood: but this is not the thing to say with regard to Christ; for He is not called "Truth" for the reason that He does not speak falsely, but because He has that Nature which is altogether superior to falsehood.

14, 15 *And Jesus, having found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh unto thee, sitting on an ass's colt.*

For when a great multitude were escorting Him like a body-guard and shouting His praises, with the most perfect self-restraint He seated Himself upon an ass, teaching us not to be lifted

up by praises, and omitting no necessary thing. Matthew therefore related at greater length the circumstances concerning the ass; but John comes at once to the point of the affair that was most suited to the occasion, as it is his custom to do. And since, contrary to His usual habits, on this occasion only, Christ appears seated on an ass, we do not say that He so sat for the reason that it was a long distance to the city; for it was not more than fifteen furlongs off: nor because there was a multitude; for it is certain that on other occasions when He was found with a multitude He did not do this: but He does so, to indicate that He is about to make subject to Himself as a new people the unclean among the Gentiles, and to lead them up to the prerogative of righteousness, and to the Jerusalem above, of which the earthly is a type; into which this people being made clean shall enter with Christ, Who will be hymned by the guileless angels, of whom the babes are a type. And He calls the ass a *colt*, because the people of the Gentiles had been untrained to the piety which faith produces.

*16 And His disciples understood not these things at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him.*

At first therefore they were ignorant that these words had been written with regard to Him; but after the Resurrection, they did not continue to suffer from the Jewish blindness, but the knowledge of the Divine words was revealed to them through the Spirit. And then was the Christ *glorified*, when after being crucified He came to life again. And the Evangelist does not blush to mention the ignorance of the disciples, and again their knowledge, since his object was, to take no heed of respect for men, but to plead for the glory of the Spirit; and to show what sort of men the disciples were before the Resurrection, and what sort of men they became after the Resurrection. If therefore these disciples were ignorant, how much more were the other Jews. And after He was crucified, *the veil was rent*, in order that we may know that nothing any longer remains hidden and concealed from the faithful and godly. They were enlightened therefore with knowledge from the time of the Resurrection, when the Christ breathed into their face, and they became different from the rest of men. And to a still greater extent they were enlightened on the Day of Pentecost, when they were transformed into the power of the Holy Spirit Who came upon them.

*17, 18 The multitude therefore that was with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, bare witness. For this cause also the multitude went and met Him, for that they heard that He had done this sign.*

The gathering of the common people, having heard what had happened, were readily persuaded by those who bare witness that the Christ had raised Lazarus to life, and annulled the power of death, as the prophets said: *for this cause also they went and met Him.*

*19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Do ye see how ye prevail nothing? Lo, the whole world is gone after Him.*

This they say, finding fault with themselves, that they had not long ago put Jesus and Lazarus also to death, urging themselves to murder; being angry concerning the believing multitude, as though deprived of their special possessions----those which really belonged to God.

*20 Now there were certain Greeks among those that went up to worship at the feast.*

Any one might be perplexed at these words and wonder with what motive *certain of the Greeks* should be going up to Jerusalem to worship, and this at the time when the feast was being celebrated according to the Law. For surely no one will say that they went up merely to look at the people there; certainly it was with the intention of participating in the feast which was suitable for Jews and Jews only, that they were journeying up in the company of the Jews. What was the point, as regards the motive of worship, that was common to both Greeks and Jews? And indeed we shall find that the habit and inclination of the two differed very widely; for the one honoured the truth, whereas the other honoured what was false. What shall we say then with regard to these words? As the territory of the Jews was situated near that of the Galileans, and as both they and the Greeks had cities and villages in close vicinity to each other, they were continually intermingling together, and interchanging visits, invited thereto by a variety of occasions. And since it somehow happens that the disposition of idol-worshippers is very easily brought to welcome a change for the better, and inasmuch as nothing is easier than to convict their false worship of being utterly unprofitable, some among them were easily persuaded to change; not yet indeed in full perfection to worship Him Who alone is truly God, being somewhat divided with regard to the arguments in favour of abandoning idolatry, and following the precepts of their own teachers, I mean Plato and those who are called the wise men of his school. For they say that one (God) is the Creator of all things, and that the rest are included within the universe, and have been elected by Him as directors for the administration of human affairs. It was then a custom for certain of the inhabitants of Palestine, especially the Greeks, who had the territory of the Jews closely adjoining and bordering on their own, to be impressed in some way by the Jewish habits of thought, and to honour the name of One Sovereign [Deity]; and this was the view current among those Greeks, whom we just now mentioned, albeit they did not express it in the same way that we do. And they, not having the tendency to Judaism in full force, nor even having separated themselves from the habits dear to the Greeks, but holding an intermediate opinion which inclined both ways, are called "worshippers of God." People of this kind therefore, seeing that their own habits of thought were not very sharply distinguished from those of the Jews as regarded sacrificial rites and the conception of a Sovereign Ruler: (for the Israelites did not previously know the doctrine of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity, nor even the true force of their spiritual worship:) they were in the habit of going up with the Jews to worship, especially at the national gatherings, not meaning to slight their own religion, but as an act of honour to the One All-supreme God.

