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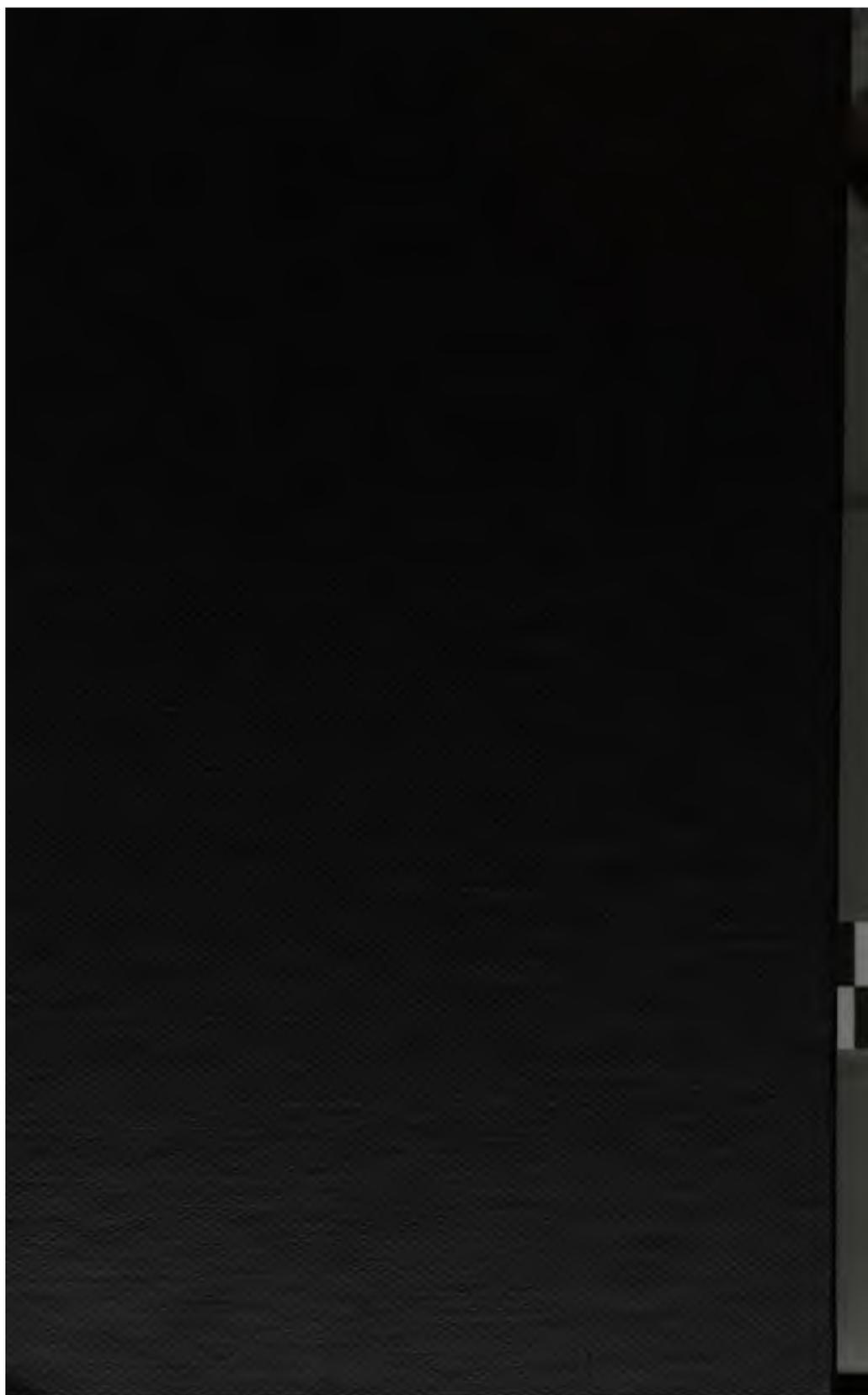
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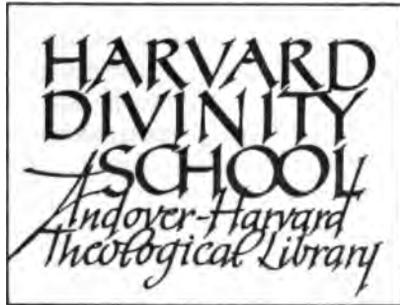
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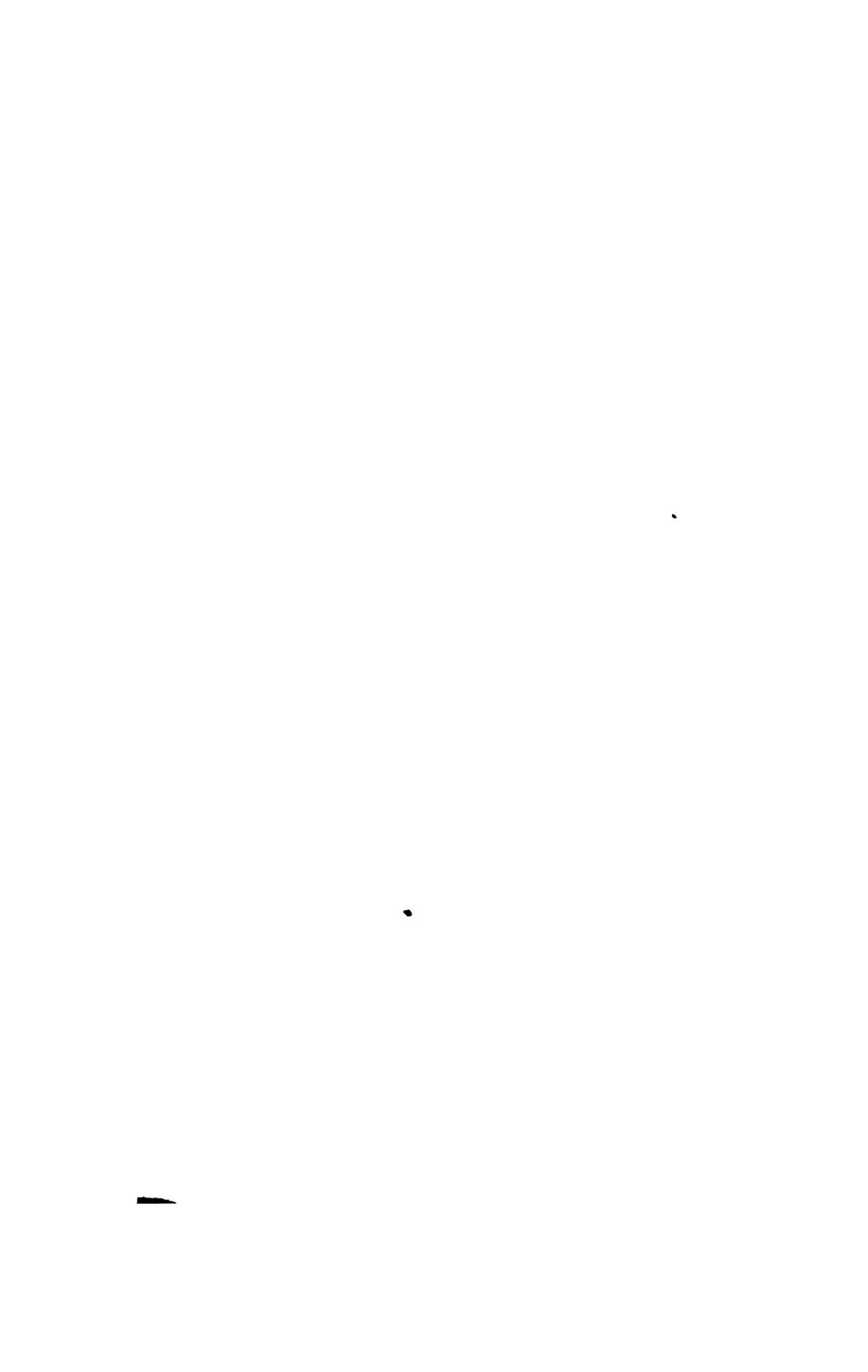
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YET SHALL NOT THY TEACHERS BE REMOVED INTO A CORNER ANY MORE, BUT  
THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS. *Isaiah lxx. 20.*

— U. 37

OXFORD,  
JOHN HENRY PARKER;  
F. AND J. RIVINGTON, LONDON.  
MDCCCLIII.



TO THE MEMORY  
OF THE  
MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD  
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PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND,  
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CARRIED ON FOR TWELVE YEARS UNDER HIS SANCTION,  
UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE HENCE IN PEACE,  
IS  
GRATEFULLY AND REVERENTLY  
INSCRIBED.



**EXPOSITIONS**

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OR

**THE BOOK OF PSALMS,**

BY

**S. AUGUSTINE,**

**BISHOP OF HIPPO,**

**TRANSLATED,**

**WITH NOTES AND INDICES.**

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**IN SIX VOLUMES.**

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**VOL. V.**

**PSALM CII.—CXXV.**

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present Volume is the last but one of St. Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms, translated by the Rev. H. M. WILKINS, M.A. of Merton College, Oxford. The remaining Volume, containing the last twenty-five Psalms, and the Indices, may be expected in about a year. Meanwhile it is hoped that a Volume of St. Athanasius, containing his recently discovered Paschal Epistles, and a Volume of St. Justin Martyr, may be brought out. A statement of the remaining Works, which it is proposed to comprise in the Library, will be found at the end of the Volume.

C. M.

*Feast of St. Mark, 1853.*



# ST. AUGUSTINE

ON

## THE PSALMS.

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### PSALM CII.

1. BEHOLD, one poor man prayeth, and prayeth not in silence. We may therefore hear him, and see who he is: whether it be not perchance He, of Whom the Apostle saith, *Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.* If it is He, then, how is He poor? For in what sense He is rich, who seeth not? For whence are men rich? I suppose from their gold, and silver, their slaves, their land; but *all things were made by Him.* What then is richer than He, by Whom riches were made, even those which are not true riches? For through Him we have even these riches, ability, memory, character, health of body, the senses, and the conformation of our limbs: for when these are safe, even the poor are rich. Through Him also are those greater riches, faith, piety, justice, charity, chastity, good conduct: for no man hath these, except through Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Behold, how rich! For which is rich, he who hath what he desireth when another doeth it for him, or he who doth what he desireth when another possesseth it? I conceive that He is richer Who made what thou hast; because thou hast not, what He hath. Behold, how rich! In one so rich, how are we to recognise these words? *I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled*

**PSALM CII.** *my drink with weeping.* Have these so great riches come to this? The former state is a very high one, this is a

very lowly one. What shall we do? How shall we reconcile these low things with those high ones? They are too far from one another? I do not as yet recognise this poor man: he is possibly some one else; but let us still seek. For as to the reason why He appeareth not the same unto us, it is wonderful if thou dost ask, and dost not dread

**John 1, 1—4.** *His riches. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.*

He who said this, while he was saying it, was rich; how much more rich He of Whom he said, "*In the beginning was the Word:*" and not any word, but the "*Word that was God:*" and not any where only, but "*with God:*" and not inactive, but "*by Whom all things were made?*" Did He

eat ashes as it were bread: and mingle His drink with weeping? It is to be feared lest our poverty do injury to so great riches. Yet still examine whether this poor

**ib. 14.** man be He; since, *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt*

**Ps. 116, 16.** *among us.* Reflect also upon these words: *I am Thy servant, and the Son of Thine handmaid.* Observe, this

handmaid, chaste, a virgin, and a mother: for there He received our poverty, when He was clothed in the form of a servant, emptying Himself; lest thou shouldest dread His riches, and in thy beggarly state shouldest not dare approach Him. There, I say, He put on the form of a servant, there He was clothed with our poverty; there He made Himself poor, and us rich. We are now drawing near to understand these things of Him: nevertheless we may not as yet rashly pronounce. The offspring of a virgin

**Dan. 2, 34.** *was the stone hewn from the hills without hands, where no man laboured: where was no concupiscence handed down,*

*but faith alone was lit up, and the Flesh of the Word conceived. Then He came forth from the womb: the heavens*

**Luke 2, 7—14.** *spake; Angels declared it to the shepherds; the star drew the Magi to worship the King; Simeon, filled with the Holy*

**Matt. 2, 12.** *Ghost, recognised the infant God in His Mother's hands.*

**Luke 2, 25—47.** *Age came, not to His Divinity, but to His flesh. Ignorant*

old men are astonished at the wisdom of a boy of twelve TITLE. years. Or even if they were learned old men, what was their wisdom to the Word of God? What was their wisdom to the Wisdom of God? Shall not the learned, unless He help them, always perish? He still increaseth in the age of His body: He cometh to the river to be baptized: the baptizer recogniseth God, confessing himself unworthy to loose the string of His sandal. From that moment the blind are enlightened, the hearing of the deaf restored, the dumb speak, the leprous are cleansed, the palsied regain strength, the sick recover, the dead arise. Mark 1,  
7—11.  
Mat. 11,  
5.

