

Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary of Luke Sermon 12 and Fragments of 21, 22, 23 & 25.

Sermon 12.

The twelfth sermon of the commentary upon the Gospel of Luke, by S. Cyril, upon the fast of our Lord in the flesh.

4:1-2. But Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan, and continued in the Spirit in the wilderness forty days, being tempted of the Devil. And he ate nothing during those days; and when they were accomplished He hungered.

THE blessed prophets, when speaking of the Only-begotten Word of God,----of Him Who is equal unto God in glory, and the sharer of His throne, and radiant in perfect equality unto Him,----lead us to the persuasion that He was manifested as a Saviour and Deliverer for those upon earth, by saying, "Arise, O Lord, help me." He arose therefore and helped, having taken the form of a slave, and being made in the likeness of men: for so did He as one of us set Himself as an avenger in our stead, against that murderous and rebellious serpent, who had brought sin upon us, and thereby had caused corruption and death to reign over the dwellers upon earth, that we by His means, and in Him, might gain the victory, whereas of old we were vanquished, and fallen in Adam.

Come therefore and let us praise the Lord, and sing psalms unto God our Saviour: let us trample Satan under foot; let us raise the shout of victory over him now he is thrown and fallen: let us exult over the crafty reptile, caught in an inextricable snare: let us too say of him in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, "How is the hammer of all the earth broken and beaten small! Thou art found and hast been taken, because thou stoodest against the Lord." For of old, that is before the time of the advent of Christ the Saviour of all, the universal enemy had somewhat grand and terrible notions about himself: for he boastfully exulted over the infirmity of the inhabitants of the earth, saying, "I will hold the world in my hand as a nest, and as eggs that are left I will take it up: and no one shall escape from me or speak against me." And in very truth there was no one of those upon earth who could rise up against his power; but the Son rose up against him, and contended with him, having been made like unto us. And therefore, as I said, human nature, as victorious in Him, wins the crown. And this in old time the Son Himself proclaimed, where by one of the holy prophets He thus addresses Satan; "Behold, I am against thee, O corrupting mountain, that corruptest the whole earth."

Come therefore and let us see what the blessed Evangelist says, when Christ was now going to battle in our behalf with him who corrupted the whole earth. "But Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan." Here behold, I pray, man's nature anointed with the grace of the Holy Ghost in Christ as the firstfruits, and crowned with the highest honours. For of old indeed the God of all promised, saying, "it shall come to pass in those days, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh." And the promise is fulfilled for us in Christ first. And whereas of those in old time who without restraint gave way to fleshly lust, God somewhere said, "My Spirit shall not dwell in these men, because they are flesh:" now because all things have become new in Christ, and we are enriched with the regeneration that is by water and Spirit;--for no longer are we children of flesh and blood, but rather call God our Father;----therefore it is, and very justly, that as being now in honour, and possessing the glorious privilege of

adoption, we have been made partakers of the divine nature by the communication of the Holy Ghost. But He Who is the Firstborn among us, when He became so among many brethren, and yielded Himself to emptiness, was the first to receive the Spirit, although Himself the Giver of the Spirit, that this dignity, and the grace of fellowship with the Holy Ghost might reach us by His means. Something like this Paul also teaches us, where speaking both of Him and us, he says, "For both He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of One: for which reason He is not ashamed to call them His brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name to My brethren." For as being in no degree ashamed to call us brethren, whose likeness He took, therefore, having transferred to Himself our poverty, He is sanctified with us, although Himself the Sanctifier of all creation; that thou mightest not see Him refusing the measure of human nature, Who consented for the salvation and life of all to become man.

When therefore the wise Evangelist says of Him, "But Jesus being full of the Spirit returned from the Jordan," be not offended, nor err from the mark in thy inward thoughts, and wander from the doctrine of the truth, as to the way and manner in which the Word, Who is God, was sanctified: but rather understand the wisdom of the economy, by reason of which also He is the object of our admiration. For He was made flesh and became man, not to avoid whatever belongs to man's estate, and despise our poverty, but that we might be enriched with what is His, by His having been made like unto us in every particular, sin only excepted. He is sanctified therefore as man, but sanctifies as God: for being by nature God, He was made man.

"He was led therefore, it says, in the Spirit in the wilderness forty days, being tempted of the devil." What therefore is the meaning of the word led? It signifies not so much that He was conducted thither, as that He dwelt and continued there. For we are ourselves also accustomed to say of any one who lives religiously, So and so, whoever it may be, is a well-conducted person. And we give the title of paedagogue, not to signify, according to the literal interpretation, that they actually lead and conduct boys, but that they take care of them, and well and laudably train them, educating and teaching them to conduct themselves with propriety.

He dwelt therefore in the wilderness in the Spirit, that is spiritually; for He fasted, granting no food whatsoever to the necessities of the body. But to this I imagine some one may immediately object; 'And what harm then did it do Jesus to be constantly dwelling in cities? And in what way could it benefit Him to choose to inhabit the wilderness? For there is no good thing of which He is in want. And why too did He also fast? What necessity was there for Him to labour, Who knows not what it is to feel the rising of any depraved desire? For we adopt the practice of fasting as a very useful expedient, by which to mortify pleasures, and buffet the law of sin that is in our members, and extirpate those emotions which lead on to fleshly lust. But what need had Christ of fasting? For He it is by Whom the Father slays the sin in the flesh. And knowing this, the divine Paul wrote, "For as to the powerlessness of the law, by reason of its weakness because of the flesh, God having sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and because of sin, condemned the sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us, who walk not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." He therefore, who even in us miserable beings mortifies the motions of the flesh, and has abolished sin, what fasting could He need in ought that concerns Himself? He is holy: undefiled by nature: wholly pure, and without blemish. He cannot experience even the shadow of a change. Why therefore did He make His abode in the wilderness, and fast, and endure, being tempted?' The type has regard to us, my beloved: He sets before us His acts as our example, and establishes a model

of the better and more admirable mode of life practised among us, I mean, that of the holy monks. For whence was it possible for men on earth to know that the habit of dwelling in deserts was useful for them, and highly advantageous for salvation? For they retire from waves and storms as it were; from the utter turmoil, and vain distractions of this world, and so to speak like the blessed Joseph, they strip off and give back to the world all that belongs to it. And something like this the wise Paul too says of those who are wont so to live. "But those who are Jesus Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." And he shews to those who choose this mode of life that abstinence is necessary, of which the fruit is fasting and the power of endurance, and of abstaining from or taking but little food. For so will Satan, when he tempts. be overcome.

But observe this especially: that he was first baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit, and withdrew into the wilderness, and made abstinence, that is, fasting, as it were His armour; and being thus equipped, when Satan drew near, and He had overcome him, He has so set before us Himself as our pattern. Thou therefore too must first put on the armour of God, and the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation. Thou too must first be clothed with power from on high, must be made, that is, partaker of the Holy Ghost by means of precious baptism, and then mayest thou undertake to lead the life well beloved and honourable with God: then with spiritual courage thou shalt take for thy habitation the deserts: then shalt thou keep holy fast, and mortify pleasures, and vanquish Satan when he tempts. In Christ therefore have we gained all things.

[From Mai.] Lo! He appears among the combatants, Who as God bestows the prize: among those who wear the chaplet of victory is He Who crowns the heads of the saints. Let us behold therefore the skilfulness of His wrestlings; how He overthrows the devil's wickedness. When forty days had been spent in fasting, "He afterwards hungered." But He it is Who gives food to the hungry, and is Himself the bread that came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, as being That whereby all things consist. But because, on the other hand, it was necessary that He Who refused not our poverty should withdraw from nothing whatsoever that belongs to man's condition, He consented for His flesh to require its natural supplies; and hence the words, "He hungered." It was not however till He had fasted sufficiently, and by His Godlike power had kept His flesh unwasted, though abstaining from meat and drink, that scarcely at length He permitted it to feel its natural sensations: for it says, that He hungered. And for what reason? That skilfully by means of the two, He Who is at once God and Man, might be recognised as such in one and the same person, both as superior to us in His divine nature, and in His human nature as our equal.

4:3. *And the devil said unto him.*

Then the devil draweth near to tempt Him; expecting that the feeling of hunger would aid him in his innate wickedness: for oftentimes he prevails over us by taking our infirmities to aid his plots and enterprizes. He thought that He would readily jump at the wish of seeing bread ready for His use: and therefore he said, "If Thou be the Son of God, bid this stone become bread." He approaches Him therefore as an ordinary man, and as one of the saints: yet he had a suspicion, that possibly He might be the Christ. In what way then did he wish to learn this? He considered, that to change the nature of any thing into that which it was not, would be the act and deed of a divine power: for it is God Who makes these things and transforms them: if therefore, says he, this be done, certainly He it is Who is looked for as the subverter of my power: but if He refuse to work this change, I have to do with a man, and cast away my fear,

and am delivered from my danger. And therefore it was that Christ, knowing the monster's artifice, neither made the change, nor said that He was either unable or unwilling to make it, but rather shakes him off as importunate and officious, saying that "man shall not live by bread alone;" by which He means, that if God grant a man the power, he can subsist without eating, and live as Moses and Elias, who by the Word of the Lord passed forty days without taking food. If therefore it is possible to live without bread, why should I make the stone bread? But He purposely does not say, I cannot, that He may not deny His own power: nor does He say, I can; lest the other, knowing that He is God, to Whom alone such things are possible, should depart from Him.

And observe, I pray, how the nature of man in Christ casts off the faults of Adam's gluttony: by eating we were conquered in Adam, by abstinence we conquered in Christ.