*21, 22 These therefore came to Philip which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: Andrew cometh and Philip, and they tell Jesus.*

Even though they knew it not, the Pharisees were telling the truth when they said: *Behold, the whole world is gone after Him*. For not Jews only, but Gentiles as well, were destined to accept the faith. Wherefore also the application of the Greeks happened at that time as a sort of firstfruits; and to Philip as being himself a Galilean, the Galilean Greeks came, asking him to shew them Jesus Whom they wished to see, as they were continually hearing Him well spoken of; that they might worship Him and attain the object of their desires. But Philip, remembering that the Lord said unto them: *Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans*, is afraid lest by any means he should seem to give offence by bringing to Christ those who had not believed, not knowing that it was of set purpose that the Lord had forbidden the disciples to approach the Gentiles until the Jews should first have rejected the grace given to them. And so Philip tells Andrew, he being more disposed for and

accustomed to such things; and then, with his approval, they both carry the message to the Lord. And by his wise conduct Philip teaches us that it is not well to speak in a careless fashion to those who are above us, even though the matter seem to be a right and proper one, but rather to take counsel with wise friends as to what ought to be done.

*23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.*

Seeing therefore that Gentiles are hastening in eager desire to see Him and to turn towards Him, on this account He says: *The hour is come*. For near at hand was the time of His Passion, after which the calling of the Gentiles immediately followed. And He calls the time now present "*the hour*," with the intention of shewing that no other occasion can bring Him to the necessity of suffering, save only this season marked out by His own appointed limitations. For having done all things that were to lead men on to faith, and having preached the word of the kingdom of heaven, He now desires to pass onward to the very crowning point of His hope, namely to the destruction of death: and this could not otherwise be brought to pass, unless the Life underwent death for the sake of all men, that so in Him we all may live. For on this account also He speaks of Himself as glorified in His Death, and in suffering terrible things at the hands of the sinners who dishonour Him. Even though by the angels in heaven He had been glorified from everlasting, yet nevertheless His Cross was the beginning of His being glorified upon earth by the Gentiles as God. For after He had left to themselves the Jews who openly despised Him, He turned to the Gentiles and is glorified by them as God, being confidently expected to come again *in the glory of the Father*. And He declares not merely that the Word shall then be glorified, but, shewing that He Who is ineffably to be regarded as sharing in humanity no less than Deity is One Only Son, He uses the title "*Son of man*:" for He is One Son and One Christ, capable since His Incarnation of no separation of Nature; but ever remaining and ever regarded as God, although clothed in flesh.

(From the Syriac.) [He is One Son and One Christ, capable since His Incarnation of no separation of Nature,] except so far as this, that we may say that we acknowledge separately the Nature of the Word and [the nature] of the flesh. And [we may say] that they are not the same in conception, for the one is of the Essence of God the Father, but the other had its root upon earth in the holy Virgin. Nevertheless there is only One Christ of the two, Who is not divided into a duality of Sons after the concourse of these Natures which have been mentioned, but remains and is regarded as in possession of the power of the Godhead, although clothed in Flesh.

*24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit.*

He not only foretells His suffering and the nearness of the time, but He also alleges the reason why He counted His suffering most precious, saying that the benefit of His passion would be great; for else He would not have chosen to suffer, for He suffered not unwillingly. For by reason of His clemency towards us, He displayed such great and tender kindness as deliberately to endure cruelties of all kinds for our sake. And even as *a grain of wheat* sown in the earth shoots forth many ears of corn, not receiving through them any loss to itself, but being present by its power in all the grains of every ear; for out of it they all shot forth: so also the Lord died, and opening the recesses of the earth, brought up with Himself the souls of men, Himself being in them all according to the doctrine of the faith, over and above His own

separate and distinct existence. And it is not to the dead only that He has granted the power of receiving the fruits of the benefit He brings, but to the living also; if indeed the doctrine is made faithfully to correspond to the form of the parable. For the life of all men, both of dead and living, is a fruit of the sufferings of Christ. For the death of Christ became a seed of life.