2. I now indeed acknowledge the poverty of riches, in comparison with that Word, by Whom all things were made; but how far as yet is He from 'ashes,' and 'weeping with His drink?' As yet, I fear to say, it is Himself; and yet I wish. For there are things here which urge me to wish to do so, and again, reasons which cause me to fear doing so. It is Himself, and yet it is not Himself. He is now in the form of a servant, he as yet carrieth frail and mortal flesh, He now cometh before us as about to die, and yet He is not understood in this want. *I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping.* Let him add poverty then to poverty: let Him transfigure into Himself our humble body: let Him be our Head, we His limbs, let there be two in one flesh. For that He might at first become poor, taking the form of a servant, He left His Father: and since He was born of a virgin, let Him also leave His mother, and cleave to His wife, and let them be twain in one flesh. For thus the twain shall have one voice also, and in that one voice we shall no longer wonder at our own words. *I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping.* For He hath deigned to hold even us as His limbs. The penitent also are among His limbs. For they are not shut out, nor separated from His Church: nor would He make the Church His spouse, unless by words like these: *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Let us then hear what the head and the body prayeth, the bridegroom and bride, Christ and the Church, both one Person; but the Word and the flesh are not both one thing; the Father and the Word are both one

PsALM CII. thing; Christ and the Church are both one Person, one perfect man in the form of His own fulness: *Till we are all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* But until we are come, poverty is our lot here, toil and groaning is our lot here. Thanks be unto His loving-kindness! Whence hath He toil, whence doth the Word groan, through Whom all things were made? If He hath deigned to submit to our death, shall He not grant unto us His life? He hath raised us up to a great hope, we groan even with great hope. Groaning causeth sorrowfulness, but these are groans that create joy. I believe that Sarah, the barren one, groaned amid her joy, when she was giving birth; and

Eph. 4, 13. we also from the fear of Thee have conceived and brought forth the Spirit of salvation. Let us hear therefore Christ, poor within us and with us, and for our sakes. For the title itself indicates the poor one. Lastly, remember that I conjectured who that poor one was: let us hear His prayer, and recognise His Person; and mistake not, when thou shalt have heard any thing that cannot apply to His Head; it was for this reason that I have prefaced as I have, that whatever thou shalt hear of this description, thou mayest understand as sounding from the weakness of the body, and recognise the voice of the members in the head.

Is. 26, 18. The title is, *A Prayer of the afflicted, when he was tormented, and poured out his prayer before the Lord.* It is the same poor one who elsewhere saith: *From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee, when my heart is in heaviness.* He is afflicted because He is also Christ; Who in the Prophet's words calleth Himself both Bridegroom

Ps. 61, 2. and Bride: *He hath bound on me the diadem as a bridegroom, and as a bride hath adorned me with an ornament.* He called Himself Bridegroom, He called Himself Bride; wherefore this, unless Bridegroom applieth to the Head, Bride to the body? They are one voice then, because they are one flesh. Let us hear, and recognise ourselves in these words; and if we see that we are without, let us labour to be there.

3. Ver. 1. *Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying*

*come unto Thee. Hear my prayer, O Lord, is the same as, Let my crying come unto Thee: the feeling of the suppliant is shewn by the repetition. Turn not Thy face away from me. When did God turn away His Face from His Son? when did the Father turn away His Face from Christ? But for the sake of the poverty of my members, Turn not away Thy face from me: whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me. For I am troubled below; but Thou art above: if I exalt myself, Thou art far from me; if I humble myself, Thou dost incline Thine ear unto me. But what meaneth, whatsoever day I am troubled? For is He not troubled now? or would He speak thus, if He were not troubled? This would therefore suffice; Incline Thine ear unto me, since I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me: as if the body were one with its Head: if one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it. Thou art in trouble this day, I am in trouble; another is in trouble to-morrow, I am in trouble; after this generation other descendants, who succeed your descendants, are in trouble, I am in trouble; down to the end of the world, whoever are in trouble in My body, I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, therefore, incline Thine ear unto me. Whatsoever day I call, O hear me, and that right soon. This is the same thing. Even now I call; but, Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Peter prayed, Paul prayed, the rest of the Apostles prayed; the faithful prayed in those times, the faithful prayed in the following times, the faithful prayed in the times of the Martyrs, the faithful pray in our times, the faithful will pray in the times of our descendants: Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Right soon: for I now ask that which Thou art willing to grant. I ask not earthly things, as an earthly man; but redeemed at last from my former captivity, I long for the kingdom of heaven; Hear me right soon: for it is only to such a longing that Thou hast said, "Even while Thou art speaking, I will say, Here I am." Wherefore dost thou call? in what tribulation? in what want? O poor one, before the gate of God all-rich, in what longing dost thou beg? from what destitution dost thou ask relief?*

VER.  
1.

1 Cor.  
12, 26.

Is. 58, 9.

**PSALM CII.** from what want dost thou knock, that it may be opened unto thee? Say, let us hear this very want; let us both discover ourselves in it, and pray together with Thee. Hear and recognise, if thou canst.

4. Ver. 3. *For my days are consumed away like smoke.* O days! if days: for where day is heard of, light is understood. *But my days are consumed away like smoke.* My days, my times; wherefore, *like smoke*, unless from the puffing up of pride? Such days proud Adam, of whom Christ received the flesh, was worthy of receiving. Christ therefore is in Adam, and Adam in Christ. He who deigned to accept the voice of the days of smoke, hath indeed rescued from the days of smoke. *For my days are consumed away like smoke.* See smoke, like pride, ascending, swelling, vanishing: deservedly therefore failing, and not stedfast. *For my days are consumed away like smoke: and my bones are scorched up as it were in an oven.* Both my bones, and my strength, not without tribulation, not without burning. The bones of the body of Christ, the strength of His body, is it any where greater than in the Holy Apostles? And yet see that the bones are scorched. *Who is offended, and I burn not?* They are brave, faithful, able interpreters and preachers of the word, living as they speak, speaking as they hear; they are clearly brave, yet all who suffer offences, are an oven to them. For there is love there, and more so in the bones. The bones are within all the flesh, and support all the flesh. But if any man suffer any offence, and endanger his soul; the bone is scorched in proportion as it loveth. Love wanting, no man is scorched; if love exist, and if one member suffereth in sympathy with another that is suffering; how are they scorched who sustain all the members? *My bones are scorched up as it were in an oven.*

5. Ver. 4. *My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass.* Look back to Adam, whence the human race sprung. For how but from him was misery propagated? whence but from him is this hereditary poverty? Let him then, who in his own body was at one time in despair, now that he is set in Christ's body, say with hope, *My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass.* Deservedly, since all flesh is grass. But how did this happen unto thee? *Since I have forgotten*

2 Cor.  
11, 29.

1a.40, 6.

*to eat my bread.* For God had given His commandment for bread. For what is the bread of the soul? The serpent <sup>VER. 4. 5.</sup> suggesting, and the woman transgressing, he touched the forbidden fruit, he forgot the commandment: his heart was <sup>Gen. 3.</sup> smitten as it deserved, and withered like grass, since he <sup>6.</sup> forgot to eat his bread. Having forgotten to eat bread, he drinketh poison: his heart is smitten, and withered like grass. This is that same smitten one in Isaiah, of whom <sup>Is. 57,</sup> and to whom it is said, *I will not contend with you for ever,* <sup>16—18.</sup> *neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit proceedeth from me, and I have made every breath. Because of sin for a little while have I grieved him, and smitten him, and hid my face from him.* With reason then it was said here, *Turn not away Thy face from me:* that is, from the smitten one, of whom Thou hast said, *I have smitten him:* of whom Thou hast said, *“I have seen his ways, and have healed him.” My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass: since I have forgotten to eat my bread.* Now eat that bread which thou hadst forgotten. But this very Bread hath come, in Whose body thou mayest remember the voice of thy forgetfulness, and cry out in thy poverty, so that thou mayest receive riches. Now eat: for thou art in His body, Who saith, *I am the living bread which came down from heaven.* <sup>John 6,</sup> Thou hadst forgotten to eat thy bread; but after His cruci- <sup>41.</sup> fixation, *all the ends of the earth shall be reminded, and be* <sup>Psa. 22,</sup> *converted unto the Lord.* <sup>27.</sup> After forgetfulness, let remembrance come, let bread be eaten from heaven, that we may live; not manna, as they did eat, and died; that bread, of <sup>John 6,</sup> which it is said, *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after* <sup>49.</sup> *righteousness.* <sup>Matt. 5,</sup> <sup>6.</sup>

6. Ver. 5. *For the voice of my groaning, the bones cleave unto my flesh.* For the voice which I understand, for the voice which I know: *for the voice of my groaning,* not for the voice of the groaning of those for whom I have a fellow-feeling. For many groan, and I also groan; even for this I groan, because they groan for a wrong cause. That man hath lost a piece of money, he groaneth: he hath lost faith, he groaneth not: I weigh the money and the faith, and I find more cause for groaning for him who groaneth not as he ought, or doth not groan at all. He committeth fraud, and rejoiceth.

8 *The groaning of charity. The Pelican in the desert :*

**PSALM** With what gain, with what loss? He hath gained money,  
**CII.** he hath lost righteousness. For the latter reason, he who knoweth how to groan, groaneth; he who is near the head, who righteously clingeth to Christ's body, groaneth for this reason. But the carnal do not groan for this reason, and they cause themselves to be groaned for, because they do not groan for this reason; nor can we despise them, whether they groan not at all, or groan for the wrong cause. For we wish to correct them, we wish to amend them, we wish to reform them: and when we cannot, we groan; and when we groan, we are not separated from them. For, *for the voice of my groaning my bones cleave unto my flesh*: the strong cleave unto the weak, the stable cleave unto the unstable. How have they cleaved unto them? For the voice of their own groaning, not for the voice of the groaning of those others. By what law do they cleave, but that which saith, *"we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak?" My bones cleave unto my flesh.*

Rom.  
16, 1.

7. Ver. 6, 7. *I am become like a pelican in the wilderness, and like an owl among ruined walls. I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top.* Behold three birds and three places; may the Lord grant us to explain what they mean, and that ye may hear profitably what is said for your good. What mean the three birds, and the three places? What are the three birds? The pelican, the owl, and the sparrow; and the three places are severally, the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top. The pelican in the wilderness, the owl in the ruined walls, and the sparrow in the house-top. In the first place we must explain, what the pelican signifieth; since it is born in a region, which maketh it unknown to us. It is born in lonely spots, especially those of the river Nile in Egypt. Whatever kind of bird it is, let us consider what the Psalm intended to say of it. *It dwelleth*, it saith, *in the wilderness.* Why enquire of its form, its limbs, its voice, its habits? As far as the Psalm telleth thee, it is a bird that dwelleth in solitude. The owl is a bird that loveth night. "*Parietinæ*," or ruins, as we call them, are walls standing without roof, without inhabitants, these are the habitation of the owl. And then as to the house-top and

the sparrows, ye are familiar with them. I find, therefore, VER. 7.  
some one of Christ's body, a preacher of the word, sym-  
pathising with the weak, seeking the gains of Christ, mindful  
of his Lord to come, that He may not say, *Thou wicked* Mat. 25,  
*and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put my money* 26.  
*to the exchangers.* Let us see these three things from the  
office of His steward. Hath such a man come among those  
who are not Christians? He is a pelican in the wilderness.  
Hath he come among those who were Christians, and have  
relapsed? He is an owl in the ruined walls; for he forsaketh  
not even the darkness of those who dwell in night, he  
wisheth to gain even these. Hath he come among such  
as are Christians dwelling in a house, not as if they believed  
not, or as if they had let go what they had believed, but  
walking lukewarmly in what they believe? The sparrow  
crieth unto them, not in the wilderness, because they are  
Christians; nor in the ruined walls, because they have not  
relapsed; but because they are within the roof; under the  
roof rather, because they are under the flesh. The sparrow  
above the flesh crieth out, husheth not up the command-  
ments of God, nor becometh carnal, so that he be subject  
to the roof. *Let not him which is on the house-top come* Mat. 24,  
*down to take any thing out of the house; and, what ye hear* 17.  
*in the ear, that preach ye on the house-tops.* Mat. 10,  
There are 27.  
three birds and three places; and one man may represent  
the three birds, and three men may represent severally the  
three birds; and the three sorts of places, are three classes  
of men: yet the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-  
top, are but three classes of men.