By the food that springeth up from the earth our earthly body is supported, and seeks for its sustenance that which is congenerate with it: but the rational soul is nourished unto spiritual healthiness by the Word of God. For the food that the earth supplies nourishes the body that is akin to it: but that from above and from heaven strengthens the spirit. The food of the soul is the Word that cometh from God, even the spiritual bread which strengtheneth man's heart, according to what is sung in the Book of Psalms. And such also we affirm to be the nature of the food of the holy angels.

4:5. *He shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world.*

But O thou malignant, and wicked, and accursed being, how didst thou dare to shew the Lord all the kingdoms of the whole creation, and say, "All these are mine? Now therefore if Thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give them Thee." How dost thou promise that which is not thine? Who made thee heir of God's kingdom? Who made thee lord of all under heaven? Thou hast seized these things by fraud. Restore them therefore to the incarnate Son, the Lord of all. Hear what the prophet Isaiah says respecting thee; "Hath it been prepared for thee also to reign? a deep gulf, fire, and brimstone, and wood laid in order; the anger of the Lord as a gulf burning with brimstone." How then dost thou, whose lot is the inextinguishable flame, promise to the King of all that which is His own? Didst thou think to have Him as thy worshipper at Whom all things tremble, while the Seraphim, and all the angelical powers hymn His glory? It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve ⁴." Seasonably He made mention of this commandment, striking as it were his very heart. For before His advent, Satan had deceived all under heaven, and was himself everywhere worshipped: but the law of God, ejecting him from the dominion he had usurped by fraud, has commanded men to worship Him only Who by nature and in truth is God, and to offer service to Him alone.

4:9. *If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down hence.*

The third temptation which the devil employs is that of vain-glory, saying, "Cast Thyself down hence," as a proof of Thy divinity. But neither did he make Him fall by means of vanity, but himself in this also shot wide of the mark. For He answers, "It is said, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." For God grants not His aid to those who tempt Him, but to those who believe in Him: nor ought we, because He deigns us mercy, therefore to make a vain display. Moreover, Christ never gave a sign to those who tempted Him: "for a wicked generation, He saith, seeketh after a sign, and a sign shall not be given it." And let Satan now when tempting

hear the same. Wo therefore won the victory in Christ: and he who conquered in Adam went away ashamed, that we might have him under our feet; for Christ as Conqueror handed on to us also the power to conquer, saying, "Behold I have granted you to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy."

4:10. *For it is written, that He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee to guard Thee.*

But see how maliciously he endeavours by the use of the Scriptures to humble the glory of the Lord, as if in need of angelic aid; and as though it would stumble, did not the angels help it. For the application of the Psalm refers not to Christ, nor does the Sovereign need angels. As for the pinnacle, it was a very lofty building, erected at the side of the temple.

5 Some however wrongly refer the Psalm to the person of the Lord, and taking the versos together thus read; "Because Thou, O Lord, art my hope, Thou has made the Most High Thy refuge." They say therefore that the Lord had as His refuge the Most High, even the Father Who is in heaven. And their pretext for such a way of understanding it is, that Satan so took the verses, saying, "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, that He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee." For Satan being false and a deceiver, applies what is said of us to the person of Christ the Saviour of us all. But we do not understand it in Satan's fashion; though if the Arians have so understood it, there is no cause for astonishment: for they follow their own father, "who is a liar, and the truth is not in him," according to the Saviour's words. For if the truth be as they say, and we have made Christ our help, and He has the Father for His refuge, then have we fled to one Who Himself has need of aid, and call Him our Saviour Who is saved by another. This cannot be: Heaven forbid. We say therefore to those who are wont so to think, Ye tell us another of your errors: ye are travelling out of the royal and straight path: ye are falling into thorns and pitfalls: ye have wandered from the truth. The Son is in all things equal to the Father: the mark and impress of His substance: the Most High, as also the Father is Most High.

Satan then made use of these verses, as though the Saviour were a common man. For being entirely darkness, and having his mind blinded, he understood not the force of what was said, that the psalm is spoken in the person of every just man who is aided by the Highest, even the God of heaven. And besides this, He knew not that the Word being God, was made man, and was Himself now being tempted in accordance with the plan of salvation. He therefore, as I said, supposed the words were spoken as of a common man, or even as of one of the holy prophets. But it is monstrous for us, who accurately know the mystery, and believe that He is God and the Son of God, and that for our sakes He became man like unto us, to imagine that the verses were spoken of Him. To say then, "Thou hast made the Most High thy refuge," befits not the person of the Saviour. For He is Himself the Most High: the refuge of all: the hope of all: the all-powerful right hand of the Father: and whosoever has made Him his defence, no evil shall approach him. For He shall command the angels, who are ministering spirits, to guard the just. For just as our fathers in the flesh, when they see the path rough and impassable, catch up their infants in their hands, lest perchance their tender feet should be hurt, being as yet unable to walk over the hard road, so also the rational powers do not permit those, who are as yet unable to labour, and whose understanding is still childish, to toil beyond their strength, but snatch them out of every temptation.

4:14. *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit unto Galilee.*

Having left the habitations of cities, He dwelt in deserts: there He fasted, being tempted of Satan; there He gained victory in our behalf: there He crushed the heads of the dragons: there, as the blessed David says, "The swords of the enemy utterly failed, and cities were destroyed," that is, those who were like towers and cities. Having therefore mightily prevailed over Satan, and having crowned in His own person man's nature with the spoils won by the victory over him, He returned unto Galilee in the power of the Spirit, both exercising might and authority, and performing very many miracles, and occasioning great astonishment. And He wrought miracles, not as having deceived the grace of the Spirit from without and as a gift, like the company of the saints, but rather as being by nature and in truth the Son of God the Father, and taking whatever is His as His own proper inheritance. For He even said unto Him, "That all that is Mine is Thine, and Thine Mine, and I am glorified in them." He is glorified therefore by exercising as His own proper might and power that of the consubstantial Spirit.

4:16. *And He came to Nazareth: and entered into the synagogue.*

Since therefore it was now necessary that He should manifest Himself to the Israelites, and that the mystery of His incarnation should now shine forth to those who knew Him not, and inasmuch as He was now anointed of God the Father for the salvation of the world, He very wisely orders this also, [viz. that His fame should now spread abroad.] And this favour He grants first to the people of Nazareth, because, humanly speaking, He had been brought up among them. Having entered, therefore, the synagogue, He takes the book to read: and having opened it, selected a passage in the prophets, which declares the mystery concerning Him. And by these words He most plainly Himself tells us by the voice of the prophet, that He both would be made man, and come to save the world. For we affirm, that the Son was anointed in no other way than by having become according to the flesh such as we are, and taken our nature. For being at once God and man, He both gives the Spirit to the creation in His divine nature, and receives it from God the Father in His human nature; while it is He Who sanctifies the whole creation, both as having shone forth from the Holy Father, and as bestowing the Spirit, Which He Himself pours forth, both upon the powers above as That Which is His own, and upon those moreover who recognised His appearing.

4:18. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; therefore He hath anointed Me: He hath sent Me to preach the Gospel to the poor.*

He plainly shews by these words that He took upon Him the humiliation and submission to the emptying (of His glory), and both the very name of Christ and the reality for our sakes: for the Spirit, He says, which by nature is in Me by the sameness of Our substance and deity, also descended upon Me from without. And so also in the Jordan It came upon Me in the form of a dove, not because It was not in Me, but for the reason for which He anointed Me. And what was the reason for which He chose to be anointed? It was our being destitute of the Spirit by that denunciation of old, "My Spirit shall not abide in these men, because they are flesh."

These words the incarnate Word of God speaks: for being very God of very God the Father, and having become for our sakes man without undergoing change, with us He is anointed with the oil of gladness, the Spirit having descended upon Him at the Jordan in the form of a dove. For in old time both kings and priests were anointed symbolically, gaining thereby a certain measure of sanctification: but He Who for our sakes became incarnate, was anointed with the spiritual oil of sanctification, and the actual descent of the Spirit, receiving It not for Himself, but for us. For inasmuch as the Spirit had taken its flight, and not made His abode in

us because of our being flesh, the earth was full of grief, being deprived of the participation of God.

And He proclaimed also deliverance to captives, which also He accomplished by having bound the strong one, Satan, who in tyrant fashion lorded it over our race, and having torn away from Him us his goods.

As the words "He anointed Me" befit the manhood: for it is not the divine nature which is anointed, but that which is akin to us: so also the words "He sent Me" are to be referred to that which is human.

Those also whose heart was of old obscured by the darkness of the devil, He has illuminated by rising as some Sun of Righteousness, and making them the children no longer of night and darkness, but of light and day, according to Paul's word, And those who were blind,----for the Apostate had blinded their hearts,----have recovered their sight, and acknowledged the truth; and, as Isaiah says, "Their darkness has become light:" that is, the ignorant have become wise: those that once were in error, have known the paths of righteousness. And the Father also says somewhere unto the Son Himself, "I have given Thee for a covenant of kindred, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out the prisoners from their bonds, and from the guard-house those that sit in darkness." For the Only-begotten came into this world and gave a new covenant to His kindred, the Israelites, of whom He was sprung according to the flesh, even the covenant long before announced by the voice of the prophets. But the divine and heavenly light shone also upon the Gentiles: and He went and preached to the spirits in Hades, and showed Himself to those who were shut up in the guard-house, and freed all from their bonds and violence. And how do not these things plainly prove that Christ is both God, and of God by nature?