Can it be then that the Divine Nature of the Word became capable of death? Surely it were altogether impious to say this. For the Word of God the Father is in His Nature Life: He raises to life, but He does not fall: He brings death to naught, He is not made subject to corruption: He quickens that which lacks life, but seeks not His own life from another. For even as light could not become darkness, so it is impossible that Life should cease to be life. How then is the same Person said to *fall into the earth as a grain of wheat*, and also to *"go up"* as *"God with a shout?"* Surely it is evident that to taste of death was fitting for Him, inasmuch as He became Man: but nevertheless to go up in the manner of God, was His own natural prerogative.

*25 He that loveth his life will lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*

You not only ought not to be offended at the thought of My suffering, or to disbelieve the words I said, but it is even right that you should be prepared in anticipation of it; for he that thinks fit to be careful over his life here, and is not willing to expose it to dangers for My sake, loses it in the time to come. But he who exposes it to dangers in this present world is laying up in store for it great rewards. And he who despises his life in this world shall obtain in the world to come life incorruptible. And the Lord said these words, not as implying that the life [i. e. the soul] can suffer anything here, but meaning by "love of life" the disposition to hold it firmly, as shown by those who do not expose their body to dangers.

*26 If any man serve Me, let him follow Me.*

What He says is something of this kind: If I, He says, for the sake of benefitting you am exposing Myself to death, is it not indeed cowardly on your part to shrink from despising your transient life for the sake of enjoying your private advantages, and from obtaining life imperishable by means of the death of the body? For they seem, to be hating their own life, with regard to the endurance of suffering, who expose it to death, and keep it for everlasting blessings. And they also who live in asceticism hate their own lives, not being subdued by the pleasures of the love of the flesh. What therefore Christ did, in suffering for the sake of all men, He did that it might be an example of manly courage; teaching those who are desirous of the hoped-for blessings to be eager in the practice of this virtue. For it is needful, He says, for those who wish to *follow Me*, to display manly courage and endurance like Mine: for so only will they receive the crown of victory.

*And where I am, there shall also My servant be.*

And since the Author of our salvation travelled not by the path of glory and luxury, but by that of dishonour and hardships; so also we must do and not complain, in order to reach the same place and share the Divine glory. And of what honour shall we be worthy, if we refuse to endure sufferings like those of our Master? But perhaps in saying: *where I am, there shall also My servant be*, He speaks not of place, but of progress in virtue. For by the same qualities in which Christ appeared conspicuous, those who follow Him must also be characterised. This

does not refer to the God-befitting and superhuman prerogatives, for it is impossible for a man to imitate Him Who is the True God and in His Nature God; but to all such qualities as the nature of man is capable of displaying: not the bridling of the sea and deeds of similar character, but the being humble and meek and tolerant of insults.

*If any man serve Me, him will the Father honour.*

Herein, He says, certainly consists their recompense, in being honoured by the Father: for the disciples of Christ are sharers of the kingdom and glory of Christ, according to the measure fitting for men. And He says that the honours are given from the Father, although Himself is the Giver of blessings; ascribing to the Divine Nature the act of giving to every man according to his work, and showing us that the Father wills that we should obey the commands of the Son, because the Son does not legislate in opposition to the Father.

We must note therefore that he that does things pleasing to God serves Christ, but he that follows his own wishes, is a follower rather of himself and not of God,

*27, 28 Now is My soul troubled; and what, shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause [came I] unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name.*

*Now, He says, is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save one from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.* See I pray you in these words again how the human nature was easily affected by trouble and easily brought over to fear, whereas on the other hand the Divine and ineffable Power is in all respects inflexible and dauntless and intent on the courage which alone is befitting to It. For the mention of death which had been introduced into the discourse begins to alarm Jesus, but the Power of the Godhead straightway subdues the suffering thus excited and in a moment transforms into incomparable boldness that which had been conquered by fear. For we may suppose that even in the Saviour Jesus Christ Himself the human feelings were aroused by two qualities necessarily present in Him. For it must certainly have been under the influence of these that He shewed Himself a Man born of woman, not in deceptive appearance or mere fancy, but rather by nature and in truth, possessing every human quality, sin only excepted. And fear and alarm, although they are affections natural to us, have escaped being ranked among sins. And yet besides this, profitably were the human feelings troubled in Christ: not that the emotions should prevail and go forward, as in us; but that, having begun, they might be cut short by the power of the Word, nature in Christ first being transelemented into some better and Diviner condition. For in this way and no other was it that the process of the healing passed over even unto us. For in Christ as the firstfruits the nature of man was restored to newness of life, and in Him we have also gained things above our nature. For on this account He is also named in the Divine Scriptures a second *Adam*. And in the same manner that as Man He felt hunger and weariness, so also He feels the mental trouble that is caused by suffering, as a human characteristic. Yet He is not agitated like we are, but only just so far as to have undergone the sensation of the experience; then again immediately He returns to the courage befitting to Himself. From these things it is evident that He indeed had a rational soul. For as the circumstance of feeling hunger or indeed of experiencing any other such thing is a suffering which is peculiarly that of the flesh, so also the being agitated by the thought of terrible things must be a suffering of the rational soul, by which alone in truth a thought can enter into us through the processes of the mind. For Christ, not having yet been on the Cross actually, suffers the trouble by anticipation, evidently beholding beforehand that which was to happen,