8. But why so much of these? Let us turn to our Lord  
Himself, if perchance it be Himself, and so it may be better  
to recognise Himself as the pelican in the wilderness, as the  
owl in the ruinous walls, and as the lone sparrow on the  
housetop. Let that poor one, our Head, speak unto us; let  
the poor of His own will speak unto the poor of necessity.  
Let us not pass over what is said, or even read, of this bird,  
that is, the pelican; not rashly asserting any thing, but yet  
not passing over what has been left to be read and uttered  
by those who have written it. Do ye so hear, that if it be  
true, it may agree; if false, it may not hold. These birds

PSALM are said to slay their young with blows of their beaks, and  
 CII. for three days to mourn them when slain by themselves in  
 the nest: after which they say the mother wounds herself  
 deeply, and pours forth her blood over her young, bathed in  
 which they recover life. This may be true, it may be false:  
 yet if it be true, see how it agreeth with Him, Who gave us  
 life by His blood. It agreeth with Him in that the mother's  
 flesh recalleth to life her young with her blood; it agreeth  
 well. For He calleth Himself a hen brooding over her  
 Mat. 23. young: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have*  
 37. *gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her*  
*chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* For He hath  
 the authority of a father and the affection of a mother: even  
 as Paul is both father and mother: not through himself, but  
 1 Cor. through the Gospel: father, where he saith, *For though ye*  
 4, 15. *have ten thousand instructors in Jesus Christ, yet have ye*  
*not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you*  
 Gal. 4, through the Gospel; and mother where he saith, *My little*  
 19. *children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be*  
*formed in you.* If, then, it be so truly, this bird doth closely  
 resemble the flesh of Christ, by Whose blood we have been  
 called to life. But how may it agree with Christ, that the  
 bird herself slays her own young? Doth not this agree with  
 Deut. it? *I will slay, and I will make alive! I will wound, and I*  
 32, 39. *will heal.* Would the persecutor Saul have died, unless he  
 Acts 9, were wounded from heaven; or would the preacher be  
 4. raised up, unless by life given him from His blood? But let  
 those who have written on the subject see to this; we ought  
 not to allow our understanding of it to rest upon doubtful  
 ground. Let us rather recognise this bird in the wilderness;  
 as the Psalm expresseth it, *A pelican in the solitude.*  
 I suppose that Christ born of a Virgin is here meant; for  
 thus He is alone, therefore the word *solitude* applieth well:  
 He was born in loneliness, because He alone was thus born.  
 After the nativity, we come to His Passion: by whom was  
 He crucified? was it by those who stood? was it by those  
 who mourned? It was, as it were, in the night of their own  
 ignorance, and in the ruins of their own fall. Behold the  
 owl, and it that dwelleth in ruinous walls; He loveth the  
 night too. For if He loved them not, how could He say,

*The Church like the 'Turtle Dove.' Conspiracy against her.* 11

*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Born <sup>VER.</sup> in the wilderness, because alone so born; suffering in the <sup>8.</sup> darkness of the Jews as it were in night, in their sin, as it <sup>Luke 23,</sup> were in ruins: what next? *I have watched.* Thou hadst then slept amid the ruins, and hadst said, *I laid me down,* <sup>Ps. 3, 5.</sup> *and slept.* What meaneth, *I slept?* Because I chose, I slept: I slept for love of night: but, *I rose again,* followeth. Therefore *I watched,* is here said. But after He watched, what did He? He ascended into heaven, He became as a sparrow by flying; that is, by ascending; *alone on the housetop;* that is, in heaven. He is therefore as the pelican by birth, as the owl by dying, as the sparrow by ascending again: there in the wilderness, as one alone; here in the ruined walls, as one slain by those who could not stand in the building; and here again watching and flying for our sakes alone on the housetop, He there intercedeth in our <sup>Rom. 8.</sup> behalf. For our Head is as the sparrow, His body as the <sup>34.</sup> turtle-dove. *For the sparrow hath found her an house.* What house? In heaven, where He doth mediate for us. *And the turtle-dove a nest,* the Church of God hath found a nest from the wood of His Cross, where *she may lay her young,* her children. I have watched: and *am become even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the housetop.*

9. Ver. 8. *Mine enemies revile me all day, and they that praised me are sworn together against me.* With their mouth they praised, in their heart they were laying snares for me. Hear their praise: *Master, we know that Thou art true, and* <sup>Mat. 22,</sup> *teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for* <sup>16, 17.</sup> *any man. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?* Thou trippest up Him whom thou praisest. Wherefore, but that *they who praised me are sworn together against me?* And whence this evil repute, except because I came to make sinners my members, that by repentance they may be in my body. Thence is all the calumny, thence the persecution. *Why eateth your Master with publicans and sin-* <sup>Matt. 9,</sup> *ners? They that be whole need not a physician, but they* <sup>11, 12.</sup> *that be sick.* Would that ye were aware of your sickness, that ye might seek a physician; ye would not slay Him, and through your infatuated pride perish in a false health.

**PSALM** 10. Ver. 9. But why do *mine enemies revile me all the*  
**CIL.** *day long? why do they that praised me conspire together*  
*against me? Because I have eaten ashes as it were bread:*  
*and mingled my drink with weeping.* Because He chose to  
have among His members these kinds of men, that they  
should be healed and set free, thence is the evil repute.  
Now at this day what is the character of Pagan calumny  
against us? what, brethren, do ye conceive they tell us?  
Ye corrupt discipline, and pervert the morality of the human  
race. Why dost thou attack us; say why? what have we  
done? By giving, he replieth, to men room for repentance,  
by promising impunity for all sins: for this reason men do  
evil deeds, careless of consequences, because every thing is  
pardoned them, when they are converted. Hence therefore  
is the evil repute: *since I have eaten ashes as it were bread,*  
*and mingled my drink with weeping.* O thou who abusest  
us, I invite thee to that bread! For thou durst not say thou  
art not a sinner. Sift thy conscience, ascend the tribunal of  
thy mind, spare not thyself, examine thyself, let the marrow  
of thy heart address thee; see whether thou darest make  
profession of innocence. Here, clearly, if he hath looked  
back upon himself, he will be disturbed; if he hath not  
flattered himself, he will confess. And what is to become of  
thee, miserable man, if there shall be no harbour of impunity?  
If there is only licence for sinning, and no pardon for sins,  
where wilt thou be, whither wilt thou go? Surely even for  
thee did it happen, that that afflicted one ate ashes as it were  
bread, and mingled His drink with weeping. Doth not such  
a feast now please thee? But nevertheless, he replieth, men  
add to their sins under the hope of pardon. Nay, but they  
would add to them if they despaired of pardon. Dost thou  
not observe in what licentious cruelty gladiators live? whence  
this, except because, as destined for the sword and sacrifice,  
they choose to sate their lust, before they pour forth their  
blood? Wouldest not thou also thus address thyself? I am  
already a sinner, already an unjust man, one already doomed  
to damnation, hope of pardon there is none: why should I  
not do whatever pleaseth me, although it be not lawful? why  
not fulfil, as far as I can, any longings I may have, if, after  
these, nothing but torments only be in store? Wouldest

thou not thus speak unto thyself, and from this very despair become still worse? Rather than this, then, He who promiseth forgiveness, doth correct thee, saying, *Return unto the heart, O ye transgressors. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* Doubtless, when this harbour is set before thee, thou furlest the sails of iniquity, turnest thy prow, makest sail on the track of righteousness, and, hoping for life, dost not neglect thy cure. And let not God displease thee in this, as if He had through this promise of forgiveness made sinners careless. For in order that men might not live the worse from despair, He promised a harbour of forgiveness; again, that they might not live the worse from hope of pardon, He made the day of death uncertain: fixing both with the utmost providence, both as a refuge for the returning, and a terror to the loitering. Eat ashes as bread, and mingle thy drink with weeping; by means of this banquet thou shalt reach the table of God. Despair not; pardon hath been promised thee. Thanks be to God, he saith, because it is promised; I hold fast the promise of God. Now therefore live well. To-morrow, he replieth, I will live well. God hath promised the pardon; no one promised thee to-morrow. If thou hast lived ill, live well even now, this very day. *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.* I say not, *Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* But, according as thou hast lived, where wilt thou be? Amend thyself therefore, that thou mayest in the body of Christ speak these words, which, if I am not deceived, thou dost willingly recognise; *For I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping.*

11. Ver. 10. *And that because of thine indignation and wrath: because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down.* This is thy wrath, O Lord, in Adam: that wrath in which we were all born, which cleaveth unto us by our birth; the wrath from the stock of iniquity, the wrath from the mass of sin: according to what the Apostle saith, *We also were once the children of wrath, even as others;* and according to our Lord's words, *The wrath of God abideth on him, because he hath not believed on the only-begotten Son of God.* For He

VER.  
10.

Is. 46, 8.

Ezek.  
33, 11.

Luke  
12, 20.

John 3,  
36.

PSALM CII. saith not, the wrath of God shall come upon him: but, *abideth upon him*: because that wrath in which he was born is not taken away. Wherefore then, and what is the meaning of that saying, *Because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down*? For he saith not, *Because thou hast taken me up, and hast cast me down*; but, *Because Thou hast taken me up, for this reason Thou hast cast me down*. Therefore Thou hast cast me down, because Thou hast taken me up. Whence this? Man set in honour, is made in the image of God: raised up to this honour, lifted up from the dust, from the earth, he hath received a reasonable soul; by the Gen. 1, 26. vivacity of that very reason, he is placed before all beasts, cattle, birds that fly, and fishes. For which of these hath reason to understand? Because none of them is created in the image of God. Just as none of these hath this honour, so none of them hath this misery. For what beast of burden groaneth for its sins? what bird feareth the hell of everlasting fire? Because it hath no share in a life of bliss, it hath also no stings of wretchedness. But man, because he was made for a life of bliss, if he shall have lived well; shall for this reason have a wretched life, if he hath lived ill. Therefore, *Because Thou hast taken me up, Thou hast cast me down*: punishment followeth me, because Thou hast given me a free choice. For if Thou hadst not given me a free choice, and for this reason didst not make me better than cattle, just condemnation would not follow me when I sinned. Thus Thou hast taken me up in giving me freedom of choice, and by Thy just judgment Thou hast cast me down.

12. Ver. 11. *My days have declined like a shadow*. For thy days might not have been declining, hadst thou not declined from the true day. Thou hast declined, and hast received declining days. What wonder, if thy days have been made like thyself? For thy days are days of decline, because thou hast declined, as they are days of smoke, because thou hast been puffed with pride. For he had said above, *My days are consumed away like smoke*; and he now saith, *My days have declined like a shadow*. In this shadow, day must be recognised; in this shadow, light must be discerned; lest afterward it be said in late and

fruitless repentance, *What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow.* <sup>V E R. 12—14. Wisd. 5, 8. 9.</sup> Say at this season, all things will pass away like a shadow, and thou mayest not pass away like a shadow. *My days have declined like a shadow, and I am withered like grass.* For he had said above, *My heart is smitten down, and I am withered like grass.* But the grass bedewed with the Saviour's blood will flourish afresh. *I have withered like grass; I, that is, man, after that disobedience; this I have suffered from Thy just judgment: but what art Thou?*

13. Ver. 12. *But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever.* My days have declined like a shadow, but Thou endurest for ever: let the eternal save the temporal! For not because I have fallen, hast Thou grown old: for Thou art strong to set me free, Who hast been strong to humble me. *But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever: and Thy remembrance throughout all generations.* Thy remembrance, because Thou dost not forget: *throughout all generations,* forasmuch as we know <sup>1 Tim. 4, 8.</sup> the promise of life, both present and future.

14. Ver. 13. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her.* What time? *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law.* <sup>Gal. 4, 4. 5.</sup> And where is Sion? *To redeem them that were under the Law.* First then were the Jews: for thence were the Apostles, thence those more than five hundred brethren, thence that later multitude, who had but one heart and one soul toward <sup>1 Cor. 15, 6.</sup> God. Therefore, *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her, yea, the time is come.* What time? *Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation.* <sup>2 Cor. 6, 2.</sup> Who saith this? That Servant of God, that Builder, who said, *Ye are God's building: who said, As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation; and, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* <sup>1 Cor. 3, 9—11.</sup>

15. Ver. 14. Here therefore what saith he? *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones.* In whose stones? In the stones of Sion? But there are those there that are not stones. Not stones of what? What then followeth? *and*

**PSALM CII.** *pity the dust thereof.* Let us acknowledge the stones in Sion; let us acknowledge the dust of Sion. For he saith not, they will *pity her stones*; but what saith he? *For thy servants take pleasure in her stones: and pity the dust thereof.* I understand by the stones of Sion all the Prophets: there was the voice of preaching sent before, thence the ministry of the Gospel assumed, through their preaching Christ became known. Therefore thy servants have taken pleasure in the stones of Sion. But those faithless apostates from God, who offended their Creator by their evil deeds, have returned to the earth, whence they were taken. They have become dust, they have become ungodly: of whom it **Ps. 1, 4.** is said, *As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; but they are like the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth.* But wait, Lord; bear with us, Lord; be longsuffering, O Lord: let not the wind rush in, and sweep away this dust from the face of the earth. Let thy servants come, let them come, let them acknowledge in the stones thy voice, let them pity the dust of Sion, let them be formed in thy image: let the dust say, lest it perish, **Ps. 103, 14.** *Remember that we are but dust.*

*And shall pity her dust.* This of Sion: was not that, which crucified the Lord, dust? What is worse, it was dust from the ruined walls; altogether dust it was, but nevertheless it was not in vain said of this dust, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* From this very dust there came a wall of so many thousands who believed, and who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet.

**1 for-  
mata et  
formosa.** From that dust then there arose a human nature formed<sup>1</sup> and beautiful. Who among the heathen acted thus? How few are there whom we admire for having done thus, compared with the many thousands of these converts? At first suddenly three, afterwards five thousand; all living in unity, all laying the price of their possessions, when they had sold them, at the Apostles' feet, that it might be distributed to each, as each had need, who had one soul and one heart toward God. Who made this even of that very dust, but He who created Adam himself out of dust? This then is concerning Sion, but not in Sion only. **Acts 2, 41; 4, 32.**

16. Ver. 15. What then followeth? *The heathen shall*

*fear Thy Name, O Lord; and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty.* Now that Thou hast pitied Sion, now that Thy <sup>VER.</sup> 16. 17. servants have taken pleasure in her stones, by acknowledging the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; now that they have pitied her dust; so that man is formed, or rather re-formed, in life out of dust; hence preaching hath increased among the heathen: let the heathen fear Thy Name, and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty; let another wall approach also from the heathen, let the Corner-Stone be recognised, let the two who come from different <sup>Eph. 2.</sup> regions, but who no longer differ in belief, meet in close <sup>20.</sup> union.