And what means the sending away the broken in freedom? It is the letting those go free whom Satan had broken by the rod of spiritual violence. And what means the preaching the acceptable year of the Lord? It signifies the joyful tidings of His own advent, that the time of the Lord, even the Son, had arrived. For that was the acceptable year in which Christ was crucified in our behalf, because we then were made acceptable unto God the Father, as the fruit borne by Him. Wherefore He said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men unto Myself." And verily He returned to life the third day, having trampled upon the power of death: after which He said to His disciples, "All power has been given Me, &c." That too is in every respect an acceptable year in which, being received into His family, we were admitted unto Him, having washed away sin by holy baptism, and been made partakers of His divine nature by the communion of the Holy Ghost. That too is an acceptable year, in which He manifested His glory by ineffable miracles: for with joy have we accepted the season of His salvation, which also the very wise Paul referred to, saying, "Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation:" the day, when the poor who erewhile were sick by the absence of every blessing, having no hope and being without God in the world, such as were the gentiles, were made rich by faith in Him, gaining the divine and heavenly treasure of the Gospel message of salvation; by which they have been made partakers of the kingdom of heaven, copartners with the saints, and heirs of blessings such as neither the mind can conceive nor language tell. "For eye, it saith, hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." Though it may also be true, that the text here speaks of the abundant supply of graces bestowed by Christ upon the poor in spirit,

But by the bruised in heart, He means, those who have a weak and yielding mind, unable to resist the attacks of their passions, and so carried along by them, as to seem to be captives: to these He promises both healing and forgiveness.

And to those who are blind, He gives the recovering of sight. For those who serve the creature instead of the Creator, "and say to the wood, Thou art my father, and to the stone, Thou hast begotten me," without recognising Him Who is by nature and in truth God, how can they be ought else than blind, seeing they have a heart devoid of the light that is divine and spiritual? And on these the Father bestows the light of the true knowledge of God: for they are called through faith, and acknowledge Him, or rather are acknowledged of Him, and whereas they were children of night and darkness, they have been made children of light. For the day has shone upon them, and the sun of righteousness has arisen, and the bright morning star has dawned.

There is no objection, however, to any one's referring all these declarations to the Israelites. For they were poor, and crushed in heart, and, so to speak, prisoners, and in darkness. "For there was not upon earth that was doing good, not even one. But all had turned aside, together they had become unprofitable." But Christ came, preaching to the Israelites before all others, the glories of His advent. And like to their maladies were those of the Gentiles; but they have been redeemed by Him, having been enriched with His wisdom, and endowed with understanding, and no longer is their mind weak and broken, but healthy and strong, and ready to receive and practise every good and saving work. For in their error they had need of wisdom and understanding, who in their great folly worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, and inscribed stocks and stones with the name of Gods. But those who long ago lived in gloom and darkness, because they knew not Christ, now acknowledge Him as their God.

These words having been read to the assembled people, He drew upon Himself the eyes of all, wondering perhaps how He knew letters Who had not learnt. For it was the wont of the Israelites to say, that the prophecies concerning Christ were fulfilled, either in the persons of some of their more glorious kings, or, at all events, in the holy prophets. For not correctly understanding what was written of Him, they missed the true direction, and travelled on another path. But that they might not again thus misinterpret the present prophecy, He carefully guards against error by saying, "This day is this prophecy fulfilled in your ears," expressly setting Himself before them in these words, as the person spoken of in the prophecy. For it was He Who preached the kingdom of heaven to the heathen, who were poor, having nothing, neither God, nor law, nor prophets; or rather, He preached it unto all who were destitute of spiritual riches: the captives He set free, having overthrown the apostate tyrant Satan, and Himself shed the divine and spiritual light on those whose heart was darkened; for which reason He said, "I am come a light into this world:" it was He Who unbound the chains of sin from those whose heart was crushed thereby: Who clearly shewed that there is a life to come, and denounced the just judgment. Finally, it was He Who preached the acceptable year of the Lord, even that in which the Saviour's proclamation was made: for by the acceptable year I think is meant His first coming; and by the day of restitution the day of judgment.

4:11. And all bare Him witness and wondered.

For not understanding Him Who had been anointed and sent, and Who was the Author of works so wonderful, they returned to their usual ways, and talk foolishly and vainly

concerning Him. For although they had wondered at the words of grace that proceeded out of His mouth, yet their wish was to treat them as valueless: for they said, "Is not this the son of Joseph?" But what does this diminish from the glory of the Worker of the miracles? What prevents Him from being both to be venerated and admired, even had He been, as was supposed, the son of Joseph? Seest thou not the miracles? Satan fallen, the herds of devils vanquished, multitudes set free from various kinds of maladies? Thou praisest the grace that was present in His teachings; and then dost thou, in Jewish fashion, think lightly of Him, because He accounted Joseph for His father? O great senselessness! True is it to say of them, "Lo! a people foolish, and without understanding: they have eyes and see not, ears, and hear not."

4:23. *Ye will altogether say unto Me this parable...*

This was a common saying among the Jews, and had its origin in a witticism: for when physicians were themselves ill, men would say, Physician, heal thyself. Christ therefore, setting before them as it were this proverb, said unto them, Ye wish for many signs to be wrought by Me among you especially, in whose country I was brought up; but I know the common feeling to which all men are liable: for always, somehow or other, even the choicest things are despised when there is no scarcity of them, and people have them in abundance. And so too is the case with men: for his acquaintance will oftentimes refuse one with whom they are familiar, and who is constantly among them, even the honour which is due. He rebuked them therefore for asking so foolishly, "Is not this the son of Joseph?" and still keeping to the object of His teaching, says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that no prophet is acceptable in his country."

4:25. *There were many widows in the days of Elias.*

For since, as I have mentioned, certain of the Jews affirmed that the prophecies relating to Christ had been accomplished either in the holy prophets, or in certain of their own more distinguished men, He for their good draws them away from such a supposition ^z, by saying that Elias had been sent to a single widow, and that the prophet Elisaeus had healed but one leper, Naaman the Syrian: by these signifying the church of the heathen, who were about to accept Him, and be healed of their leprosy, by reason of Israel remaining impenitent.

4:28. *And all in the synagogue were filled with anger.*

They then were inflamed with anger, because he had branded their wicked thought; and also because He had said. To-day is this Scripture fulfilled, namely, that "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me;" for they considered that He made Himself equal to the prophets. Moreover, they cast Him out of their city, decreeing thereby their own condemnation, and confirming; what the Saviour had said: for they themselves were banished from the city that is above, for not having received Christ. And that He might not convict them of impiety in words merely, He permitted their audacity against Himself to proceed even unto deeds: for their violence was unreasonable, and their envy untamed. Leading Him therefore to the brow of the hill, they endeavoured to throw Him from the crags: but He went through the midst of them without taking any notice, so to say, of their attempt: not as refusing to suffer,---for for this reason He had even come,---but as awaiting a suitable time. For it was now the commencement of His preaching, and it would have been unseasonable to have suffered before He had proclaimed the word of truth. For it depended on Him to suffer, or not to suffer; for He is Lord of times as

well as of things. And this is a proof, that when He suffered He suffered voluntarily, and that neither then could He have suffered, had He not yielded Himself thereto.

4:31. *And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.*

Those whom argument cannot bring to the sure knowledge of Him Who by nature and in truth is God and Lord, may perhaps be won by miracles unto a docile obedience. And therefore usefully, or rather necessarily, He oftentimes completes His lessons by proceeding to the performance of some mighty work. For the inhabitants of Judaea were unready to believe, and slighted the words of those who called them to salvation, and especially the people of Capernaum had this character: for which reason the Saviour reproveth them, saying, "And thou Capernaum, that art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down unto hell." But although He knows them to be both disobedient, and hard of heart, nevertheless He visits them as a most excellent physician would those who were suffering under a very dangerous disease, and endeavours to rid them of their malady. For He says Himself, that "those who are in health, have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." He taught therefore in their synagogues with great freedom of speech: for this He had foretold by the voice of Isaiah, saying, "I have not spoken in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth." The holy apostles moreover He even commanded to publish their words concerning Him with full boldness of speech, saying, "What I tell you in darkness, speak ye in the light: and what ye have heard (whispered) into the ear, proclaim upon the housetops." On the Sabbath also, when they were at leisure from labour, He conversed with them. They therefore wondered at the power of His teaching, and at the greatness of His authority: "For the word, it says, was with authority;" for He used not flatteries, but urged them to salvation. For the Jews indeed thought that Christ was nothing more than one of the saints, and that He had appeared among them in prophetic rank only: but that they might entertain a higher opinion and idea concerning Him, He exceeds the prophetic measure; for He never said, Thus saith the Lord, as of course was their custom, but as being the Lord of the law He spake things that surpass the law.

God moreover said by Isaiah, "And I will make with them an everlasting covenant, even the holy, the sure things of David: behold I have given Him as a testimony among the gentiles, a ruler and commander of the gentiles." For it was fitting that Moses, as a servant, should be the minister of the shadow that endureth not: but Christ, I affirm, was the eternal publisher of a lasting and abiding worship. And what is the eternal covenant? It means the sacred prophecies of Christ, Who is of David's seed according to the flesh, and which produce in us holiness, and sureness: just as also the fear of God is pure, because it makes us pure: and the word of the Gospel is life, because it produces life: "for the words, He says, "that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life," that is, spiritual and life-giving. But mark well the exactness of the prophecy. Isaiah, speaking as in the person of God the Father concerning Christ, says, "Lo, I have given Him as a testimony unto the Gentiles," that is, to bear witness unto them, that these things are acceptable; that no one may imagine Him to be one of the holy prophets, but that all mankind may rather know, that He is radiant with the glory of lordship,---for being God, He appeared unto us;---and so he goes on to say, not merely that He was given for a testimony, but also as "a ruler and commander of the gentiles." For the blessed prophets, and before them even Moses, holding the station of servants, ever called out to their hearers, "Thus saith the Lord," not as being so much commanders, as ministers of the divine words. But our Lord Jesus Christ spake words most worthy of God; and was therefore admired even by the Jews themselves, because His word was with authority, and because He taught them as

one that had authority, and not as their scribes. For His word was not of the shadow of the law, but as being Himself the lawgiver, He changed the letter into the truth, and the types into their spiritual meaning. For He was a ruler, and possessed a ruler's authority to command.