and being led by reasoning to the thought of the future events. For the suffering of dread is a feeling that we cannot ascribe to the impassible Godhead, nor yet to the Flesh; for it is an affection of the cogitations of the soul, and not of the flesh. And although an irrational animal is troubled and agitated, inasmuch as it possesses a soul, yet it does not come to feel dread by a process of thought, nor by a logical anticipation of coming suffering, but whenever it happens to find itself actually involved in any evil plight, then it painfully experiences the sensation of the danger which is present. Here, on the other hand, the Lord is troubled, not by what He sees, but by what He anticipates in thought. Further it is noteworthy that Christ did not say "My flesh is troubled," but "My soul;" thereby dispelling the suggestion of the heretics. And although thou mayest say that in the ancient Scripture God said to the Jews: *Your fasts and holiday-keeping and festivals My soul hateth*, and other expressions of a similar kind; we shall maintain that He has made use of our habits of speech, especially by reason of His helpful condescension towards us; just as also by a forced use of language He attributes to His Incorporeal Nature a Face and Eyes and other bodily organs. But after the Incarnation, if we were to explain such expressions in the same way, it would follow that He was a mere image or phantom or shadow and not truly a Man, according to the teaching of the ungodly Manes. Therefore the Word of God made one with Himself human nature in its entirety, that so He might save the entire man. For that which has not been taken into His Nature, has not been saved.

Nevertheless, after speaking of being *troubled*, He does not relapse into silence, but transforms the suffering which had affected Him into dauntless courage, almost going so far as to say: "Death is in itself nothing; but on this account I permitted My Flesh to feel dread, that I might infuse it with a new element of courage. I came to restore life to those who are on earth, wherefore also I am prepared for My Passion."

He then makes a request of His Father and exhibits the outward appearance of prayer, not as being weak in respect of that Nature which is Almighty, but in respect of His Manhood, ascribing to the Divine Nature those attributes that are superhuman; not implying that the Divine Nature was something external to Himself, since He calls God His own Father, but in full consciousness that universal power and glory would be the lot of both Father and Son. And whether the text has: *Glorify Thy Son*, or: *Glorify Thy Name*, makes no difference in the exact significance of the ideas conveyed. Christ however, despising death and the shame of suffering, looking only to the objects to be achieved by the suffering, and almost beholding the death of all mankind already passing out of sight as an effect of the death of His Own Flesh; knowing that the power of corruption was on the point of being for ever destroyed, and that the nature of man would be thenceforth transformed to a newness of life: He all but says something of this sort to God the Father: "The body, O Father, shrinks from encountering the suffering, and dreads that death which is unnatural to it; nay more, it seems a thing not to be endured that One Who is enthroned with Thee and Who possesses Almighty power should be grossly outraged by the audacious insults of the Jews; but since this is the cause for which I have come, *glorify Thy Son*, that is, prevent Me not from encountering death, but grant this favour to Thy Son for the good of all mankind." And that the Evangelist in some other places also speaks of the Cross under the name of "glory," thou mayest learn from what he says: *For the Holy Spirit was not yet [given]; because Jesus was not yet glorified*. For in his wisdom he in these words speaks of being "crucified" as being "*glorified*:" and the Cross is a glory. For although at the season of His Passion, Christ willingly and patiently endured many contumelies, and moreover underwent voluntarily for our sake sufferings which He might have refused to suffer; surely the undergoing this for the benefit of others is a characteristic of

excessive compassion and of supreme glory. And the Son became glorious also in another way. For from the fact that He overpowered death, we recognise Him to be Life and Son of the Living God. And the Father is glorified, when He is seen to have such a Son begotten of Himself, of the same Nature as Himself. And He is Good, Light, Life, and superior to death, and One Who does whatsoever He will. And when He says: *Glorify Thy Son*, He means this: "Give Thy consent to Me in My willingness to suffer." For the Father gave up the Son to death, not without taking counsel, but in willingness for the life of the world: therefore the Father's consent is spoken, of as a bestowal of blessings upon us; for instead of "suffering" He spake of "glory." And this also He says as a Pattern for us: for while on the one hand we ought to pray that we fall not into temptation, yet on the other hand if we should be so tried we ought to bear it nobly and not to rush away from it, but to pray that we may be saved unto God. But *Glorify Thy Name*. For if through our dangers it comes to pass that God is glorified, let all things be accounted secondary to that end.