17. Ver. 16. *For the Lord shall build up Sion.* This work is going on now. O ye living stones, run to the work of building, not to ruin. Sion is in building, beware of the ruined walls: the tower is building, the ark is in building; remember the deluge. This work is in progress now, *for the Lord shall build up Sion*; but when Sion is built, what will happen? *and He will appear in His glory.* That He might build up Sion, that He might be a foundation in Sion, He was seen by Sion, but not in His glory: *we have seen Him, and He had* <sup>Isa. 53,</sup> <sup>2.</sup> *no form nor comeliness.* But truly when He shall have come with His Angels to judge, when all nations shall be gathered before Him, when the sheep shall be set apart on the right hand, and the goats on the left, shall they not look <sup>Mat. 25,</sup> <sup>31—33.</sup> then upon Him whom they have pierced? and they shall be <sup>Zech. 12,</sup> <sup>10.</sup> put to confusion when too late, who refused confusion in early and healthful repentance. *The Lord shall build up Sion, and will appear in His glory.* He who was first seen in her in His infirmity.

18. Ver. 17. *He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire.* This is going on now in the building of Sion: the builders of Sion pray, they groan: He is the one poor, because the poor are many; because the thousands among so many nations are one in Him, because He is the unity of the peace of the Church, He is one, He is many: one, through love: many, on account of His extension. Therefore we now pray, we now run: now, if any man hath used to be otherwise, and lived differently, let him eat ashes as it were bread, and mingle his drink with

**PSALM  
CII.**

weeping. Now is the time, when Sion is in building: now the stones are entering into the structure: when the building is finished, and the house dedicated, why dost thou run, to ask when too late, to beg in vain, to knock to no purpose, doomed to abide without with the five foolish virgins? Therefore now run: for *He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire.*

**Mat. 25,  
13.**

19. Ver. 18. 19. *Let these things be written for those that come after.* When these words were written, they profited not so much those among whom they were written: for they were written to prophesy the New Testament, among men who lived according to the Old Testament. But God had both given that Old Testament, and had settled in that land of promise His own people. But since *Thy remembrance is from generation to generation*, belongeth not to the ungodly, but to the righteous; "in our generation" belongeth to the Old Testament; while "in the other generation" belongeth to the New Testament; and since the New Testament announceth this that was prophesied, *Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord.* Not the people which is created, but *the people which shall be created.* What is clearer, my brethren? Here is prophesied that creation of **2 Cor. 5,  
17. 18.** which the Apostle saith: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. What meaneth, and all things are of God?* both old and new, because *Thy remembrance is from generation to generation: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary.* He hath looked down from on high, that He might come unto the humble: from on high He hath become humble, that He might exalt the humble.

## SERMON II.

*On the Second Part of Psalm CII.*

1. **YESTERDAY** we heard the groaning of some poor one in prayer: and we acknowledged this one as Him Who for our

sakes became poor, when He was rich, and the members <sup>V. 19.</sup> which cleave unto Him, and speak by means of their Head. <sup>19. 20.</sup> For we beheld there even ourselves; if indeed through <sup>2 Cor.</sup> His grace even we are any thing. But the words of groaning were now finished, and those of consolation had begun; but these could never have been finished had we treated of them yesterday: in what remain, let us hear to-day the poor no longer groaning, but rejoicing; rejoicing, because hoping; hoping, because not presuming in himself. He foretold in the holy Scriptures the blessedness which men should have, and added, *Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord.* For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary. So far yesterday's discourse reached: consider what followeth.

2. Ver. 19. 20. *Out of the heaven did the Lord look down upon the earth: that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of such as are put to death.* We have found it said in another Psalm, *O let the sorrowful sighs of the fettered come before Thee;* and in a passage where the voice of the martyrs was meant. Whence are the martyrs in fetters? Are they not rather in chains? For we know that the holy martyrs of God, led after the judges in their circuit of the provinces, were thrown into chains; but we are not aware that they were thrown into fetters. Fetters are also recognised in the teaching of God, and the fear of Him, concerning which it is said, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* <sup>Eccles. 1, 18.</sup> For through this fear the servants of God feared not those who slay the body, but cannot slay the soul: inasmuch as they feared Him Who hath power to slay both body and soul <sup>Mat. 10, 28.</sup> in everlasting fire. For unless the martyrs had been bound by the fetters of fear; when would they have endured all the cruel severities of their persecutors, when they were free to do what they were constrained to, and to escape what they were suffering? But God had bound them with these fetters, hard indeed and painful for a season, but endurable on account of His promises, unto Whom it is said, *On account of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard ways.* We must indeed groan in these fetters in order to gain the mercy of God; whence are those words of the martyrs in

**PSALM CII. 11.** another Psalm, *Let the sorrowful sighing of the fettered come before Thee*: yet these fetters must not be shunned,

in order to gain a destructive freedom and the temporal and brief pleasure of this life, to be followed by perpetual bitterness. Accordingly Scripture, that we may not refuse the fetters of wisdom, thus addresseth us: *Give ear, my son, refuse not my advice, and receive my counsel, and put thy feet into her fetters, and thy neck into her chain. Bow down thy shoulder, and bear her, and be not grieved with her bonds. Come unto her with all thy heart, and keep her ways with all thy power. Search and seek, and she shall be made known unto thee: and when thou hast got hold of her, let her not go. For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy. Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory. For there is a golden ornament upon her, and her bands are purple lace. Thou shalt put her on as a robe of honour, and shalt put her about thee as a crown of joy.* Let the fettered therefore cry out, as long as they are in the chains of the discipline of God, in which the martyrs have been tried: the fetters shall be loosed, and they shall fly away, and these very fetters shall afterwards be turned into an ornament. This hath happened with the martyrs. For what have the persecutors effected by killing them, except that their fetters were thereby loosed, and turned into crowns?

3. *Out of heaven, therefore, the Lord looked down, that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of those that were put to death.* They were put to death: but who are the children of those that were put to death, except ourselves? But how are we loosed, except when we say unto Him, *Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder; I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.*

For every one is released from the chains of evil lusts, or from the entanglements of his sins. The remission of sins, is the loosing. For what would it have profited Lazarus, that he came forth from the tomb, unless it were said to him, *loose him, and let him go?* Himself indeed with His voice aroused him from the tomb, Himself restored his life by crying unto him, Himself overcame the mass of earth that was heaped upon the tomb, and he came forth bound hand

and foot: not therefore with his own feet, but by the power of Him who drew him forth. This taketh place in the heart of the penitent: when thou hearest a man is sorry for his sins, he hath already come again to life; when thou hearest him by confessing lay bare his conscience, he is already drawn forth from the tomb, but he is not as yet loosed. When is he loosed, and by whom is he loosed? *Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, He saith, shall be loosed in heaven.* VER.  
21.

Forgiveness of sins may justly be granted by the Church: but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him; for God doth this within him. We speak to your ears: how do we know what may be going on in your hearts? But what is going on within, is not our doing, but His.

4. He hath then looked back, that He may deliver the children of them that were put to death. Who these were, and who were their children, ye have heard. For what follows\*? (Ver. 21.) *That the name of the Lord may be declared in Sion.* For at first, when the fettered were appointed unto death, the Church was oppressed: since these tribulations the Name of the Lord has been declared in Sion, with great freedom, in the Church herself. For she is Sion: not that one spot, at first proud, afterwards taken captive; but the Sion whose shadow was that Sion, which signifieth a watch-tower; because when placed in the flesh, we see into the things before us, extending ourselves not to the present which is now, but to the future. Thus it is a watch-tower: for every watcher gazes far. Places where guards are set, are termed watch-towers: these are set on rocks, on mountains, in trees, that a wider prospect may be commanded from a higher eminence. Sion therefore is a watch-tower, the Church is a watch-tower. Why a watch-tower? To see afar, this is watching. For *toil is before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God: then understand I the end.* Ps. 73,  
16. 17. What sort of vision is this, to understand the end? To pass the sea by sight, not by sailing, and to remain in the uttermost parts thereof; that is, to put our trust in that which will be at the end of the world. If therefore the Church be a watch-tower, Ps. 139,  
6. the Name of the Lord is already declared there. Not the

\* Oxf. Mss. 'Then the reason why this is done.'

22 *How those who are called God's 'praise' answer Him.*

**PSALM** Lord's Name only is declared in that Sion, but *His praise*,  
**CII.** He saith, *in Jerusalem*.  
**IL.**

5. Ver. 22. And how is it declared? *In the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord.* How is this accomplished, unless by the blood of the slain? How accomplished, but by the groans of the fettered? Those therefore who were in tribulation and humility have been heard; that in our times the Church might be in the great glory which we see her in, so that the very kingdoms which then persecuted her, now serve the Lord.

6. Ver. 23. *She answered Him in the way of His strength.* Whom did she answer, but the Lord? Who answered, let us see above. *And His praise*, He saith, *in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. She answered Him in the way of His strength.* Who answered Him, *in the way of His strength?* Let us first then examine who answered, and then we will enquire what is the path of His strength. The preceding words shew, that either *His praise*, or *Jerusalem*, answered: for it was said, "And His praise in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. *Respondit ei.*" We cannot say, "the kingdoms answered," for he would have said "responderunt." "*Respondit ei.*" We cannot say, "the nations answered," for he would have said, "responderunt," (in the plural.) Since then it is "*Respondit ei,*" in the singular, and we look for the singular number above, and find that the words, *His praise*, and *Jerusalem*, are the only words in which we find it. But since it is doubtful, whether it be *His praise*, or *Jerusalem*, let us expound it each way. How did *His praise* answer Him? When they who are called by Him thank Him. For He calleth, we answer; not by our voice, but by our faith; not by our tongue, but by our life. For if God calleth thee, and enjoineth thee to live well, and thou livest ill, thou dost not answer His call, nor doth His praise answer Him from thee; because thy life is such that He is rather blasphemed than worshipped through thee: but when we live in such a way, that through us God is praised, His praise answereth Him. From His elect and holy men, Jerusalem also answereth Him. For Jerusalem also was called: and

the first Jerusalem refused to hear, and it was said unto her, VER. 22. 23.  
*Behold, thy house shall be left unto thee desolate. O Jerusalem,* Mat. 23,  
*Jerusalem,* (He crieth, and is not answered,) 38. 37.  
*how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* There is no answer: rain cometh from above, and thorns are brought forth instead of fruit. But that Jerusalem, of whom it was written, "*Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear: break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than those of the married wife.*" *She hath answered Him.* What meaneth, *She hath answered Him?* She despiseth Him not when He called. What meaneth, *She hath answered Him?* He sent rain, She gave fruit.

7. *She answered Him:* but where? *in the path of His strength.* Did She so in Herself? For what could there be in herself, or what voice could she find within and from herself, except the voice of sin only, the voice of iniquity? Consider her own words; what findest thou but, as ever, *I said,* Ps. 41, 4.  
*Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee?* Moreover, if she be justified, she answereth Him, not after her own deservings, but from the work of His own hands. Wherein? *In the way of His strength.* Christ Himself is this: *I am,* He said, *the Way, the Truth, and the Life!* But before His resurrection, He was acknowledged by John 14, His own people: and when He was crucified through weakness, it was especially hidden Who He was, until by His 13, 4. resurrection He appeared strong. The Church therefore answered Him not in the way of weakness, but *in the way of His strength:* because after His resurrection He called the Church from the whole world, no longer weak upon the cross, but strong in heaven. For it is not the praise of the Christian faith that they believe that Christ died, but that they believe that He arose from the dead. Even the Pagan believeth that He died; and maketh this a charge against thee, that thou hast believed in one dead. What then is thy praise? It is that thou believest that Christ arose from the dead, and that thou dost hope that thou shalt rise from the dead through Christ: this is the praise of faith. *For if thou shalt confess with thy* Rom. 10,  
*mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart* 9. 10.

**PSALM** *that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

**CII.**  
**II.**

He saith not, if thou shalt believe that God gave Him up to be slain: but, *if thou shalt believe—that God hath raised Him from the dead, then shall thou be saved.* For *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* But wherefore do we believe that He died also? Because we cannot believe that He arose from the dead, unless we believe that He died first. For who riseth again, who hath not died? who waketh from sleep, **Ps. 41, 8.** unless he hath slept before? but *shall not he who sleepeth, also rise again?* This is the faith of Christians. In this faith then, **Is. 54, 1.** in which the Church is gathered, in which “*the children of the barren one are more than those of her that hath the husband;*” *She hath answered Him,* She gave Him worship according to His commandments; *in the path of His strength,* not in the path of His weakness.