4:35. *And Jesus rebuked him.*

With godlike power He rebuked the unclean spirits, making the miracle follow immediately upon His words, that we might not disbelieve. We have seen the guilty Satan overcome by Him in the wilderness, and broken by three falls: we have seen his might again shaken, and the power that was against us falling: we have seen ourselves rebuking the wicked spirits in Christ as our firstfruits. For that this also has reference to the ennoblement of human nature, thou mayest learn from the Saviour's own words. For the Jews indeed maligned His glory, and even said, "This man casteth not out devils except in Beelzebub, prince of the devils:" but He in answer, having first said much and to the purpose, ended by declaring; "But if I in the Spirit of God cast out devils, then has the kingdom of God come upon you unawares." For if, says He, I, Who have become a man like unto you, chide the unclean spirits with godlike power and majesty, it is your nature which is crowned with this great glory: for ye are seen both through Me and in Me to have gained the kingdom of God.

The evil demons therefore were cast out, and made moreover to feel how invincible is His might; and being unable to bear the conflict with Deity, they exclaimed in imperious and crafty terms, "Let us alone: what is there between us and Thee?" meaning thereby, Why dost Thou not permit us to keep our place, whilst Thou art destroying the error of impiety? But they further put on the false appearance of well-sounding words, and call Him the Holy One of God. For they supposed that by this specious kind of language they could excite the desire of vainglory, and thereby prevent His rebuking them, returning as it were one kindness for another. But though he be crafty, he will fail of his prey: for "God is not mocked;" and so the Lord stops their impure tongues, and commands them to depart from those possessed by them. And the bystanders being made witnesses of so great deeds, were astonished at the power of His word. For He wrought His miracles, offering up no prayer, to ask of any one else at all the power of accomplishing them, but being Himself the living and active Word of God the Father, by Whom all things exist, and in Whom all things are, in His own person He crushed Satan, and closed the profane mouth of impure demons.

4:38. *He entered into Simon's house.*

Observe therefore how He Who endured voluntary poverty for our sakes, that we by His poverty might become rich, lodged with one of His disciples,----a man poor, and living in obscurity,----that we might learn to seek the company of the humble, and not to boast ourselves over those in want and affliction.

Jesus arrives at Simon's house, and finds his wife's mother sick of a fever: and He stood, and rebuked the fever, and it left her, Now in what is said by Matthew and Mark, that "the fever left her," there is no hint of any living thing as the active cause of the fever: but in Luke's phrase that "He stood over her, and rebuked the fever, and it left her," I do not know whether we are not compelled to say that that which was rebuked was some living thing unable to sustain the influence of Him Who rebuked it: for it is not reasonable to rebuke a thing without life, and unconscious of the rebuke. Nor is it anything astonishing for there to exist certain powers that inflict harm on the human body: nor must we necessarily think evil of the soul of

those who thus suffer for being harmed by these beings. For neither, when the Devil obtained authority to tempt Job by bodily torments, and struck him with painful ulcers, was Job therefore to be found fault with, for he manfully contended, and nobly endured the blow. God grant, however, that it be said, if at any time we are tempted by bodily pains, "but touch not his soul." The Lord then by a rebuke heals those who are possessed.

He laid also His hands upon the sick one by one, and freed them from their malady, so demonstrating that the holy flesh, which He had made His own, and endowed with godlike power, possessed the active presence of the might of the Word: intending us thereby to learn that though the Only-begotten Word of God became like unto us, yet even so is He none the less God, and able easily, even by His own flesh, to accomplish all things: for by it as His instrument He wrought miracles. Nor is there any reason for great wonder at this; but consider, on the contrary, how fire, when placed in a brazen vessel, communicates to it the power of producing the effects of heat. So therefore the all-powerful Word of God also, having joined by a real union unto Himself the living and intelligent temple taken from the holy Virgin, endowed it with the power of actively exerting His own godlike might. To put to shame, therefore, the Jews, He says, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not: but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe My works." We may, therefore, see, with the Truth Itself witnessing thereto, that the Only-begotten gave not His glory as to a man taken separately and apart by himself, and regarded as the woman's offspring; but as being the One only Son, with the holy body united to Him, He wrought the miracles, and is worshipped also by the creation as God.

He entered, then, into Peter's house, where a woman was lying stretched upon a bed, exhausted with a violent fever: and when He might as God have said, "Put away the disease, arise," He adopted a different course of action. For, as a proof that His own flesh possessed the power of healing, as being the flesh of God, He touched her hand, and forthwith, it says, the fever left her. Let us, therefore, also receive Jesus: for when He has entered into us, and we have received Him into mind and heart, then He will quench the fever of unbefitting pleasures, and raise us up, and make us strong, even in things spiritual, so as for us to minister unto Him, by performing those things that please Him.

But observe again, I pray, how great is the efficacy of the touch of His holy flesh. For It both driven away diseases of various kinds, and a crowd of demons, and overthrows the power of the devil, and heals a very great multitude of people in one moment of time. And though able to perform these miracles by a word and the inclination of His will, yet to teach us something useful for us, He also lays His hands upon the sick. For it was necessary, most necessary, for us to learn, that the holy flesh which He had made His own was endowed with the activity of the power of the Word by His having implanted in it a godlike might. Let It then take hold of us, or rather let us take hold of It by the mystical "Giving of thanks," that It may free us also from the sicknesses of the soul, and from the assault and violence of demons.

4:41. *And rebuking them, He suffered them not to speak.*

He would not permit the unclean demons to confess Him; for it was not fitting for them to usurp the glory of the Apostolic office, nor with impure tongue to talk of the mystery of Christ. Yea! though they speak ought that is true, let no one put credence in them: for the light is not known by the aid of darkness, as the disciple of Christ teaches us, where he says, "For what communion hath light with darkness? or what consent hath Christ with Beliar?"

5:2. And He saw two ships standing by the lake, but the fishermen were gone out of them, and, were washing their nets.

LET us admire the skilfulness of the method employed in making them a prey who were to make prey of the whole earth; even the holy Apostles, who, though themselves well skilled in fishing, yet fell into Christ's meshes, that they also, letting down the drag-net of the Apostolic preachings, might gather unto Him the inhabitants of the whole world. For verily He somewhere said by one of the holy prophets, "Behold I send many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall catch them as fish: and afterwards I will send many hunters, and they shall hunt them as game." By the fishers He means the holy Apostles; and by the hunters, those who successively became the rulers and teachers of the holy churches. And observe, I pray, that He not only preaches, but also displays signs, giving thereby pledges of His power, and confirming His words by the display of miracles: for after He had sufficiently conversed with the multitudes, He returns to His usual mighty works, and by means of their pursuits as fishers catches the disciples as fish: that men may know that His will is almighty, and that the creation ministers to His most godlike commands.

5:4. And when He ceased speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep.

As He had now taught them sufficiently, and it was fitting also to add some divine work to His words for the benefit of the spectators, He bade Simon and his companions push off a little from the land, and let down the net for a draught. But they replied, that they had been labouring the whole night, and had caught nothing: in the name, however, of Christ, they let down the net, and immediately it was full of fish; in order that by a visible fact, and by a type and representation, miraculously enacted, they might be fully convinced that their labour would not be unrewarded, nor the zeal fruitless which they displayed in spreading out the net of the Gospel teaching; for that most certainly they should catch within it the shoals of the heathen. But observe this, that neither Simon nor his companions could draw the net to land; and therefore, being speechless from fright and astonishment:---for their wonder had made them mute:---they beckoned, it says, to their partners, those, that is, who shared their labours in fishing, to come and help them in securing their prey. For many have taken part with the holy Apostles in their labours, and still do so, especially such as search into the meaning of what is written in the holy Gospels; and others besides them, even the pastors and teachers and rulers of the people, who are skilled in the doctrines of truth. For still is the net drawn, while Christ fills it, and summons unto conversion those in the depths of the sea, according to the Scripture phrase; those, that is to say, who live in the surge and waves of worldly things.

5:8. And when Simon Peter saw it.

For this reason also Peter, carried back to the memory of his former sins, trembles and is afraid, and as being impure ventures not to receive Him Who is pure: and his fear was laudable: for he had been taught by the law to distinguish between the holy and the profane.

5:12. And behold a man full of leprosy.

The faith, however, of him who drew near is worthy of all praise: for he testifies that the Emmanuel can successfully accomplish all things, and seeks deliverance by His godlike

commands, although his malady was incurable: for leprosy will not yield to the skill of physicians. I see, however, he says, the unclean demons expelled by a godlike authority: I see others set free from many diseases: I recognise that such things are wrought by some divine and resistless force: I see, further, that He is good, and most ready to pity those who draw near unto Him: what therefore forbids His taking pity on me also? And what is Christ's answer? He confirms His faith, and produces full assurance upon this very point. For He accepts His petition, and confesses that He is able, and says, "I will: be thou cleansed." He grants him also the touch of His holy and all-powerful hand, and immediately the leprosy departed from him, and his affliction was at an end. And in this join with me in wondering at Christ thus exercising at the same time both a divine and a bodily power. For it was a divine act so to will, as for all that He willed to be present unto Him: but to stretch out the hand was a human, act: Christ therefore is perceived to be One of both, if, as is the case, the Word was made flesh.