Moreover, just as death was brought to naught in no other way than by the Death of the Saviour, so also with regard to each of the sufferings of the flesh: for unless He had felt dread, human nature could not have become free from dread; unless He had experienced grief, there could never have been any deliverance from grief; unless He had been troubled and alarmed, no escape from these feelings could have been found. And with regard to every one of the affections to which human nature is liable, thou wilt find exactly the corresponding thing in Christ. The affections of His Flesh were aroused, not that they might have the upper hand as they do indeed in us, but in order that when aroused they might be thoroughly subdued by the power of the Word dwelling in the flesh, the nature of man thus undergoing a change for the better.

(From the Syriac)

AND AGAIN, WHEN [S. CYRIL] IS MANIFESTLY REPROVING THE IMPIETY OF ARIUS AND OF EUNOMIUS, AFTER OTHER THINGS HE TEACHES AS FOLLOWS:----

Since therefore that which is the outcome of thoughts could not truly happen to inanimate flesh, but on the contrary is suitable to a human and rational soul; how can it be improper to imagine that we think rightly in assigning the suffering to it [i. e. the human soul,] rather than in casting it upon the Nature of the Godhead, [as we must do] by forcible and inevitable reasoning, if truly (in accordance with their doctrine) the Divine Nature dwelling in Christ's body occupied the place of the soul?

(From the Greek)

*There came therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

The Evangelist did not say that it was the Father Who uttered the voice from above, but that the voice came from heaven; in order that no heretics, because they heard that the Father spake, might attempt to say that also the Divine Nature, to wit, the Father, is encompassed with a gross body. Wherefore he speaks indeed of the harmonious voice, but how the voice was brought to pass it is not in our power to say. But what the interpretation of its words signifies is this: The Son was conspicuous by many signs, the Father withal working the miracles along with Him; and inasmuch as He was Fellow-worker with Him in all things

which He did, He says now that He has glorified [His Name,] and freely promises that He will also glorify it again, through the sign at His Death. For inasmuch as the Son is both God of God, and Life born of That which is by nature Life, He raised Himself from the dead; but inasmuch as He is regarded as a Man like us, albeit without sin, He is not regarded as having raised Himself, but as risen by the power of the Father. *30 Jesus answered and said unto them, This voice hath not come for My sake, but for your sakes.*

The Father replied aloud----after what manner He only knows----unto His own Son, manifesting His own purpose with intent to rouse the zeal of the hearers, that they might believe without any doubt that He is by Nature the Son of God the Father. But the multitude were perplexed and divided unto different surmisings, without understanding. For they ought to have apprehended that it was the Father that gave answer, unto Whom the Son had addressed His words. For the Son asked not for thunder to come, nor for an angel to utter a voice, nevertheless He saith: *The Voice hath not come for My sake, but for your sakes.* For He knew the purpose of Him Who begat Him, even if no word had been uttered, for that He was and is the Wisdom and Word of the Father. *For your sakes* therefore, He says, *the Voice hath come*; in order that ye may receive Me as Son of God, Whom the Father knoweth to be by Nature His own Son. Now the Lord says that *the Voice hath come*; yet He adds not that it was the Father's Voice, nor how it came: for this is a superfluous matter. He affirmed however that although they had even heard a Voice as from heaven, they persisted none the less in their impiety.

*31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

This sore-yearned-for time of the Saviour's sojourn upon earth showed that the judgment and justice for the Gentiles was already come. For they were about to be delivered from the arrogant usurpation of the devil, and the Holy and Righteous Judge was portioning out most righteous mercy to them. For I think we ought not to suppose that the world was even now being condemned, when the moment of its justification was come; but judgment, in the sense of vengeance, shall come upon the world hereafter. Again: *the prince of this world shall be cast out.* There shall be, He says, judgment against him that wronged the world, and not against the world that endured the wrong. For truly, as Christ Himself said: *God sent not His Son to judge the world, but to save the world.* This then He says will be the character of the impending judgment, that *the prince of this world shall be cast out.* And cast out whence? Manifestly, from the dominion that hath been gained by him through violence, and from the kingdom that in no wise belongs to him. And "out" indicates the punishment of Hades and the passage to it.