8. How she answered Him, ye have already heard above. *In the gathering of the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they might serve the Lord.* Herein she answered Him, in unity: he who is not in unity, answereth Him not. For He is One, the Church is unity: none but unity answereth to Him who is One. But there are those who assert: “this hath already happened; the Church hath answered Him in all nations, bringing forth many more children than the married wife; *she hath answered in the path of His strength;* for she hath believed in the resurrection of Christ, all nations have believed in Him; but that Church which was the Church of all nations no longer existeth; she hath disappeared.” This is what they who are not in her say. O impudent words! Hath she ceased to be, because thou art not in her? Beware lest thou shouldst cease to be, for this very reason; for she will remain, although thou dost not. The Spirit of God hath foreseen this abominable, detestable assertion, full of presumption and falsehood, supported by no truth, enlightened by no wisdom, seasoned with no salt, vain, rash, headlong, destructive, and as if specially against these men the Spirit declaring the unity of the Church: *in gathering the people together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord;* and when He had added, *She hath answered Him,* that is, His worship, that is, Jerusalem our Mother, doomed to be

recalled from her wandering, prolific with many sons, more than the married wife; since some were destined to say <sup>VER. 22. 23.</sup> against her, She hath existed, and no longer doth exist; *Shew me*, He saith, *the shortness of my days*, what is it, that I know not what apostates from me murmur against me? why is it that lost men contend that I have perished? For they surely say this, that I have been, and no longer am: *Shew me the shortness of my days*. I do not ask from Thee about those everlasting days: they are without end, where I shall be; it is not those I ask of: I ask of temporal days; shew unto me my temporal days; *shew me the shortness*, not the eternity, *of my days*. Declare unto me, how long I shall be in this world; on account of those who say, *She hath been*, and is no more: on account of those who say, The Scriptures are fulfilled, all nations have believed, but the Church hath become apostate, and hath perished from among all nations. What meaneth this, *Shew me the shortness of my days*? He hath declared, that word too was not in vain. Who, but the Way Himself, hath declared? How hath He declared? *Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world.* <sup>Mat. 28, 20.</sup>

9. But here also they meet us, and say, *Behold, I am with you*. He said, *unto the end of the world*; because He foresaw us, and that we, the party of Donatus, would be on the earth. Was it this sect which said, *Shew me the shortness of my days*; and not She rather who thus spoke above; *In gathering the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord*? Why is your heart grieved? Because even emperors enact prohibitions against heretics, therein are fulfilled the words, *and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord*. For ye are not the sons of those that were put to death, whose voice when in their fetters was heard by the Lord. Far from it: your deeds shew not this; your pride sheweth not this, your vanity sheweth not this: ye have no savour, and are cast out of doors: ye are the salt that hath lost its savour, and for this reason also ye are <sup>Mat. 5, 13.</sup> trodden down by men. Hear what he saith: what is the Church? She *who gathered the nations into one*. What is the Church? She who gathered together the kingdoms to serve the Lord. Moved by your words and your false opinions, She asketh of God that He will declare unto Her

PSALM the shortness of Her days, and findeth that the Lord hath  
 CII.  
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Here ye say: He said this of us; we exist, we shall exist even unto the end of the world. Let Christ Himself be asked, for unto Him it was said, "*Declare unto me the shortness of my days.*" *The Gospel of the kingdom*, He replieth, *shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.* Why didst thou say, This indeed was, and hath ceased? Hear the Lord declaring the shortness of my days. *This Gospel*, He saith, *shall be preached.* Where? *in the whole world.* Unto whom? *for a witness unto all nations.* What after this? *and then shall the end come.* Seest thou not that there are still nations among whom the Gospel hath not been preached? Since then it is needful that what the Lord spoke shall be fulfilled, declaring unto the Church the shortness of my days, that this Gospel be preached in all nations, and then that the end may come, why is it that thou sayest that the Church hath already perished from among all nations, when the Gospel is being preached for this purpose, that it may be in all nations? Therefore the Church remaineth even unto the end of the world, in all nations; and this is the shortness of Her days, because all that is limited is short; so that She may pass into eternity from this brief existence. May heretics be lost<sup>1</sup>, may that which they are be lost, and may they be found, that they may be what they are not. Shortness of days will be unto the end of the world: shortness for this reason, because the whole of this season, I say not from this day unto the end of the world, but from Adam down to the end of the world, is a mere drop compared with eternity.

<sup>1</sup> per-  
 eant.

10. Ver. 24. Let not therefore heretics flatter themselves against me, because I said, *the shortness of my days*, as if they would not last down to the end of the world. For what hath he added? *O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days.* Deal Thou not with me according as heretics speak. Lead me on unto the end of the world, not only to the middle of my days; and finish my short days, that Thou mayest afterwards grant unto me eternal days. Wherefore then hast thou asked concerning the shortness of thy days? Wherefore? Dost thou wish to hear? *Thy years are in the generation of*

*generations.* This is why I asked concerning those short days, because although my days should endure unto the end of the world, yet they are short in comparison of Thy days. For *Thy years are in the generation of generations.* Wherefore doth he not say, Thy years are unto worlds of worlds; for thus rather is eternity usually signified in the holy Scriptures; but he saith, *Thy years are in the generation of generations?* But what are thy years? what, but those which do not come, and then pass away? what, but they which come not, so as to cease again? For every day in this season so cometh as to cease again; every hour, every month, every year; nothing of these is stationary; before it hath come, it is to be; after it hath come, it will not be. Those everlasting years of thine, therefore, those years that are not changed, *are in the generation of generations.* There is a "generation of generations;" in that shall thy years be. There is one such, and if we acknowledge it aright, we shall be in it, and the years of God shall be in us. How shall they be in us? Just as God Himself shall be in us: whence it is said, *That God may be all in all.* For the years of God, and God Himself, are not different: but the years of God are the eternity of God: eternity is the very substance of God, which hath nothing changeable; there nothing is past, as if it were no longer: nothing is future, as if it existed not as yet. There is nothing there but, Is: there is not there, Was, and Will be; because what was, is now no longer: and what will be, is not as yet: but whatever is there, simply Is. God justly sent His servant Moses thus: for he asked the name of Him that sent him; he asked, and heard, nor was the longing of a good desire forsaken. But he asked, not from presumptuous curiosity, but from his own need in His service: *What, he asked, shall I say unto the children of Israel, if they shall say to me, Who sent thee unto us?* and He, exhibiting Himself as the Creator to the created, God unto man, Immortal unto mortal, Eternal unto temporal: *I, He replied, Am That I Am.* Thou wouldest say, I am. Who? Gaius: another, Lucius: another, Marcus. Wouldest thou say any thing else than thy name? This was expected of God. For it was this which was asked. What art Thou called? From Whom shall I answer

VER.  
24.1 Cor.  
15, 28.

PSALM to those who ask, that I am sent? "I AM"—who?—"THAT  
 CII. I AM." Is this Thy name? is this all that Thou art called?  
 11. Would Thy name be TO BE, unless whatever else "Is," when  
 compared with Thee, was found not to BE truly? This is  
 Exod. 3, Thy Name: explain it more clearly. Go, He saith, and say  
 13—15. unto the children of Israel, *I Am hath sent me unto you. I Am That I Am: I Am hath sent me unto you.* Behold  
 this great I AM! What is man's being to this? To this  
 great I AM, what is man, whatever he be? Who can under-  
 stand that TO BE? who can share it? who can pant,  
 aspire, presume that he may be there? Despair not, human  
 frailty! *I am*, He saith, *the God of Abraham, and the God*  
*of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* Thou hast heard what I  
 am in Myself: now hear what I am on thy account. This  
 eternity then hath called us, and the Word burst forth from  
 eternity. It is now eternity, it is now the Word, and no  
 longer time. Why not time? Because time also was created.  
 John 1, How so? *All things were made by Him: and without Him*  
 3. *was not any thing made that was made.* O Word before  
 seasons, through Whom seasons were created, born also in  
 time, though It be eternal life, calling the temporal, making  
 the eternal. This is the "generation of generations." For  
 Eccles. *one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh.*  
 1, 4. Now ye see the generations of men exist upon the earth as  
 leaves do on a tree; on the olive, however, or the laurel, or  
 any other evergreen. Thus the earth beareth the human  
 race as it were leaves: it is full of men, while those who die  
 are continually succeeded by others being born. For that  
 tree is ever adorned with a green garment: but observe how  
 many dry leaves thou treadest on beneath.

11. There was then a generation under Adam; it passed  
 away. Even at that season some were thence born who  
 should share in God's eternity: for thence sprung Abel,  
 thence Seth, thence Enoch. That generation passed away,  
 the deluge came, one family remained. Even that genera-  
 tion gave some, Noah himself, his three sons, and three  
 daughters in law; for in the whole of this family of eight,  
 only one sinner was found. The former generation was  
 increased in numbers. Next the whole world was filled  
 from the three sons of Noah, as it were with three measures

of meal. Abraham was chosen, Isaac, and Jacob; they <sup>VER. 25-27.</sup> were holy men, patriarchs, who pleased God. This generation produced also others following, which gave birth to <sup>Gen. ch. 4-28.</sup> the prophets, gave birth to the messengers of God. Afterwards our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also came; He sent the leaven into the three measures of meal, until the whole <sup>Mat. 13,</sup> should be leavened. In the times while His flesh was still <sup>33.</sup> upon the earth, the Apostles lived, and the saints; after them other saints: and whatever saints there now are in the name of Christ, and whatever saints there shall be after us, and down to the end of the world whatsoever saints shall be. From so many generations thou wilt gather together all the holy offspring of all generations, and wilt form one generation thence: *In this generation of generations are Thy years*, that is, that eternity will be in that generation, which is collected from all generations, and reduced into one; this shall share in Thy eternity. Other generations are born for fulfilling their times, out of which this one is regenerated for ever; though changed it shall be endued with life, it shall be fitted to bear Thee, receiving strength from Thee. *In the generation of generations are Thy years.*

12. Ver. 25. *Thou, O Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth.* I know Thy eternity, in which Thou art before all the things Thou hast made. *Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the Heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same. Who art Thou? Thou art the same.* Thou Who hast said, *I Am That I Am*, art the same. And although these things would have no being but from Thee, and through Thee, and in Thee, yet are they not what Thou art Thyself: *for Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.* Those years of Thine shall not fail, those years of Thine, which shall be in the generation of generations, shall not fail. Knowing this, then, I would ask the shortness of my days of Thee, did I not know that all the days of the world from the beginning to the end are short when compared with Thy eternity. I

80 *The Church desires her full time. What are God's 'hands.'*

PSALM  
CII.  
II.

know therefore why I have asked. Let not the heretics puff themselves up, as if the days of the Church were brief, diffused as she is over the whole world; for even though her days last unto the end, they are short. Why are they brief? Because at some period they must cease. Those years that shall be in the generation of generations, these are to be loved, these we ought to long and to sigh for; on account of these we must remain in unity, on account of these all the evil caused by heretics must be shunned, on account of these we must answer the lost, on account of these we must recover those who had perished, and gain those who had strayed: there our longings ought to be. Yet, that I may answer the talkative, idle tattlers, the slanderers, whisperers, and detractors, for this reason, *Tell me the shortness of my days; and take me not away in the midst of my days*, so as to withdraw me from the earth, before the whole world be filled with the Gospel, against the answer of my

Mat. 24, Lord, Who saith, *The Gospel must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come*. What can we add to these words, brethren? They are plain, they are clear; God laid the foundation of the earth, we know: the heavens are the works of His hands. For do not imagine that God doth one thing with His hand, another by His word. What He doth by His word, He doth by His hand: for He hath not distinct bodily members, Who said, *I Am That I Am*. And perhaps His Word is His hand, assuredly

Gen. 1, His hand is His power. For inasmuch as it is said, *Let there be a firmament*, and there was a firmament; He is understood to have created it by His Word; but when He said,

Gen. 1, *Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness*; He seemeth to have created him by His hand. Hear therefore: *The heavens are the work of Thy hands*. Lo, what He created by His word, He created also by His hands; because He created them through His excellence, through His power. Observe rather what He created, and seek not to know in what manner He created them. It is much to thee to understand how He created them, since He created thyself so,

John 15, that thou mayest first be a servant obeying, and afterwards perhaps a friend understanding. Therefore, *the heavens are the works of Thy hands*.

12. *They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure.* The Apostle <sup>V. 26.</sup> Peter saith this openly: *By the word of God the heavens <sup>2 Pet. 3,</sup> were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the <sup>5. 6.</sup> water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, to be reserved unto fire.* He hath said then that the heavens have already perished by the flood: and we know that the heavens perished as far as the extent of this atmosphere of ours. For the water increased, and filled the whole of that space in which birds fly; thus perished the heavens that are near the earth; those heavens which are meant when we speak of the birds of heaven. But there are heavens of heavens higher than these in the firmament: but whether these also shall perish by fire, or those only which perished also by the flood, is a much harder question among the learned, nor can it easily, especially in a limited space of time, be explained. Let us therefore dismiss or put it off; nevertheless, let us know that these things perish, and that God endureth. And if some things which were made by God remain with God, they do not endure in themselves, but in God, by not departing from God. For what? Are we to say, brethren, that the Angels will perish in the fire with which the world shall burn? Far be it! But what? Shall we say that God made not the Angels? Far be it! But what shall we say? and whence could they exist, if they were not made by Him? *For He <sup>Ps. 33, 9.</sup> spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.* Now this was said in the course of a commemoration of His works, among which the Angels also are mentioned. The Angels therefore will be with Him, even when the world is blazing with fire; and there will be a conflagration of the world, that shall not burn the saints of God: what the monarch's furnace was to the three youths, this the <sup>Dan. 3.</sup> burning world will be to the righteous sealed in the Trinity.