5:14. *And He charged him to tell no man.*

Even though the leper had been silent, the very nature of the fact was enough to proclaim to all who knew him how great was His power Who had wrought the cure. But He bids him tell no man: and why? That they who receive from God the gift of working cures may hereby learn not to look for the applause of those whom they have healed, nor indeed any one's praises whatsoever, lest they fall a prey unto pride, of all vices the most disgraceful.

He purposely, however, bids the leper offer unto the priests the gift according to the law of Moses. For it was indeed confessedly His wish to put away the shadow, and transform the types unto a spiritual service. As the Jews, however, because as yet they did not believe on Him, attached themselves to the commands of Moses, supposing their ancient customs to be still in force, He gives leave to the leper to make the offering for a testimony unto them. And what was His object in granting this permission? It was because the Jews, using ever as a pretext their respect for the law, and saying that the hierophant Moses was the minister of a commandment from on high, made it their endeavour to treat with contempt Christ the Saviour of us all. They even said plainly, "We know that God spake unto Moses: but This man, we know not whence He is." It was necessary, therefore, for them to be convinced by actual facts that the measure of Moses is inferior to the glory of Christ: "For he indeed as a servant was faithful over his house; but the other as a Son over His Father's house." From this very healing, then, of the leper, we may most plainly see that Christ is incomparably superior to the Mosaic law. For Mariam, the sister of Moses, was herself struck with leprosy for speaking against him: and at this Moses was greatly distressed; and when he was unable to remove the disease from the woman, he fell down before God, saying, "O God, I beseech Thee, heal her." Observe this, then, carefully: on the one hand, there was a request; he sought by prayer to obtain mercy from above: but the Saviour of all spake with godlike authority, "I will: be thou cleansed." The removal therefore of the leprosy was a testimony to the priests, and by it those who assign the chief rank to Moses may know that they are straying from the truth. For it was fitting, even highly fitting, to regard Moses with admiration as a minister of the law, and servant of the grace that was spoken of angels; but far greater must be our admiration of the Emmanuel, and the glory we render Him as very Son of God the Father.

And whoever will may see the profound and mighty mystery of Christ written for our benefit in Leviticus. For the law of Moses declares the leper defiled, and gives orders for him to be put out of the camp as unclean: but should the malady ever be alleviated, it commands that he

should then be capable of readmission. Moreover it clearly specifies the manner in which he is to be pronounced clean, thus saying; "This is the law of the leper on whatsoever day he shall have been cleansed, and shall be brought unto the priest. And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall see him, and behold, the touch of the leprosy is healed from the leper: and the high priest shall command, and they shall take for him who is cleansed two living clean birds; and the high priest shall command, and they shall kill the one into an earthen vessel over living water: and he shall take the living bird, and dip it into the blood of the bird that was killed over the living water, and shall sprinkle it seven times over the man cleansed of the leprosy, and he shall be cleansed: and he shall send away the living bird into the field." The birds then are two in number, both without stain, that is, clean, and liable to no fault on the part of the law: and the one of them is slain over living water, but the other, being saved from slaughter, and farther baptized in the blood of that which died, is let loose.

This type, then, represents to us the great and adorable mystery of our Saviour. For the Word was from above, even from the Father, from heaven; for which reason He is very fitly compared to a bird: for though He came down for the dispensation's sake to bear our likeness, and took the form of a slave, yet even so He was from above.----Yea, He even, when speaking to the Jews, said so plainly, "Ye are from beneath: I am from above." And again, "No one hath ascended up into heaven, but the Son of man That came down from heaven." As therefore I just now said, even when He became flesh, that is, perfect man, He was not earthy, not made of clay as we are, but heavenly and superior to things worldly in respect of that wherein He is perceived to be God. We may see, then, in the birds (offered at the cleansing of the leper), Christ suffering indeed in the flesh according to the Scriptures, but remaining also beyond the power of suffering; and dying in His human nature, but living in His divine; for the Word is Life. Yea, too, the very wise disciple said, "that He was put to death in the flesh, but made to live in the spirit." But though the Word could not possibly admit the suffering of death into His own nature, yet He appropriates to Himself that which His flesh suffered: for the living bird was baptized in the blood of the dead one; and thus stained with blood, and all but made partaker of the passion, it was sent forth into the wilderness. And so did the Only-begotten Word of God return unto the heavens, with the flesh united unto Him. And strange was the sight in heaven, yea, the throng of angels marvelled when they saw in form like unto us the King of earth, and Lord of might: moreover they said, "Who is This that cometh from Edom?-- --meaning thereby the earth:----the redness of "His garments is from Bosor:" the interpretation of which is flesh, as being a narrowing and pressing. Then too they inquired, "Are such the wounds in the middle of Thy hands?" and He answered, "With these was I wounded in the house of My beloved." For just as after His return to life from the dead, when showing, with most wise purpose, His hands unto Thomas, He bade him handle both the prints of the nails, and the holes bored in His side: so also, when arrived in heaven, He gave full proof to the holy angels, that Israel was justly cast out and fallen from being of His family. For this reason, He shewed His garment stained with blood, and the wounds in His hands, and not as though He could not put them away; for when He rose from the dead, He put off corruption, and with it all its marks and attributes: He retained them therefore, that the manifold wisdom of God, which He wrought in Christ, might now be made known by the Church, according to the plan of salvation, to principalities and powers.

But perhaps some one will say, How can you affirm that Jesus Christ is one and the same Son and Lord, when there were two birds offered? Does not the law very plainly hereby show that there are certainly two Sons and Christs? Yes, verily, men have ere now been brought to such a pitch of impiety, as both to think and say, that the Word of God the Father is one Christ

separately by Himself, and that He Who is of the seed of David is another. But we reply to those who, in their ignorance, imagine such to be the case, what the divine Paul writes, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." If, therefore, they affirm that there are two Sons, necessarily there must be two Lords, and two faiths, and the same number of baptisms: and therefore, though he has Christ speaking within him, as he himself affirms, yet will his teaching be false. But this cannot be: away with such a thought! We therefore acknowledge one Lord, even the Only-begotten incarnate Word of God: not putting apart the manhood and the Godhead, but earnestly affirming that the Word of God the Father Himself became man while continuing to be God.

And next, let those who hold a contrary opinion be the speakers. 'If, they say, there are two Sons, one specially of the seed of David, and the other again separately the Word of God the Father; must not the Word of God the Father be superior in nature to him of the seed of David? What, then, shall we do in seeing the two birds, not distinct in nature from one another, but, on the contrary, of the same kind, and in no point, as regards specific difference, unlike one another.' But they gain nothing by their argument; for great is the distance between the Godhead and the manhood: and in the explanation of examples, we are to understand them according to their fitting analogy; for they fall short of the truth, and often effect but a partial demonstration of the things signified by them. We say, moreover, that the law was a sort of shadow and type, and a painting, as it were, setting things forth before the view of the spectators: but in the pictorial art, the shadows are the foundations for the colours; and when the bright hues of the colours have been laid upon them, then at length the beauty of the painting will flash forth. And in like manner, since it was fitting for the law of Moses to delineate clearly the mystery of Christ, it does not manifest Him as both dying and at the same time living in one and the same bird, lest what was done should have the look of a theatrical juggle; but it contained Him, as suffering slaughter in the one bird, and in the other displayed the same Christ as alive and set free.

But I will endeavour to shew that my argument here does not go beyond the bounds of probability by means of another history. For were any one of our community to wish to see the history of Abraham depicted as in a painting, how would the artist represent him? as doing every thing at once? or as in turn, and variously acting in many different modes, though all the while the same one person? I mean, for instance, as at one time sitting upon the ass with the lad accompanying him, and the servants following behind: then again the ass left with the servants, Isaac laden with the wood, and himself carrying in his hands the knife and the fire: then in another compartment, the same Abraham in a very different attitude, with the lad bound upon the wood, and his right hand armed with the knife ready to strike the blow. Yet it would not be a different Abraham in each place, though represented in very many different forms in the painting, but one and the same everywhere, the painter's art conforming itself constantly to the requirements of the things to be represented. For it would be impossible in one representation to see him performing all the above-mentioned acts. So therefore the law was a painting and type of things travelling with truth, and therefore even though there were two birds, yet was He Who was represented in both but One, as suffering and free from suffering, as dying and superior to death, and mounting up unto heaven as a sort of second first fruits of human nature renewed unto incorruption. For He has made a new pathway for us unto that which is above, and we in due time shall follow Him. That the one bird then was slain, and that the other was baptized indeed in its blood, while itself exempt from slaughter, typified what was really to happen. For Christ died in our stead, and we, who have been baptized into His death, He has saved by His own blood.

5:17. *And He Himself was teaching, and the Pharisees were sitting.*

Around Him verily was a company of the envious, scribes, that is, and pharisees, who were spectators of His wonderful works, and listened as He taught: "and the power of God was present, it says, to heal him." Is this spoken as though God gave Him the ability to perform the miracles? Did He borrow of another the power? But who would venture to affirm this? Rather it was He Himself, working by His own power, as God and Lord, and not as partaker of some divine grace. For men indeed often, even after being counted worthy of spiritual gifts, yet sometimes occasionally prove infirm, according to the proportion known to Him Who distributes these divine graces. But in the case of the Saviour of us all, there was nought such as this; but His power to heal him was not a human power, but rather one divine and irresistible: for He was God and the Son of God.