*32 And I, if I be lifted up from, the earth, will draw all men unto Myself.*

Howbeit, after that Christ had given Himself unto the Father for our salvation as a Spotless Victim, and was now on the point of paying the penalties that He suffered on our behalf, we were ransomed from the accusations of sin. And so, when the beast has been removed from our midst, and the tyrant is deposed, then Christ brings unto Himself the race that had strayed away, calling not only Jews but all mankind as well unto salvation through the faith that is in Him. For whereas the calling through the Law was partial, that through Christ was universal. For Christ alone, as God, was able to procure all good things for us. And with exceeding good omen, He speaks of being "uplifted" instead of being "crucified." For He would keep the mystery invisible to those intent on killing Him; for they were not worthy to

learn it: nevertheless, He allowed them that were wiser to understand that He would suffer because of all and on behalf of all. And especially I suppose any one might take it in this way, and very fitly; that the Death on the Cross was an exaltation which is ever associated in our thoughts with honour and glory. For on this account too Christ is glorified, forasmuch as the benefits He procured for humanity thereby are many. And by these He draws men *unto Himself*, and does not, like the disciples, lead them to another. He shows therefore that He is Himself by Nature God, in that He does not put the Father outside Himself. For it is through the Son that a man is drawn unto the knowledge of the Father.

33 *But this He said, signifying by what manner of death He should die.*

Hereby the Evangelist showed that the Lord did not suffer in ignorance, but voluntarily; and with full knowledge, not only that He was dying, but also in what manner: and He named the Cross [as His] death.

34 *The multitude therefore answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?*

And this they say, as we have remarked, understanding that being "*lifted up*" meant being crucified. For it was their wont to signify by more auspicious names things which pointed directly to sore disasters. They essay therefore by means of the Scripture to prove that Christ speaks falsehood. For the Scripture, says [one of them], denies that the Christ is but for a time, when it says concerning Him: *Thou art a Priest for ever*. How then sayest Thou: "I am the Christ," whereas Thou sayest that Thou wilt die? For, because they understand not, the Jews say that by reason of the Passion He cannot be Christ; and they deny that it was written that the Christ must suffer and rise again and ascend unto the Father, to be *Minister of the Sanctuary* and High Priest of our souls, when He should return to life, a Conqueror and Incorruptible. Albeit the Scripture foretells expressly, not only that He should come in this common fashion of a Man, but that He should die for the life of all men, and should return to life again after breaking asunder the bonds of death: whereby the saying that *Christ abideth for ever* is fully and fitly accomplished. For when He had shown Himself superior to death and corruption, He ascended unto the Father.

35 *Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the Light among you. Walk while ye have the Light, that the darkness overtake you not: and he that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.*

To the Jews, without understanding and faithless as they were, the Christ does not clearly and at length declare the deep mystery of the saying. But He speeds on at once to utter another, at the same time both expounding what is profitable for them and shewing them the cause wherefore they do not understand the things in the Scriptures, and that, if they believed not Him Who is Light, the darkness of ignorance would overtake them without fail, and they would forfeit the benefits that come of the Light. For inasmuch as their expectations were drawn from the Scripture, they looked for the Messiah as a Light. But when He came, all their hopes fell out contrariwise; for a darkness overtook them because of their unbelief. Recover yourselves therefore (saith He) speedily, while it is possible for you to win some small share in the radiance of *the Divine Light*, in order that *the darkness of sin overtake you not*. And right well He said that after *the Light* cometh *the darkness*. For the darkness presseth hard on the

track of the departing light. But whereas He spake of "the Light," using the definite article, He signified Himself, for He alone is in truth *The Light*.

*36 While ye have the Light, believe on the Light, that ye may become sons of Light.*

He proved therefore that the faith which is in Him, through Whom a man comes to the knowledge also of the Father, is the way of salvation. And He names them *sons of Light* whether of Himself or of the Father, for He speaks of the Father as Light after having spoken of Himself as Light---in order to show that the Nature of Himself and of His Father is One: and we become sons of the Father, when, through the faith which is in Christ, we accept the Father Who is Light; for then shall we also be entitled children of God.

*These things spake Jesus, and He departed and hid Himself from them.*

After teaching them in few words what was profitable, once again by God-befitting power He betakes Himself from their midst, concealing Himself; and not permitting them to be roused to anger, but giving them opportunity to change their mind, with intent that they might do what was better. And He withdraws with a set purpose, His Passion being nigh; shewing that it was not His will to be put to death by the Jews, notwithstanding that He willingly yielded Himself up to suffer, giving Himself a Ransom for our life; and accepted death, which men naturally liken unto sorrow, and changed the sorrow into gladness.