14. Perhaps by the heavens we here may understand, without being far-fetched, the righteous themselves, the saints of God, abiding in whom God hath thundered in His commandments, lightened in His miracles, watered the earth with the wisdom of truth, for *The heavens have declared the glory of God. <sup>Ps. 19, 7.</sup>* But shall they perish? Shall they in any sense perish? In

PSALM what sense? As a garment\*. What is, as a garment? As to  
 CII. the body. For the body is the garment of the soul; since our  
 II. Lord called it a garment, when He said, *Is not the life more*  
 Matt. 6, *than meat, and the body than raiment?* How then doth the  
 25. garment perish? *Though our outward man perish, yet the*  
 2 Cor. 4, *inward man is renewed day by day.* They then shall perish:  
 16. but as to the body: *But Thou shalt endure.* If then they  
 shall perish according to the body, where then is the resur-  
 rection of the flesh? Where is the example for the members  
 which went before in the Head? Where? Dost thou wish to  
 hear? It shall be changed; it shall not be such as it was. Hear  
 the Apostle, saying, *and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,*  
 1 Cor. *and we shall be changed.* How shall we be changed? *It is*  
 15, 52. *sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* It is  
 44. sown corruptible, it shall be raised incorruptible. We are  
 therefore expecting a change: thus shall the heavens perish,  
 and the heavens shall be changed. But perhaps the heavens  
 are not correctly taken for the bodies of the saints? If they  
 bear not God, let them not be heavens. Yet whence, thou  
 sayest, dost thou prove to me that they bear God? Hast  
 1 Cor. 6, thou then so far forgotten, *glorify and bear God in your*  
 50. *body?* Such heavens therefore shall perish; not, however,  
 for ever; they shall perish, that they may be changed. Doth  
 not the Psalm say this? Read the following: *They shall all*  
*wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall Thou*  
*change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the*  
*same, and Thy years shall not fail.* Thou hearest of the  
 garment, of the vesture, and dost thou understand any  
 thing but the body? We may therefore hope for the change  
 of our bodies also, but from Him Who was before us, and  
 abideth after us; from Whom we are what we are, to Whom  
 we shall come when we shall have been changed; He Who  
 changeth, and is not changed; Who createth, without being  
 created; Who moveth, yet abideth; and as it may be under-  
 stood by flesh and blood, *I Am That I Am: therefore*  
*Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.* But what  
 are we to those years with these beggarly years? and what  
 are they? Yet we ought not to despair. He had already said  
 in His great and exceeding Wisdom, *I Am That I Am;*

\* Or, 'as to the garment,' (*secundum vestimentum.*)

and yet He saith to console us, *I am the God of Abraham*, VER. 28.  
*and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*: and we are Exod. 3, 6.  
 Abraham's seed: even we, although abject, although dust Gal. 3, 29.  
 and ashes, trust in Him. We are servants: but for our sakes Phil. 2, 7.  
 our Lord took the garb of a servant: for us who are mortal  
 the Immortal One deigned to die, for our sakes He shewed  
 His example of resurrection. Let us therefore hope that we  
 may reach these lasting years, in which days are not spent  
 in a revolution of the Sun, but what is abideth even as it is,  
 because it alone is truly.

15. Ver. 28. But say whether we may ever be there.  
 Hear and consider whether thou oughtest to despair; hear  
 what followeth: *The children of Thy servants shall dwell  
 there.* Where, but in the years that shall not fail? *The  
 children of Thy servants shall dwell there: and their seed  
 shall stand fast for ages:* for the age of ages, the age of  
 eternity, the age that abideth. But, *the children*, he saith,  
*of Thy servants*: it is to be feared lest we be the servants of  
 God, and our children, and not ourselves, dwell there? Or  
 if we are the children of the servants, inasmuch as we are  
 the Apostles' children, what are we to say? Can those  
 children rising after have so unhappy a presumption, as to  
 boast in their late succession, and so to venture to say, We  
 shall be there; the Apostles will not be there? May this be  
 far from their piety as children, from their faith as little  
 ones, from their understanding when of age! The Apostles  
 also will be there: rams go before, lambs follow. Wherefore  
 then, *the children of Thy servants*; and not in brief, *Thy  
 servants*? Both they are Thy servants, and their children  
 are Thy servants; and the children of these, their grandsons,  
 what are they but Thy servants? Thou wouldest include  
 them all briefly, if Thou shouldest say, Thy servants shall  
 dwell therein. Let us consider what he wished to teach us.  
 For a thing was done in the former ages. For forty years  
 the children of Israel were worn in the wilderness: not one  
 of them entered into the land of promise, but their children  
 did; two indeed, as we now call to mind, did enter; if I am Numb. 14, 29.  
 right, the rest did not. Two out of so many thousands 30.  
 entered. So much toil was borne with them: but God toileth  
 not; surely His servants toiled. How much did Moses bear,

**PSALM CIII.** what revilings did he hear, for the sake of men who were never to enter into the land of promise? Their children entered, what signifieth this? New men entered: the old men entered not yet; of these, two did enter, One and Unity, Head as it were and body, Christ and the Church, with all the youth, I mean, the children. Therefore, *The children of Thy servants shall dwell therein. The children of Thy servants*, are the works of Thy servants; no one shall dwell there, but through his own works. What therefore meaneth, Their children shall dwell? Let no man boast that he shall dwell there, if he calleth himself God's servant, and hath not works; for none but children shall dwell there. What meaneth therefore, *The children of Thy servants shall dwell there?* Thy servants shall dwell there by their own works, Thy servants shall dwell there through their own children. Be not therefore barren, if thou dost wish to dwell there; send before the children whom thou mayest follow, by sending them before thee, not by burying them. Let thy children lead thee to the land of promise, the land of the living, not of the dying: whilst thou art living here in this pilgrimage, let them go before thee, let them receive thee. For the Gen. 45, 7. sake of providing for the flesh, his son went before Jacob into Egypt, and saith to his father and his brethren, "I came before you to prepare food for you." Let therefore thy children go before thee, let thy works go before thee; such children as thou hast sent before, such shalt thou follow.

**L.A.T.  
CII.**

**PSALM CIII.**

*A Sermon delivered on a feast of the Martyrs.*

1. Ver. 1. IN every gift of the Lord our God, in every consolation of His, in every chastisement of His, in the grace which He hath deigned to grant, in the indulgence with which He hath recompensed not as we deserved, in all His works, let our soul praise the Lord. For it is this that we have sung; thence beginneth the Psalm, of which we will speak, whatever we can do being His gift, Whom our soul blesseth. Let each one of us arouse and exhort his soul, and say unto it, *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Both all of us, and all the brethren every where in Christ, must, as one man,

whose Head is in Heaven, individually exhort his own soul, and say unto it, *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* He listeneth, VER.  
I. he obeyeth, he doth this, he is persuaded of it, not from our gift, but from His Whom our soul blesseth. For this Psalm undertakes to shew us wherefore our soul blesseth the Lord, as if the soul had replied unto it, Wherefore sayest thou unto me, Bless the Lord? Let us therefore hear, let our soul itself hear, let it weigh all the causes which arouse it, that it may not be slothful in blessing the Lord; and let it consider whether what is said to it be just, *Bless the Lord, O my soul:* let it consider whether it ought to bless any thing beside the Lord. *Bless,* it saith, *the Lord, O my soul!*

2. It repeateth this, and saith more expressly what it had said, *Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, His holy Name.* I suppose that he speaketh not of what is within the body; I do not suppose him to mean this, that our lungs and liver, and so forth, are to burst forth into the voice of blessing of the Lord. There are lungs in our breast indeed, like a kind of bellows, which send forth successive breathings, which breathing forth of the air inhaled is pressed out into voice and sound, when the words are articulated; nor can any utterance sound forth from our mouth, but what the pressed lungs have given vent to; but this is not the meaning here; all this relateth to the ears of men. God hath ears: the heart also hath a voice. A man speaketh to the things within him, that they may bless God, and saith unto them, *all that is within me bless His holy Name!* Dost thou ask the meaning of what is within thee? Thy soul itself. In saying then, *all that is within me, bless His holy Name,* it only repeateth the above, *Bless the Lord, O my soul:* for the word *Bless,* is understood. Cry out with thy voice, if there be a man to hear; hush thy voice, when there is no man to hear thee; there is never wanting one to hear all that is within thee. Blessing therefore hath already been uttered from our mouth, when we were chanting these very words: *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, His holy Name.* We sung as much as sufficed for the time, and were then silent: ought our hearts within us to be silent to the blessing of the Lord? Let the sound of our voices bless Him at intervals, alternately, let the voice of our hearts be

**PSALM CIII.** perpetual. When thou comest to church to recite a hymn, thy voice soundeth forth the praises of God: thou hast sung as far as thou couldest, thou hast left the church; let thy soul sound the praises of God. Thou art engaged in thy daily work: let thy soul praise God. Thou art taking food; see what the Apostle saith: *Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God.* I venture to say; when thou sleepest, let thy soul praise the Lord. Let not thoughts of crime arouse thee, let not the contrivances of thieving arouse thee, let not arranged plans of corrupt dealing arouse thee. Thy innocence even when thou art sleeping is the voice of thy soul. *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, His holy Name.*

1 Cor.  
10, 31.

3. Ver. 2. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards.* Bless, he saith, *the Lord, O my soul.* What is, thy soul? all that is within thee. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* The repetition giveth force to the exhortation. But that thou mayest ever bless God, *forget not all His rewards.* If thou dost forget, thou wilt be silent. But the rewards of the Lord cannot be before thine eyes unless thy sins are before thine eyes. Let not delight in past sin be before thine eyes, but let the condemnation of sin be before thine eyes: condemnation from thee, forgiveness from God. For Ps. 116, thus God rewardeth thee, so that thou mayest say, *How shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me?* This it

Ps. 116,  
12.

1 John 3, down their lives for the brethren, which is the perfection of love, even as our Lord saith: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:* this the holy martyrs, then, considering, despised their lives here, that they might find them there, following our Lord's words when

1 John 3,  
16.  
John 15,  
13.

John 12, He said, *He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall keep it unto life eternal.* For they wished to pay their reward: who? and what reward? and unto whom? Men paid the reward of their ministry to God even unto death. What paid they that He had not given them? what gave they that they received not? He therefore truly rewardeth, Who alone giveth; but

John 12,  
25.  
Mat. 10,  
39.

He rewardeth not our sins; for other rewards than those <sup>V ER.</sup> which were due have been paid us. *Forget not*, he saith, *all* <sup>2.</sup> *His rewards*: not awards, but *rewards*<sup>1</sup>. For something else <sup>1 Non</sup> was due, and what was not due hath been paid. Whence <sup>tributi-</sup> also these words: *What*, he asketh, *shall I reward the Lord* <sup>ones,</sup> *for all His rewards unto me?* He saith not, His awards, but <sup>sed re-</sup> *ones*. <sup>tributi-</sup>

*His rewards*. Thou hast rewarded good with evil: He rewardeth evil with good. How hast thou, O man, rewarded thy God with evil for good? Thou who hast once been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, hast rewarded <sup>1 Tim.</sup> blasphemies. For what good things? First: because thou <sup>1, 13.</sup> art: but a stone also is. Next, because thou livest: but a brute also liveth. What reward wilt thou give the Lord, for His having created thee above all the cattle; and above all the fowls of the air, in His image and likeness? Seek not <sup>Gen. 1,</sup> how to reward Him: give back unto Him His own image: <sup>26; 27.</sup> He requireth no more; He demandeth His own coin. But <sup>Mat. 23,</sup> thou instead of giving thanks, instead of humility, of obedi- <sup>21.</sup> ence, of religious worship, that is, instead of all these good things which thou didst owe to thy God, for the good things which thou hast received, which I have described, hast rewarded blasphemies. What then doth He? Confess: I forgive thee. I also reward: but not as thou hast rewarded: thou hast rewarded evil for good: I reward good for evil.

4. Think thou, soul, of all the rewards of God, in thinking over all thy wicked deeds: for as many as are thy sins, so many are His rewards of good. And what present, what offering, what sacrifice, canst thou ever tender unto Him? If thou dost not forget His rewards, He is pleased with this sacrifice: *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* “*The sacrifice of* <sup>Ps. 50,</sup> *praise honoureth Me:*” “*Offer unto God the sacrifice of* <sup>23. 14.</sup> *praise, and pay thy vows to the Most Highest.*” God wisheth Himself to be praised: and this, that thou mayest profit, not that He may be exalted. It is not possible that thou canst reward Him; and what He requireth, He requireth not for Himself, but for thee; thee it shall profit, for thee it is reserved. He loveth not that from thee which may honour Him, but which may lead thee to Him. For this reason the martyrs sought, and failed in a manner in discovering, and said, *How can I reward the Lord, for all His* <sup>Ps. 116,</sup> <sup>12; 13.</sup>

**PSALM** rewards unto me? and they found no reward that they  
**CIII.** could give, except this: *I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* What wilt thou reward the Lord with? For thou wast reflecting, and couldest not find: *I will receive the cup of salvation.* What? hath not the Lord Himself given the cup of salvation? Reward Him from thine own, if thou canst. I would say, No, do it not; reward Him not from thine own; God doth not will to be rewarded from thine own. If thou rewardest Him from thine own, thou rewardest sin. For all that thou hast thou hast from Him: sins only thou hast of thine own. He doth not wish to be rewarded from thine, He doth will from His own. Just as, if thou shouldest bring to a husbandman, from the land which he hath sown, an ear of wheat, thou hast rewarded him from the husbandman's own produce; if thorns, that hast offered him of thine own. Reward truth, in truth praise the Lord: if thou shalt choose to reward Him from thine own, thou wilt lie. He who speaketh a lie, **John 8,** speaketh of his own. If he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of  
**44.** his own: so he who speaketh truth, speaketh of the Lord's. But what is to receive the cup of salvation, but to imitate the Passion of our Lord? This did the Martyrs. This He said to the proud, and those who were seeking exalted seats, and who were avoiding the vale of lamentation, who wished to sit, one at the right hand, the other at the left. What **Mat.20,** then said He? *Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall*  
**22.** *drink of?* Now therefore the Martyr ready for the holy offering saith, *I will receive the cup of salvation: I will receive the cup of Christ, I will drink of our Lord's Passion.* Beware that thou fail not. But, *I will call upon the Name of the Lord.* They then who failed, called not upon the Lord; they presumed in their own strength. Do thou so return, as remembering that thou art returning what thou hast received. So then let thy soul bless the Lord, as not to forget all His rewards.