[From Cod. D.] Christ alone teaches as being the (true) teacher, and the wisdom of the Father. For all the rest teach as receiving from Him. "And there was also, it says, the power of the Lord upon Him to heal all;" which means that His power to heal was not human, but divine and irresistible. For the rest of the saints at one time receive the power to work cures, and at another time, not: but Jesus, as being God, and the power of the Father, ever healed all.

5:18. *And behold certain bringing on a bed a man who was paralytic.*

[From Cod. D.] When, then, no small number, as it says, of scribes and pharisees, were assembled together, behold certain bringing upon a bed a man who was paralytic; and not being able to come in by the door, they carried him up to the roof, to attempt a strange and novel deed. For having pulled up the tiling, they removed the wood laid there: and still, while this was being done, both Jesus waited patiently, and those who were present; kept silence, watching for the result, and wishing to see what He would say and do. Having uncovered, therefore, the roof, they let down the bed, and lay the paralytic in the midst. What then does the Lord do? Having seen their faith, ----not that of the paralytic, but of the bearers; for it is possible for one to be healed by the faith of others; or, perceiving that the paralytic also believed, He healed him. It is possible, however, that the place into which they let down the bed of the paralytic through the tiles was open to the air, so that they would not have at all to break up the roof. But when the Saviour says to him, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee," He addresses this generally to mankind: for those who believe in Him, being healed of the diseases of the soul, will receive forgiveness of the sins which formerly they had committed. Or He may mean this; I must heal thy soul before I heal thy body: for if this be not done, by obtaining strength to walk, thou dost but sin the more: and even though thou hast not asked for this, yet I as God see the maladies of the soul, which brought upon thee this disease.

And as it was necessary, now that so large a number of scribes and pharisees had assembled, that some especially divine miracle should be wrought for their benefit, because of the scorn with which they regarded Him, well does the Saviour provide again for them a most wonderful deed. For there was stretched upon a bed a paralytic, overcome with an incurable disease: and as the art of the physicians had proved altogether unavailing, he was carried by his relatives to the Physician Who is from above, even from heaven. And when he was in the presence of Him Who is able to heal, his faith was accepted: and that faith can take away sin, Christ immediately shews; for He proclaims to him as he lay there, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Now some one, I imagine, may say to this; What he wanted was to be delivered from his disease; and why, then, does Christ announce to him the forgiveness of his sin? It was that thou

mayest learn that God silently and noiselessly observes the affairs of men, and watches the course of each one's life; and so it is written, "The paths of a man are before the eyes of God; and He looks at all his tracks." And as He is good, and willeth that all men should be saved, He often purifies those who are entangled in sins by inflicting sickness upon their body. For so He somewhere says by the voice of Jeremiah, "Thou shalt be taught, O Jerusalem, by labour and the scourge." And the writer of the book of Proverbs also has somewhere said, "My son, despise not thou the teaching of the Lord, nor faint when thou art convicted by Him, for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He accepteth." Well, therefore, does Christ announce that He will cut away the cause of the disease, and the very root, as it were, of the malady, even sin: for if this be removed, necessarily must the disease which sprung from it be also at the same time taken away.

5:21. *And the scribes and pharisees began to reason, saying.*

He then, as was said, being endowed with a most godlike authority, declared the forgiveness of sins. But the declaration disturbs again the ignorant and envious gang of the Pharisees: for they said one to another, "Who is This That speaketh blasphemies?" But thou wouldest not have said this of Him, O Pharisee, if thou hadst known the divine Scriptures, and borne in mind the words of prophecy, and understood the adorable and mighty mystery of the incarnation. But now they involve Him in a charge of blasphemy, determining against Him the uttermost penalty, and condemning Him to death: for the law of Moses commanded that whoever spake blasphemies against God, should suffer death. But no sooner have they arrived at this height of daring, than He shews forthwith that He is God, to convict them once more of intolerable impiety. "For what, saith He, reason ye in your hearts?" If thou, therefore, O Pharisee, sayest, who can forgive sins but One, God; I will also say to thee, Who can know hearts, and see the thoughts hidden in the depth of the understanding, but God only? For He saith Himself somewhere by the voice of the prophets, "I am the Lord that searcheth hearts, and trieth reins." And David also said somewhere concerning both Him and us, "He Who singly formed their hearts." He therefore Who as God knows both the hearts and reins, as God also forgives sins.

5:24. *But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power.*

But inasmuch as a place still remains open for disbelief, in saying, "Thy sins be forgiven thee:"---for man sees not the forgiven sins with the eyes of the body, whereas the putting off of the disease, and the paralytic's rising up and walking carries with it a clear demonstration of a godlike power:---He adds, "Rise up and carry thy bed, and go to thine house:" and this was done, for he returned unto his house, delivered from the infirmity under which he had so long suffered. It is proved therefore by the very fact, that "the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins." But of whom says He this? Is it of Himself, or also of us? Both the one and the other are true. For He forgives sins as being the Incarnate God, the Lord of the law: and we too have received from Him this splendid and most admirable grace. For He hath crowned man's nature with this great honour also, having even said to the holy apostles, "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever things ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever things ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And again, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them: and whosoever ye bind shall be bound." And what is the occasion on which we find Him thus speaking unto them? It was after He had trampled upon the power of death, and risen from the grave, when He breathed upon them, and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost." For having made them partakers of His nature, and bestowed upon

them the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, He also made them sharers of His glory, by giving them power both to remit and to bind sins. And as we have been commanded to perform this very act, how must not He much more Himself remit sins, when He giveth unto others authority to enable them to do so?

5:27. *And He saw a publican named Levi.*

For Levi was a publican, a man insatiable after filthy lucre, of unbridled covetousness, careless of justice in his eagerness after what was not his own; for such was the character of the publicans: yet was he snatched from the very workshop of iniquity, and saved beyond hope, at the call of Christ the Saviour of us all. For He said unto him, "Follow Me: and he left all and followed Him," Seest thou that most wise Paul truly says, that "Christ came to save sinners?" Seest thou how the Only-begotten Word of God, having taken upon Him the flesh, transferred unto Himself the devil's goods?

From Sermon 21.

Explanation of what follows.

"Or how can a man enter the house of the strong man, and spoil his vessels, unless first he have bound the strong man, and then he will spoil his vessels." By the house of the strong man, that is of Satan, He means this country upon earth, and his vessels are those who are likeminded with him. For just as we call the saints holy vessels, so there is nothing to prevent our giving the name of "vessels of the devil" to those who are the contrivers of all wickedness. The Only-begotten Word therefore of God at His incarnation entered into the strong man's house, even into this world, and having bound him, and "sunk him in fetters of darkness," as it is written, spoiled his goods.

[From Mai.] And Levi verily was saved, while in us the deed suggests happy hopes; for by the very fact we are taught that repentance will save. Yea, moreover, God Himself, Who is Lord of all, shall be our surety, where He says by the voice of the prophet, "Return unto Me, and be ye saved, even from the ends of the earth."

From the same Sermon.

Explanation of what follows.

"Which of you that has a hundred sheep, and has lost one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the mountain, and go and seek that which has gone astray? And if he chance to find it, verily I say unto you, that he rejoices more in it, than in the ninety-nine which went not astray." For the multitude of rational created beings which form Christ's flock in heaven and on earth is innumerable, and so great as even to mount up unto a perfect number. For this is what is signified to us by the term "one hundred." The companies then of the holy angels are the ninety-nine; for, as I said, they are many: but the flock on earth is one, but yet useful to complete the number, and sought for also by Christ. Did He then seek it as that which was lost, or as that which had not yet suffered this? But it is plain that that which is lost is sought for. In what manner then had it been lost? By being brought down into sin: by wandering from the divine will, and going far astray from the universal Shepherd.

But none of these things moved the Pharisees: on the contrary, they find fault with them to the disciples; for listen,

5:30. *And their scribes and pharisees murmured, saying unto His disciples:*

There are however some who endeavour to deprive those entangled in sin of the divine gentleness: for they do not admit of repentance, but as it were rebuke the Saviour for seeking His own, and gathering from every quarter that which was scattered: and to these we say, The pharisees set you the example of murmuring, when they saw Levi called, and a crowd of publicans gathered together, and feasting with Christ the Saviour of us all. And going up to the holy apostles, they vented their blame, saying, "Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans?" But they had for answer, "They that are whole need not a physician." For the Saviour of all, as being the physician of spirits, does not withdraw from those in need of Him, but as being able to cleanse them, purposely conversed with those not as yet purified of their sins. But let us see, O pharisee, the overweening pride of thy disposition: for let us take Christ Himself, to Whom all things are known, as the expounder of the great blame that thou broughtest upon thyself by thy overbearing treatment of sinners. For speaking of a Pharisee who vaunted himself when praying, and of a certain publican who accused himself, He said, "Verily I say unto you, that he went down justified to his house rather than that Pharisee." The publican therefore, who confessed his sin, is justified rather than the haughty Pharisee. But for what reason do the Pharisees blame the Saviour for eating with sinners? Because it was the law to put a distinction between the holy and the profane: that is, that whatever was hallowed was not to be brought into contact with things profane. They made the accusation therefore as vindicating the law forsooth: but really it was envy against the Lord, and readiness to find fault. But He shews them that He is present now, not as a judge, but as a physician; and performs the proper duty of the physician's office, in being in the company of those in need of healing. But no sooner had they received an explanation of their first accusation, than they bring forward another, finding fault because His disciples did not fast, wishing to obtain hereby an opportunity against Himself.