*37 But though He had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on Him.*

And the Evangelist, wishing to convict their immoderate stubbornness, adds also the words: *before them*; showing that they did not believe even what they saw.

*38, 39, 40 That the word of Isaiah might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For this cause they could not believe, for that of old Isaiah said, He hath blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart; lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

It was not however with intent to fulfil the prophecies that the Jews slew the Lord, for in that case they would not have been impious; but it was by reason of their own malignity. For although the prophets foretold the things which were certainly to be brought to pass by their determined evil counsel, they foretold it for this cause, that the sober might leap over the pitfalls of the devil: for surely they who heard might also have taken heed. On which, account also the prediction was needful.

AGAIN: A SOLUTION OF ANOTHER QUESTION:----

That it was not God Who blinded the Jews. For else He would not have required them to give account thereof, forasmuch as He surely pardons involuntary offences. But the meaning is on this wise. It is just as though Isaiah were setting before us, as having been spoken by God, the words: "If I should become a Man, and with Mine own voice expound unto you what is profitable, not even so will ye hearken unto Me, as neither did ye hearken unto the prophets; neither, when ye see signs beyond description, will ye be profited aught by seeing them." This is really what "*Ye will not see*" means. For He did not say: "I will harden their hearts and blind

their eyes;" but He said: "Although ye hear, ye will not hear; and though ye see, ye will not see, in order that ye may not be converted and I may heal you." For if they had heard and seen in such a way as they ought, they would surely have found benefit thereby. And so the passage contains no indication of an inevitable punishment, nor does it set forth a decree of One condemning and sentencing the Jews; but it is a prediction given with a good purpose. For He knew what manner of men they were going to become, and He made a declaration concerning them. Yet the saying does not go against all [the Jews], but only against the unbelieving; for many of them have believed. In this way therefore the Seventy have rendered the passage. But it is likely that the Evangelist followed the text of the Hebrews, which differs from that of the Seventy, and therefore said: *For this cause they could not believe, because: He hath blinded them*; and so far as the actual wording of the prophet goes, he has not said that "God" blinded them. And it is likely that some one else did this, in order that the Jews *should not convert* and find healing. But even though we should accept the supposition that God blinded them, yet it must be understood in this way;----that He allowed them to suffer blinding at the hands of the devil, when they were not good as regards their character. For in this way He gives up to a reprobate mind and to passion those who are of a disposition like theirs. But whilst they were such, it was not just that they should know the depth of the mystery and its secrets, seeing that they were men that kept not even the commandments of the Law. Whereas then they received neither the Law nor the ordinances of the Gospel, closing fast the eye of their understanding; on this account they receive not the instruction that is able to illuminate them.

*42, 43 Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [it], lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.*

Now, however, when constrained by the signs to believe and no longer daring to gainsay the Lord, they fail of eternal life through the persistence of their own abominable perversity in esteeming their position in the eyes of men higher than their relationship to God, and in being slaves of a temporal glory, deeming it an intolerable loss to fail of honour at the hands of the Pharisees. Forasmuch therefore as this was what hindered them from believing, hear what the Christ says:----

*44, 45 And Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. And He that beholdeth Me beholdeth Him that sent Me.*

Contrary to His wont He cries aloud, and the cry convicts the ill-timed fear of men which influenced those who believed on Him and yet veiled their belief. For He wishes to be honoured of men that choose to admire Him, not stealthily, but openly. For He assumed that while faith ought to be laid up in the heart, nevertheless the most wise confession that is founded thereon ought to be made with great boldness. And forasmuch as, being by Nature God, He condescended to take a form like ours, He refuses for the time to declare in plain words into the ears of men who hate Him that they ought to believe in Him, although He often did say this; and with fullest adaptation to the needs of those who suffer the distemper of untamable envy at Him, He gradually accustoms their minds to penetrate towards the depth of the mysteries concerning Himself, [leading them] not to the Human Person, but to That Which was of the Divine Essence; inasmuch as the Godhead is apprehended completely in the Person of God the Father, for He, hath in Himself the Son and the Spirit. Exceeding wisely He carries them onwards, saying: *He that believeth on Me believeth not on Me, but on Him that*