5. Ver. 3—5. Hear ye all His rewards. *Who forgiveth all thy sin: Who healeth all thine infirmities; Who saveth thy life from corruption; Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness. Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, making thee young and lusty as an eagle.* Behold His

rewards. What, save punishment, was due unto the sinner? What was due to the blasphemer, but the hell of burning fire? He gave not these rewards: that thou mayest not shudder with dread: and without love fear Him. Forget not all His good rewards; and now change, lest thou experience His—what shall I say? Evil rewards? if just, not evil. To thee evil, therefore: but with respect to God, what thou sufferest is not evil: for if just, it is good; but to thee, who sufferest, these things are evil. Thou dost not wish that those things, which in God are just, should be evil unto thee? Let not thy wickedness be evil in the sight of God. For He hath not ceased to call thee, or neglected to strengthen thee when called, or ceased to perfect thee when strengthened, or neglected to crown thee when perfected. What sayest thou? That thou art a sinner? Turn again, and receive these His rewards: He *forgiveth all thy sin*. After the remission of thy sins thou bearest a body that is infirm: there must needs be some carnal desires to tickle thee, and to suggest to thee illicit delights; they come in consequence of thy infirmity. For as yet thou bearest flesh that is weak: death hath not as yet been swallowed up in victory: not as yet hath this corruptible put on incorruption: as yet even after remission of sins the soul herself is shaken by certain passions; still is she amid the dangers of temptation, still is she pleased with certain suggestions; with some she is not pleased, and sometimes she consenteth unto some of those with which she is pleased: she is taken. This is infirmity: but He *healeth all thine infirmities*. All thine infirmities shall be healed: fear not. They are great, thou wilt say: but the Physician is greater. No infirmity cometh before the Almighty Physician as incurable: only suffer thou thyself to be healed: repel not His hands; He knoweth how to deal with thee. Be not only pleased when He cherisheth thee, but also bear with Him when He useth the knife: bear the pain of the remedy, reflecting on thy future health. For consider, my brethren, in these bodily infirmities how much men bear, that after living for a few days they may die, and these few, days of uncertainty. For many after they have borne great pains when they were under the physician's knife, have either died under the physician's hands, or, some

**PSALM CIII.** fresh attack coming on, have sunk beneath it. If they believed death so near them, would they endure those great pains? Thou dost not endure in uncertainty: He Who promised thee health, cannot be deceived. The physician is often deceived: and promiseth health in the human body. Why is he deceived? Because he is not healing his own creature. God made thy body, God made thy soul. He knoweth how to restore what He hath made, He knoweth how to fashion again what He hath already fashioned: do thou only be patient beneath the Physician's hands: for He hateth one who rejects His hands. This doth not happen with the hands of a human physician. Men choose to be bound, and to suffer the operation; ready to admit certain pain for uncertain recovery, a high price. God both surely, and without charge, healeth thee, whom He created. Bear then His hands, O soul, who blessest Him, not forgetful of His rewards: for He *healeth all thine infirmities.*

6. *Who redeemeth thy life from corruption.* He healeth all thine infirmities, because He saveth thy life from corruption. Behold, *the body which is corrupted, weigheth down the soul.* The soul then hath life in a corruptible body. What sort of life? It suffereth burdens, it beareth weights. How great obstacles are there to thinking of God Himself, as it is right that men should think of God, as if interrupting us from the necessity of human corruption? how many influences recall us, how many interrupt, how many withdraw the mind when fixed on high? what a crowd of illusions, what tribes of suggestions? All this in the human heart, as it were, teemeth with the worms of human corruption. We have set forth the greatness of the disease, let us also praise the Physician. Shall not He then heal thee, Who made thee such as to be in health, hadst thou chosen to keep the law of health which thou hadst received? Did He not arrange and enjoin to thee what thou shouldest touch, and what thou shouldest not touch, in order to retain thy health? Thou wouldest not hear to retain thy health, hear therefore in order to recover it. By thine infirmity thou hast experienced how justly He had thus ordered. At last then, let man who kept not the Law when he was warned, keep it now he hath had experience of it. How

Wisd. 9,  
15.

Gen. 2,  
16. 17.

great is that hardness, which not even experience teacheth? VER.  
Shall not He then heal thee, Who created thee such as that 4.  
thou shouldest never feel sickness, hadst thou chosen to  
keep His commandments? Shall not He heal thee Who  
made the Angels, and Who will make thee equal with the  
Angels when thou art restored? Shall not He heal one who  
was created in His own image—He Who made Heaven and  
earth? He will heal thee: but thou must wish to be healed.  
He indeed healeth all the infirm, whomsoever; but He  
healeth no man against his will. What can be more happy  
than thou, who canst hold thy health as it were in thine  
own hands, that is, in thine own free-will? If thou didst  
wish for some exalted honour in this world; if thou wast  
ambitious of a duchy, a proconsulate, a prefecture; couldest  
thou at once have as thou wast desirous? would power be  
in attendance upon thy first wish? Many wish to attain  
these things, but cannot: and if they could, of what use is  
honour to the sick? For who is not sick in this life? who  
doth not drag on tedious infirmity? To be born here in  
a mortal body, is to begin to be sick. Our wants are  
supported by daily medicines, the means of restoration for  
all wants are daily medicines. Would not hunger cause thy  
death, unless thou didst apply what would cure it? would  
not thirst destroy thee, unless thou didst by drinking satisfy  
it for a season, though not for ever? For thirst will return  
in a short interval, though checked. We therefore by these  
means of healing do assuage the troubles of our distempered  
state. Thou wast wearied with standing, by sitting down  
thou art refreshed; the very act of sitting is the cure of  
thy fatigue: by this very remedy thou art in turn fatigued;  
thou canst not long sit. Whenever one cause of fatigue is  
counteracted, a fresh one is created. Why then, infirm as  
thou art, dost thou long for these things? First think of  
thine own health. Sometimes a man is stricken in his own  
house, on his bed, with a more than usually manifest dis-  
order; although this disorder too, which men dislike to  
contemplate, be plain; yet each man may be attacked with  
that sickness for which human physicians are sought, and  
may gasp with fever in his bed; perhaps he may wish to  
consider of his domestic affairs, to make some order or

**PSALM** disposition relating to his estate or his house; at once he  
**CIII.** is recalled from such cares by the anxiety of his friends,  
 plainly expressed around him, and he is advised to dismiss  
 these subjects, and first to take thought for his health. This  
 then is addressed unto thee, and to all men: if thou art not  
 sick, think of other things: if thy very infirmity prove thee  
 sick, first take heed of thy health. Christ is thy health:  
 think therefore of Christ. Receive the cup of His saving  
 Health, *Who healeth all thine infirmities*; if thou shalt  
 choose, thou shalt gain this Health. When thou hast sought  
 for honours and wealth, thou wilt not gain them at once,  
 though thou wishest: this is even more precious, and it  
 followeth thy will. *He Who healeth all thine infirmities:*  
*and Who redeemeth thy life from corruption.* There shall  
 all thine infirmity be healed, when this corruptible shall put  
 on incorruption. For thy life hath been redeemed from cor-  
 ruption: rest secure now: the contract of good faith hath  
 been entered upon; no man deceives, no man circumvents,  
 no man oppresses, thy Redeemer. He hath here made a  
 barter, He hath already paid the price, He hath poured  
 forth His blood. The only Son of God, I say, hath shed  
 His blood for us: O soul, raise thyself, thou art of so great  
 price. *He redeemeth thy life from corruption.* He hath  
 shewn by His example, what He hath promised in the  
 Rom. 4, reward. He died for our transgressions, and rose again for  
 25. our justification. Let the members hope for that which hath  
 been shewn in the Head. Will He not heal those members  
 of His own, whose Head He raised into heaven? Therefore,  
*He redeemeth thy life from corruption.*

7. *Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness.*  
 Thou hadst perhaps begun to be in a manner proud, when  
 thou didst hear the words, *He crowneth thee.* I am then  
 great, I have then wrestled. By whose strength? By  
 thine, but supplied by Him. For thou dost strive, it is  
 clear, and therefore thou shalt be crowned, because thou  
 wilt conquer: but see Who conquered first, Who hath made  
 John 16, thee a conqueror, even though in the second place. *I have*  
 83. *overcome the world,* He said: *be of good cheer.* And whence  
 are we of good cheer, if He hath overcome the world? as if  
 we overcame it? Surely for this reason we rejoice, because

we ourselves have overcome it. We who were overcome <sup>VER.</sup>  
in ourselves, have in Him overcome. He crowneth thee, <sup>4.</sup>  
because He is crowning His own gifts, not thy deservings.  
*I laboured more abundantly than they all*, said the Apostle; <sup>1 Cor.</sup>  
but see what he addeth: *yet not I, but the grace of God* <sup>15, 10.</sup>  
*which was with me*. And after all his toils he hopeth for  
the crown itself, and saith, *I have fought a good fight*, <sup>2 Tim.</sup>  
*I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth* <sup>4, 7, 8.</sup>  
*there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the*  
*Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day*.  
Why? Because *I have fought a good fight*. Wherefore?  
Because *I have finished my course*. Wherefore? Because  
*I have kept the faith*. How hast thou fought? By what  
power hast thou kept the faith? *Yet not I, but the grace*  
*of God which was with me*. It is then by His mercy that  
thou art crowned; in nothing be proud; ever praise the  
Lord; forget not all His rewards. It is a reward when  
thou, a sinner and an ungodly man, hast been called, that  
thou mayest be justified. It is a reward, when thou art  
raised up and guided, that thou mayest not fall. It is  
a reward, when strength is given thee, that thou mayest  
persevere unto the end. It is a reward, that even that flesh  
of thine by which thou wast oppressed riseth again, and  
that not even a hair of thy head perisheth. It is a reward,  
that after thy resurrection thou art crowned. It is a reward,  
that thou mayest praise God Himself for evermore without  
ceasing. Forget not all His rewards, if thou dost wish that  
thy soul may praise the Lord, *Who crowneth thee with*  
*mercy and lovingkindness*.

8. And what shall I do when crowned? Lo, I was  
supported while I was striving; I shall be crowned when  
the fight is finished; there will be no longer any remaining  
suggestion or corruption of the enemy with which to strive.  
For in this life we are ever striving with this corruption;  
but what is written? *The last enemy that shall be destroyed* <sup>1 Cor.</sup>  
*is death*. After the destruction of death thou shalt fear no <sup>15, 26.</sup>  
enemy: thenceforward *death is swallowed up in victory*. <sup>54.</sup>  
Then therefore will be the victory, then the crown. After  
the battle, then, I shall be crowned; after the crown, what  
shall I do? *He Who satisfieth thy longing with good things*.

**PSALM CIII.** For at present thou hearest of good, and dost pant for it: thou hearest of good, and sighest for it: and even whenever thou sinnest, it is perhaps because thou art mistaken in the eagerness of thy choice of good; and in this thou art liable to condemnation, that thou hearest not the good counsel of God, as to what ought to be spurned, and what to be chosen; in that perhaps thou neglectest to learn, if thou wast deceived in thy choice of good. Wherever thou sinnest, thou art as it were seeking for a good, longing for refreshment. These objects of thy search are good; but unto thee they will be evil, if He by Whom they were made good be forsaken. Seek thy own good, O soul. For one thing is good to one creature, another to another, and all creatures have a certain good of their own, to the completeness and perfection of their nature. There is a difference as to what is essential to each imperfect thing, in order that it may be made perfect; seek for thy own good. *There is none good but One, that is, God.* The highest good is thy good. What then is wanting unto him to whom the highest good is good? For there are inferior goods, which are good to different creatures respectively. What, brethren, is good unto the cattle, save to fill the belly, to prevent want, to sleep, to indulge themselves, to exist, to be in health, to propagate? This is good to them: and within certain bounds it hath an allotted measure of good, granted by God, the Creator of all things. Dost thou seek such a good as this? God giveth also this: but do not pursue it alone. Canst thou, a coheir of Christ, rejoice in fellowship with cattle? Raise thy hope to the good of all goods. He will be thy good, by Whom thou in thy kind hast been made good, and by Whom all things in their kind were made good. For God made all things very good. If therefore we say that That good, which is God, is very good, it hath already been said of the creation: *God made every thing very good.* What therefore is that good whereof it is said, *There is none good but One, that is, God?* Do we say that it is very good? We call to mind that this is said of the whole creation, God made all things very good. What then are we to say? Our words are wanting, but not our feeling. Let us remember the Psalm lately treated of: we cannot

**Mat. 19,**  
**17.**

**Gen. 1,**  
**31.**

express our feeling; let us shout<sup>1</sup> for joy. God is good. V. 5.  
What sort of good, who can say? Lo, we cannot say, and 1 jubile-  
we are not allowed to be silent. If then we cannot say, and mus:  
for our joy are not able to be silent; let us neither speak, vid. on  
nor be silent. What then are we to do, neither speaking, Ps. 100,  
nor silent? Let us shout for joy. *Jubilate unto the God*  
*of our salvation. Jubilate unto God, every land.* What  
meaueth, *Jubilate?* Utter the ineffable accents of your joy,  
and let your delight burst forth before Him. And what will  
this burst be after the full feast, if even now after slight  
refreshment the soul is so much affected? what will it be,  
when it shall be done after our redemption from all cor-  
ruption, as is said in this Psalm, *He shall satisfy thy longing*  
*with good things?*