But observe their perseverance in malice: for no sooner have they received an explanation of their first accusation, than they change from one thing to another, in the hope of finding an opportunity of convicting the holy disciples, and Jesus Himself, of disregard of the law. But they are told in reply, now is the bride-chamber, the time of calling, the time of instruction: the children are being nursed up; those who are called are being fed with milk: fasting is not yet seasonable. For yes! say they, you feast with publicans and sinners, although the law commands that the pure should not hold intercourse with the impure: and your pretext for transgressing the law is your love for mankind. But why fast ye not according to the custom of the just, and those who wish to live according to the law? But in answer to such objections one may say, Do you understand at all yourself, O Jew, the proper method of fasting? For as the prophet Isaiah says, "On the days of your fasts ye find your own wills, and goad all who are subject unto you. If ye fast for lawsuits and contentions, and strike the lowly with fists, why fast ye for Me? This is not the fast I have chosen, saith the Lord." And dost thou then, when thou thyself knowest not how to fast, blame the holy apostles for not fasting after thy fashion?

And to view it in another light, those who are made wise by the new covenant in Christ, fast rationally; that is, by humbling themselves in the eyes of God, and imposing upon themselves as it were a voluntary sentence of labour and abstinence, that they may obtain forgiveness of their offences, or win some fresh spiritual gift, or even to mortify the law of sin that is in their

fleshly members. But this mode of fasting thou art ignorant of, O Pharisee! For thou hast refused to receive the heavenly Bridegroom, Who is the planter and teacher of every virtue, even Christ. Moreover, the saints indeed fast that they may quell the passions of the body by exhausting it: but Christ needed not to fast for the perfecting of virtue, because, as being God, He was free from all passion; nor did His companions, because they received of His grace, and were made strong, and wrought virtue oven without fasting. And even though He fasted for the forty days, it was not to mortify any passions in Himself, but to set an example for men in His own conduct of the law of abstinence. With good reason therefore He defends Himself by the words which the Evangelist goes on to record.

5:34. *But He said unto them, Can ye make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?*

Observe, I pray again, the manner in which Christ shews that they have no share in the feast, but are altogether strangers to the joy felt on His account, and without part in the world's groat festival. For the revelation of our Saviour to the world was nothing else than a general festival, at which He spiritually united to Himself the nature of man, to be as it were His bride: that she who had been long barren might be fruitful, and blessed with a numerous offspring. All therefore are the children of the bridechamber who are called by Him through the new message of the Gospel: but not the scribes and Pharisees, who attached themselves solely to the shadow of the law. But as He had once granted permission to the children of the bridechamber not to afflict themselves, as a concession suitable to the season, inasmuch as they were keeping a spiritual feast, that fasting might not be entirely rejected by us, He adds most suitably.

5:35. *But the days will come, when also the bridegroom shall be taken away from them; then shall they fast in those days.*

For all things are good in their season. But what is the meaning of the bridegroom being taken away from them? It is His being taken up into heaven.

5:36. *And He spake also a parable unto them.*

But that the institutions of Christ cannot be received by those who live according to the law, nor admitted into the hearts of such as have not as yet received the renewing by the Holy Ghost, the Lord shews by saying, that "a tattered patch cannot be put upon a new garment, nor can old skins hold new wine." For the first covenant has grown old, nor was it free from fault. Those therefore who adhere to it, and keep at heart the antiquated commandment, have no share in the new order of things in Christ: "For in Him all things are become new:" but their mind being decayed, they have no concord nor point of mutual agreement with the ministers of the new covenant. The God of all accordingly somewhere said of them by one of the holy prophets, that "a new heart and a new spirit will I put into them." And David also sings, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And we have been commanded also "to put off the old man, and to put on the new man, renewed after the image of Him that created it." And Paul also gives counsel, saying, "Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Those therefore who have not as yet received the renewing of the spirit, are also unable to prove the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

From Sermon 22.

Explanation of that which is below.

"And no man puts now wine into old skins." The heart of the Jews then is an old skin, and therefore cannot hold the new wine: for this is the saving commandment of the Gospel, making glad the heart of man. But Christ hath filled us with these great blessings, by bountifully endowing us with spiritual gifts, and opening the pathway wide unto all virtue.

6:2. *Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbaths?*

[From Mai.] Yet a new covenant God promiseth us, now that "the first hath waxed old and is near to vanish away," according to the words of the divine Paul. Yea, He even says by one of the holy prophets, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will perfect with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, a new covenant: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took hold of their hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." If therefore the new covenant is the second, and different from the first, there is every necessity for those who wish to live according to it, to abandon the old laws, and conform to those which will guide them into the newness of the gospel polity. But of all this we can see that the Scribes and Pharisees comprehended nothing: for being altogether destitute of knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, they had but one sole purpose, on every occasion to find fault with the divine and heavenly preaching. They lie in wait therefore for the holy apostles in their constant attendance upon our common Saviour Christ, and tell Him concerning them; "Behold we see those who are under Thy instruction acting contrary to the precepts of the law: for they do what it is not lawful to do on the sabbaths: for while the law enjoins men to do no work on the sabbath, and to meddle with no labour whatsoever, the disciples are rubbing ears of corn with their hands." But tell me, dost not thou thyself, when setting thy sabbath meal, break the bread? Why then dost thou blame others? But that we may use against thee the bulwark of the Saviour's words, listen;

6:3. *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Have ye not even read what David did ...?*

Now even though David thus acted contrary to what the law approves, yet he is rightly and justly esteemed by us as worthy of all admiration: for he was in truth a saint and prophet. Since, therefore, the law of Moses expressly commands, "Judge just judgment, and regard not the person in judgment;" how, saith He, condemn ye My disciples, while ye still admire as a saint and prophet the blessed David, although he did not keep Moses' command?

But by the loaves (of the shewbread), there is clearly indicated to us the bread that cometh down from heaven to be set forth upon the holy tables of the churches: and all the furniture of the table, used for the performance of its mystical service, was a plain type of the divine treasures. But spiritually [the bread signifies] the twelve Apostles: of whom we shall speak in duo order, when our discourse reaches the disciples themselves.

From Sermon 23.

Explanation of what follows.

But God said, I require mercy, and not sacrifice: and the acknowledgment of God, and not whole burnt offerings.

What is meant by mercy? and what by sacrifice? By mercy then is signified, Justification and grace in Christ: even that which is by faith. For we have been justified, not by the works of the law that we have done, but by His great mercy. And sacrifice means the law of Moses.

6:6. And He was teaching: and there was a man there whose right hand was withered.

[From Mai.] But His teaching was ever of things too high for reason, and such as made plain to His hearers the pathway of salvation opened through Him: and immediately after His teaching He displayed His godlike power, having first by words smoothed, as it were, the road to belief. For the miracle sometimes converts unto faith those who had disbelieved the word. But the Pharisees watched Him, to see if He would heal on the sabbath: for such is the nature of an envious man, that he makes the praises of others food for his own disease, and wickedly is maddened by their reputation. And what once more said He to this, Who knoweth all things, Who searcheth the hearts, and understandeth whatever is therein? "For with Him is the light," as Scripture declares. "He spake to him that had the withered hand, Stand forth into the midst." And why did He do this? It might perhaps be to move the cruel and un pitying Pharisee to compassion: the man's malady perhaps might shame them, and persuade them to allay the flames of envy.

6:9. I will ask you something: Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil?

Most wise in very deed is this question, and a statement most suitable to meet their folly. For if it be lawful to do good on the sabbath, and nothing prevents the sick being pitied by God, cease thus picking up opportunities for faultfinding against Christ, and bringing down on thy own head the sentence which the Father has decreed against those who dishonour the Son: for thou hast heard Him where He says of Him by the voice of David, "And I will cut off His enemies from before His face, and put to flight those that hate Him." But if it be not lawful to do good on the sabbath, and the law forbids the saving of life, thou hast made thyself an accuser of the law, thou hast slandered the commandment, for which the ministry of Moses is regarded with admiration. No, he replies, the God of all did not enact the law of the sabbath for Himself, but for us rather, whose neck is bowed to it. Thou sayest well; I assent to thy words; therefore that which is divine is free from the compulsion of the law. Why, then, dost thou blame Christ for wishing also to shew mercy on the sabbath, and benefit a living soul? And were it our wish to examine closely the law enacted for the sabbath, we should find it ordained by God for purposes of mercy. For He commanded to do no work on the sabbath, and entirely to abstain from labour, and even to give rest at the same time to the irrational animals. For He said, that its purpose was, "that thy manservant may rest, and thy maidservant, thy ox, and thy beast of burden, and all thy cattle." But He Who has mercy on the ox and other animals, how would not He pity on the sabbath day a man who was attacked by a severe and irremediable malady?

6:11. And they ware filled with madness.

Is not the miracle enough to produce faith? Thou seest Him working with godlike dignity, and with supreme power healing the sick, and travailest thou with murder, bred of envy and malice?

6:12. *He went out into the mountain to pray.*

All that Christ did was for our edification, and for the benefit of those who believe in Him; and by proposing to us His own conduct as a sort of pattern of the spiritual mode of life, He would make us true worshippers. Let us see, therefore, in the pattern and example provided for us by Christ's acts, the manner in which we ought to make our supplications unto God. We must pray secretly and in concealment, and with no one seeing us: for this is the signification of Jesus going into the mountain alone, and praying, as it were, leisurely. And this He has Himself taught us, saying; "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet." For we ought to pray, not seeking after glory, but "lifting up holy hands," while the soul, as it were, mounts aloft to the contemplation of God, withdrawing from all tumult, and quitting worldly anxiety. And this we must do not with fickleness, nor with a listless feebleness; but, on the contrary, with earnestness and zeal, and a patience worthy of admiration: for thou hast heard that Jesus did not merely pray, but that He also passed the night in this duty.