*sent Me*; for He does not exclude Himself from being believed on by us, because He is God by nature and has shone forth from God the Father. But skilfully (as has been said) He handles the mind of the weak to mould them to piety, in order that thou mightest understand Him to say something of this kind: "When ye believe on Me, Who for your sakes am on the one hand a man like yourselves, but on the other hand am God by reason of My own Nature and of the Father from Whom I am, do not suppose that it is upon a man you are setting your faith. For I am by Nature God, notwithstanding that I appear like one of yourselves, and I have within Myself Him Who begat Me. Forasmuch therefore as I am Consubstantial with Him that hath begotten Me, your faith will assuredly pass on also to the Father Himself." As we said therefore, the Lord, gradually training them to something better, and profitably interweaving the human with what is God-befitting, said: *He that believeth on Me* and the words that follow. For that the faith must not be directed simply to a man, but to the Nature of God, notwithstanding that the Word was clothed in flesh, because His Nature was not converted into man, He hath very clearly informed us; and that He is on an equality in every respect with God the Father, by reason of Their likeness of Nature and Their identity (as we may term it) of Essence, He made amply clear: by saying:----

46 *I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me may not abide in the darkness.*

Behold, again He grasps their faith and fixes it on Himself, and effects at once two most useful ends. For on the one hand in professing Himself to be *Light* He proves that He is God by Nature, for so to be called befits Him alone Who is in His Nature God; and on the other hand by adding the cause of His coming, He brings a blush to the cheek of any man who thinks but little of loving Him. Because we evidently must understand that those who had not yet believed on Him are as yet in darkness, inasmuch as to be in the light that flows from Him is theirs only who have believed on Him. And He leads them also to the remembrance of the things that are spoken in many passages concerning Him, whereby He foretold that He would come to enlighten the world; as for example; *Be enlightened, be enlightened, O Jerusalem, for thy Light, the True Light, is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee*; and: *Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth*. Therefore it is just as if He had said: "I am the Light that in the Scripture is looked for, to come for the salvation of the world, to enlighten them that are wandering in darkness as if in night."

48 *The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.*

They will be self-condemned therefore, He says, who refuse to hear Him and do not accept the saving faith. For He that came to illumine, came not in order to judge, but to save. He therefore that disobeys and thereby subjects himself to the greatest miseries, let him blame himself as justly punished." For I am not the cause thereof, Who desire to save those that are going to fall into judgment, and Who came for this end. For he that makes a law punishing the disobedient, makes it not for the sake of punishing them that transgress it, but in order that they that hear may take heed of it and be safe. I therefore, having come to save, charge you to believe, and not to despise My words; inasmuch as the present is a time of salvation, not of judgment. For *in the day of judgment, the word* that called you to salvation will bring the penalties of disobedience upon you. And of what nature was *the word that I spake?*"

(From the Syriac)

FROM THE EIGHTH BOOK OF S. CYRIL'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN;  
WHAT HE SAITH CONCERNING THE HERETICS, WHO, DESIRING TO CONCEAL THEIR  
IMPIETY, USE OBSCURE LANGUAGE.

For justly their conscience does not suffer them [to speak plainly], although an impulse from within urges them to *lift up their horn on high*, as it is written, and they speak evil against Him Who truly and by Nature is God, namely the Only-Begotten, Who reflects the Nature of the Father, being the essential and natural Likeness and Image of Him.

FROM THE EIGHTH DISCOURSE OF S. CYRIL'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF  
JOHN.

For it is by Jesus Christ that those who believe have glory and indwelling with God, and the Divine Paul contends on our side, writing thus, that it was *God Who was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*. For let none of those who are accustomed after a foolish manner to hear the Scripture which is inspired by God, corrupt what is read, when it asserts that *God was in Christ*; or think that [Paul] says "one clothed with the Spirit," for the expression is not very correct. For Christ is indeed by Nature God, and not a man "clothed with God" as one of the prophets.

SIMILARLY, IN THE EIGHTH BOOK OF THE COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

Therefore a type of the change is that faith which justifies, which when the Son receives unto Himself He truly causes to approach the Father also, for there is One Godhead in Them Both, and an undistinguishable glory of Essence.

ON THIS ACCOUNT ALSO THE WISE CYRIL, IN THE EIGHTH BOOK OF THE  
COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, WROTE AS FOLLOWS.

"Was therefore the Mystery of Christians, so adorable and great, an image or shadow, or rather an imagination or phantom: or was it verily real? And did Manes, that lover of heathendom, and a guilty wretch too, as well as ungodly, indeed make no mistake, no not at all; but is it rather we who err, in reasoning thus against these men? But these things are not so: God forbid. Let them rather be "cast away on some mountain far off, or to the waves," as some say. For not in vain do we believe that He was a Man, that is, one Who in everything was like ourselves, sin only excepted.