But possibly the enemy of the truth will not endure us when thus speaking: for he says, 'He prays and requests from the Father what He hath not: how then do ye still say, that He is both consubstantial and equal to Him in all things, and in no way whatsoever unlike Him? "For without all controversy the less is blessed of the greater:" and decidedly he who gives is greater than he who makes request to receive something.' Let then those who pervert the right faith teach us first of all, of what they imagine the Son to be in need? And what did He seek to obtain as not as yet possessing it? He is the true light; He is in His own nature life, and the cause of life; He is the Lord also of powers; He is wisdom and righteousness; the Creator and train or of the universe; superior to every thing that has been brought into being; is the King of the universe; the dispenser of heaven and earth; the giver, with God the Father, of every blessing. And this thou wilt learn by what the blessed Paul has somewhere written; "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." He is conspicuous on the throne far above, and is glorified by the whole rational creation. Accordingly He is by substance the heir of all the divine dignities of God the Father: and therefore spake He unto Him, that "all that is Mine is Thine; and Thine Mine: and I am glorified in them." But He Who has every thing that belongs to God the Father as His very own, of what is He still in need? But if, in fine, He is in need of any thing, and they affirm that this is true, there is nothing to prevent our saying, that there are certain things of which the Father Himself is in need. For if all that the Son has is the Father's, but there is something of which the Son is in need, therefore must the Father too be similarly circumstanced: for all that the Son hath is the Father's. But the Father is all perfect, and is deficient of no good whatsoever that is suitable to Deity: therefore is the Son all perfect, as having all that the Father hath, and being His image and the impress of His substance: but in the impress there is displayed entirely the original form, and in the original form there exists entirely the impress. And thus much then as respects them.

And those too who have been caught by the empty declamations of Nestorius, say that it is entirely unbecoming the Son, considered as God by nature, to pray: and rather belongs to the man, coupled with Him by way of connexion, to him, that is, of the seed of David. He it was therefore who offered up the prayer. What reply, then, shall we make to this? That ye are

utterly ignorant of the mystery of the incarnation of the Only-begotten. Remember the blessed Evangelist John, who says; "And the Word was made flesh." And of this the all-wise Paul has given us a plain proof by saying concerning Him: "For He taketh not hold at all of the angels, but taketh hold of the seed of Abraham: whence it became Him to be made like unto His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining unto God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." On what account therefore does Nestorius eject from the measure of human nature Him Who, though divinely begotten as the Word by God the Father, yet humbled Himself unto emptying, even to becoming our brother, by being made like unto us, and similar in all things to the inhabitants of the earth, sin only excepted? For having become like unto us from His exceeding gentleness and love to mankind, He disdains not human things: but sets before us His conduct as a type of goodness unto the end, that as I said we may be earnest in following His footsteps.

6:13. *And when it was day, He called His disciples, and of them having chosen twelve.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, having spent the night in prayer, and having conversed with His Father and God in heaven in a way ineffable and beyond our powers of understanding, and such as is known solely to Himself,---even therein making Himself an example unto us of that which is necessary for salvation; for He taught us in what way we too may rightly and blamelessly offer our prayers:---comes down from the mountain, and appoints those who were to be the world's teachers, according to the words He spake, "Ye are the light of the world." And of this appointment of the holy Apostles, the blessed David also makes mention, addressing himself, as it were, to Christ: "Thou shalt make them rulers over all the earth; they shall make mention of Thy name in every successive generation." For verily, while they were in the body, they made mention of the glory of Christ, telling His mystery both in cities and villages: and now that they have been called to the mansions that are above, none the less do they still even thus converse with us about Him, by the most wise history which they have written concerning Him. And those, indeed, who were appointed priests according to the law of Moses, even Aaron and his company, were made beautiful to the senses by vestments suitable to their priestly dignity; but the divine disciples, being adorned with spiritual gifts, had entrusted to them the ministry of the Gospel oracles. For it was said unto them, "Heal the sick: cast out daemons: cleanse lepers: raise the dead." And being thus invested with Christ's power, they have filled the whole world with astonishment. But mark the extreme moderation of the Evangelist: for he does not simply say that the holy Apostles were appointed, but rather, by introducing the record of these chief ones each by name, takes care that no one should venture to enrol himself in the company of those that were chosen. For as Paul saith, "No man taketh this honour upon himself, but he that is called by God." And though the holy Apostles were called by name to this great and splendid dignity, yet from time to time some men have gone to such a pitch of madness and audacity, as even to name themselves Apostles of Christ, and to usurp an honour not granted unto them. Of these the divine disciples have made mention; for they say, "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into angels of righteousness. And no wonder: for Satan even transforms himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also transform themselves into angels of righteousness." But we neither acknowledge nor will receive any one, except those only so named in the Evangelic writings, and him who was appointed after them, the most wise Paul: to whom also the Saviour Himself bore witness, saying, that he is a vessel of election for Me, to carry My name before all the heathen."

²⁴ The law indeed pointed them out before in type, and the prophets also proclaimed them. As, for instance, it is written in the Mosaic record, "And ye shall take fine flour, and make it into twelve loaves: and he shall put them in two rows upon the pure table before the Lord. And ye shall put upon the row frankincense and salt: and they shall be for loaves, set before the Lord for a memorial." For the bread that came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world, Who else can it be but Christ the Saviour of the universe? And in imitation too of Him, the blessed disciples also are named loaves: for having been made partakers of Him Who nourishes us unto life eternal, they also nourish by their own writings those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. And as the Saviour Who is the true light called the disciples also light:----"for ye are the light of the world:"----so also being Himself the broad of life, He has bestowed upon His disciples to be ranked as loaves." And observe, I pray, the marvellous art of the law: "for ye shall put, it says, upon the loaves frank-incense and salt." Now the frankincense is the symbol of a sweet odour; and the salt that of understanding and good sense: both of which existed in the highest degree in the holy Apostles. For their life was one of a sweet savour, as they also said, that "we are a sweet savour of Christ unto God:" and they were moreover also full of understanding, so that I hear the prophet David even singing of them in the Psalms: "There is Benjamin in entrancement: the princes of Judah are their leaders: the princes of Zebulon, the princes of Nephthalim." For the blessed disciples were chosen out of almost every tribe of Israel, and were the bearers of light to the world, "holding up the word of life." And the wonder indeed is this, that the sages of the Greeks possess a splendid copiousness of speech, and an admirable beauty of language: but the disciples of our Saviour were mere artificers, and boatmen, and fishers, having no boast of words, no fluency of picked phrases, and in expression indeed were simple men, but rich in knowledge: yet is the literature of the Greeks, with its sonorous phrases, silent; while the power of the Evangelic preaching has possession of the world. God also makes mention of them by the voice of Jeremiah, saying of the enemy of all, even Satan; "Woe to him, who multiplieth for himself that which is not his, and maketh his collar thick and heavy: for suddenly shall they arise that shall bite him, and thy adversaries shall wake up, and thou shalt be their prey." For Satan had gathered unto him all the inhabitants of the earth, though they were not his, and had caused them to be his worshippers, making his collar heavy: but those who were to plunder his goods woke up: for the net of the apostolic teaching caught all those that were in error, and brought back unto God the whole world.

From Sermon 25.

Explanation of the saying of the Apostle that follows.

Be ye like unto me, as I also am unto Christ.

AND how was the wise Paul like unto Christ? Did he establish the heavens, as did the Word of God? Did he set the earth upon its firm foundation, and bring forth the sun and moon, and the stars, and light? How therefore was he like Him? By being an imitator of that human virtue, which Christ shewed forth for our example.

6:17. He stood upon level ground, and a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of the people.

But observe, I pray, the manner of the election. For the most wise Evangelist says that it was not done in a corner and secretly, but rather when many disciples were gathered together, and

a vast crowd from all the country of the Jews, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon. These latter were idolaters, lame in the hollow of both knees, in part observing the customs of the Jews, but yet not altogether abandoning their idolatrous practices. The election, therefore, was held in the presence of all these spectators, and teachers appointed for all beneath the heaven: and this duty they also fulfilled, summoning the Jews from their legal worship, and those who served demons, from Grecian error to the acknowledgment of the truth.

And when He had appointed the holy Apostles, He performed very many wonderful miracles, rebuking demons, delivering from incurable diseases whosoever drew near unto Him, and displaying His own most godlike power: that both the Jews, who had run together unto Him, and those from the country of the Greeks, might know, that Christ, by Whom they were honoured with the dignity of the Apostolate, was not some ordinary man of those in our degree, but, on the contrary, God, as being the Word That was made man, but retained, nevertheless, His own glory. For "power went forth from Him, and healed all." For Christ did not borrow strength from some other person, but being Himself God by nature, even though He had become flesh, He healed them all, by the putting forth of power over the sick.

If further you wish to learn the interpretation of the Apostles' names, know that Peter is explained as meaning "loosing," or "knowing:" Andrew as "comely strength," or "answering:" James as "one who takes labour by the heel:" John, "the grace of the Lord:" Matthew, "given:" Philip, "the opening of the hands," or "the mouth of a lamp:" Bartholomew, "the son suspending water:" Thomas, an "abyss," or "a twin:" James, the son of Alphaeus, "the supplanting" of the passage of life:" Judas, "thanksgiving:" and Simon, "obedience."