9. And as if thou didst ask, when doth He satisfy us?  
for at present I am not satisfied; whatever I turn myself  
unto, becometh vile when gained, although it incited me  
when desired; when I despise all those things after attaining  
them, which I love only when I have them not, what good  
thing will satisfy me? The praise of God? Even by this,  
while the corrupt body weigheth it down, and its earthly Wisd. 9,  
abode overpowers the reflecting mind, the soul, not satisfied, 16.  
is not perfected; other pleasures attached to my wants, and  
arising from corruption, turn me aside from it. When shall  
my longing be satisfied with good things? when, dost thou  
ask? *Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's.* Dost thou  
then ask when thy soul is to be satisfied with good things?  
When thy youth shall be restored. And he addeth, as an  
eagle's. Something here lieth hidden; what however is said  
of the eagle, we will not pass over silently, since it is not  
foreign to our purpose to understand it. Let this only be  
impressed upon our hearts, that it is not said without cause  
by the Holy Spirit, *Thy youth shall be renewed as the*  
*eagle's.* For it hath intimated unto us a sort of resurrection.  
And indeed the youth of the eagle is restored, but not into  
immortality, for a similitude hath been given, as far as it  
could be drawn from a thing mortal to signify a thing im-  
mortal, not to demonstrate it. The eagle is said, after it  
becometh overpowered with bodily age, to be incapable of  
taking food from the immoderate length of its beak, which is

PSALM CIII. always increasing. For after the upper part of its beak, which forms a crook above the lower part, hath increased from old age to an immoderate length, the length of this increase will not allow of its opening its mouth, so as to form any interval between the lower beak and the crook above. For unless there be such an opening, it hath no power of biting like a forceps, by which to shear off what it may put within its jaws. The upper part therefore increasing, and being too far hooked over, it cannot open its mouth, and take any food. This old age doth to it, it is weighed down with the infirmity of age, and becometh too weak from want of power to eat; two causes of infirmity assaulting it, old age, and want. By a natural device, therefore, in order in some measure to restore its youth, the eagle is said to dash and strike against a rock the upper lip of its beak, by the too great increase of which the opening for eating is closed: and by thus rubbing it against the rock, it breaketh off the weight of its old beak, which impeded its taking food. It cometh to its food, and every thing is restored: it will be after its old age like a young eagle; the vigour of all its limbs returneth, the lustre of its plumage, the guidance of its wings, it flieth aloft as before, a sort of resurrection taketh place in it. For this is the object of the similitude, like that of the Moon, which after waning and being apparently intercepted, again is renewed, and becometh full; and signifieth to us the resurrection; but when it is full it doth not remain so; again it waneth, that the signification may never cease. Thus also what hath here been said of the eagle: the eagle is not restored unto immortality, but we are unto eternal life; but the similitude is derived from hence, that the rock taketh away from us what hindereth us. Presume not therefore on thy strength: the firmness of the rock rubbeth off thy old age: for that Rock was Christ. In Christ our youth shall be restored like that of the eagle. For we have grown old among our enemies, in the well-known words of the Psalm, *I have grown old amid all mine enemies.* How have we grown old? By our mortal flesh, by that flesh of grass: and therefore, *My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. I have forgotten, he saith, to eat my bread.* Old

1 Cor.  
10, 4.

Ps. 6, 7.

age hath increased, it hath closed the mouth, let it be rubbed away by the rock. VER.  
5.

10. Thus also in this Psalm which we are now concerned with, when he had said, *He satisfieth thy mouth with good things*, the soul seemeth to reply, I will not be satisfied with things perishable, with things temporal; let Him give me something everlasting: let Him grant me His Wisdom, His Word: let Him give me God with God, and Himself God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I stand as a beggar before His door, He whom I call upon sleepeth not, let Him give me Three Loaves. Remember the Gospel: behold what it is to know the words of God; they who have read them are moved. For ye remember that a person in want came to the house of his friend, and begged of him three loaves. And he, it is said, while in bed answered him, saying, *The door is now shut; and my children are with me in bed.* He through persevering entreaty, extorted by importunity what he could not of his own deserts. But God is willing to give: but He giveth not except to him who asketh, that He may not give to him who receiveth not. He wants not to be aroused by thine importunity. For when thou prayest, thou art not troublesome as to one who sleepeth. *Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Once hath Christ slept, that from His side a wife might be created: He slept on the Cross, it is clear. For He died, so that He said, *I have laid me down and slept.* But shall not he who sleepeth also rise? For this reason it is said, *I rose up again, for the Lord sustained me.* But what doth the Apostle say? *Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death shall have no more dominion over Him.* He therefore doth not sleep: beware lest thy faith sleep. Let then the soul that longeth to be satisfied with some exalted, ineffable good, to which it rather shouteth for joy, and for which it rather shouteth, than uttereth any description; for it already wisheth, it already perceiveth somewhat thereof: it seeth that it is hindered by the weighing down of the body, that it cannot be satisfied in this life; let it answer, and say, What sayest thou to me? Shall my longing be satisfied with good things? I know that good of His which I am to desire, I know what is

48 *When renewed, we shall be satisfied. Mercy to the merciful.*

PSALM  
CIII. enough for me, I see this in Philip: *Shew us*, he said, *the Father, and it sufficeth us.* He seemingly longed for the Father alone: our Lord shewed that three loaves were to be desired: He Who is one loaf shewed him this, saying, *Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known the Father, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.* He promised also the Holy Ghost: *Whom the Father, He said, will send in My Name;* and again He saith, *Whom I will send you from the Father:* His own gift coequal with Himself. I know what I long for: but when shall I be satisfied with it? Lo, now my thoughts are of the Trinity, in such wise as I can about the Trinity, I hardly dare to perceive any thing even darkly in a looking-glass; when shall I be satisfied? *Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's.* Thou art not satisfied at present, because thy soul is not fit for that great and solid food; for when thy beak is closed, it is not fit for it. Old age hath closed thy mouth, for this reason is the Rock given, where, oldness rubbed off, thy youth may be restored as that of an eagle; that thou mayest be able to eat thy bread, Him Who saith, *I am the living bread, Who came down from Heaven. Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's:* then shalt thou be satisfied with good things.

11. Ver. 6. *The Lord executeth mercy and judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong.* He doth so now, brethren, before we come to our restoration like that of the eagle, before we are satisfied with good things. For what here, what in this pilgrimage, what in this life? are we forsaken? No. *The Lord executeth mercy.* Now see how He executeth mercy, not leaving us in the desert, not leaving us in the wilderness, until we reach our country: *He executeth mercy;* but unto whom? *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy,* ye have heard lately, brethren, while the Gospel was being read. Let not therefore any man imagine, that the mercy of God will light upon him, if he is unmerciful himself. But hear what is the measure of mercy, lest perhaps it be only towards a friend, and not towards an enemy. It is said, *Love your enemies.* Thou dost wish to be satisfied with the good things of God; let mercy be satisfied within thee. Full mercy, this is perfect

mercy; it is this which loveth, which loveth him even who hateth herself. But what shall I do? thou sayest. If I begin to love mine enemy, shall I receive injuries, and bear injuries, and shall not I seek redress, when the laws protect me? It is right for thee to redress thyself; it is allowed, that it is just: see whether thou hast nothing to redress within thyself, and redress it. For thou speakest thus, shall I not then redress myself? as if God were restraining the justice of redress, and not extinguishing the pride of him who redresseth. Or was not that adulterous woman worthy of being stoned? or if she were stoned, would an act of injustice have been done? If it were unjust, the commandment was unjust; but the Law commanded it, God commanded it. Yet, O ye avengers, see whether ye be not sinners. An adulterous woman is brought forward to be stoned according to the Law, but she is brought before the Lawgiver Himself. Thou who bringest her forth, dost rage against her: see who thou art who art cruel, and against whom thou art cruel; if sinner against sinner, be cruel no more, first confess; if thou a sinner dost rage against a sinner, leave her; He knoweth what to think of her, what to judge, how to spare, how to heal. Art thou angry according to the Law? He Who made the Law, which causeth thy rage, knoweth better what to do. Our Lord, at the time she was brought before Him, bending His Head, began writing on the earth. When He bent Himself down upon the earth, He then wrote on the earth: before He bent upon the earth, He wrote not on the earth, but on stone. The earth was now something fertile, ready to bring forth from the Lord's letters. On the stone He had written the Law, intimating the hardness of the Jews: He wrote on the earth, signifying the productiveness of Christians. Then they who were leading the adulteress came, like raging waves against a rock: but they were dashed to pieces by His answer. For He said to them, *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.* And again bending His head, He began writing on the ground. And now each man, when he asked his own conscience, came not forward. It was not a weak adulterous woman, but their own adulterate conscience, that drove them back. They

VER.  
6.

John 8,

7.

PSALM CIII. wished to punish, to judge; they came to the Rock, their judges were overthrown by the Rock.  
Ps. 141, 6. 12. *The Lord doeth mercies: but unto whom? Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* Be merciful unto all men. What mercy art thou to shew to the righteous? Only in his bodily wants; if they are not supported by thee, they will not be abandoned by God. What therefore thou dost, profiteth thyself more. Thou givest to a beggar when passing by and asking alms: thou seekest also a righteous man unto whom thou mayest give, through whom thou mayest be received into eternal tabernacles; since *he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, receiveth a righteous man's reward.* A beggar seeketh thee: do thou look for a righteous man. For of one thing it is said, *Give to every man that asketh of thee:* and of another, "Let almsgiving toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man, to whom thou mayest give. And if after a long time he be not found; seek long: thou wilt find." But what wilt thou give? is not more given thee? *If we have sown unto you, saith the Apostle, spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?* Thence also is the passage which we have already expounded by our Lord's permission, that the earth bringeth forth grass for cattle, that is, carnal things for those who thresh the wheat: for, *thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.* Whence we have exhorted you to be in this matter diligent, cautious, sober; that ye think your works your treasures. But do we, brethren, say this, that these works may be done towards ourselves? I think that although from weak men, this exhortation may be nevertheless made in the name of the Lord, and Apostolic; but it is profitable unto you, as the Apostle saith, *Not because I desire a gift, but that I desire fruit that may abound to your account.* What alms then wilt thou give to the righteous? The widow did not feed him, the crow fed him; because He Who made the crow fed him: Elias, I mean. There is therefore no deficiency in what God giveth to His own: do thou see what thou art buying, when thou mayest buy, and at what price? For thou art buying the kingdom of heaven: and there is no time for buying, except in this life. Remark also, at how

low a price thou buyest. Its value to thee is that of all that thou canst ever possess. VER.  
6.

13. Execute mercy to<sup>1</sup> the wicked, not as being wicked. <sup>1</sup>Oxf. Do not receive the wicked, in so far forth as he is wicked: that <sup>Ms.</sup> is, do not receive him as if from inclination towards and love to<sup>2</sup> for his iniquity. For it is forbidden to give unto a sinner, and to receive sinners. Yet how is this, *Give unto every man that asketh of thee?* and this, *if thine enemy hunger, feed him?* <sup>Rom.</sup> This is seemingly contradictory: but it is opened <sup>12, 20.</sup> to those who knock in the name of Christ, and will be clear unto those who seek. *Help not a sinner:* and, *give not to the ungodly;* and yet, *give unto every man that asketh of thee.* <sup>Eccles.</sup> But it is a sinner who asketh of me. Give, not as <sup>12, 4-6.</sup> unto a sinner. When dost thou give as unto a sinner? When that which maketh him a sinner, pleaseth thee so that thou givest<sup>2</sup>. Attend for a short space, beloved, until this matter, which is very useful to understand, be unfolded by illustrations. He said this, If any man be hungry, if thou hast whence to give, give; if thou seest that thou oughtest to give in order to his support, give. Let not the bowels of mercy become sluggish within thee, because a sinner meeteth thee: the sinner who meeteth thee is a man. When I say, the sinner who meeteth thee is a man, I mention two names; these two names are not superfluous: two names, one that he is a man, another that he is a sinner; that he is a man, is the work of God: that he is a sinner, is the work of the man: give unto the work of God, give not to that of man. Yet how, thou askest, dost thou forbid me to give to the work of the man? what is to give to the man's work? To give to the sinner in consideration of his sin, because he pleaseth thee by his sin. And who will do this, sayest thou? Who will do this? Would that no man would, would that few only, would that it were not in public! Let those who give to a man, who fights with wild beasts, tell me why they give? Why doth he give to this man? He loveth that in him, in which consists his greatest sin; this he feedeth, this he clotheth in him, wickedness itself, made public by all witnessing it. Why doth the man give, who giveth to actors, or to charioteers, or to courtesans? Do not these very persons give

**PSALM**  
**CIII.**

to human beings? But it is not the nature of God's work that they attend to, but the iniquity of the human work. Dost thou wish to see what thou art honouring in the man who encounters beasts, when thou clothest him? Suppose it is said unto thee: Become like him: thou lovest him, thou rejoicest in him, thou art seemingly glad to strip thyself, and to clothe him; take it not as an insult, if it be said to thee\*, *May thy sons be such as this man!* This is an insult, thou sayest. Why an insult, save because that is wickedness? Why an insult, unless because that is infamy? When therefore thou givest, thou givest to infamy, not to bravery. As then he who giveth to the fighter of beasts, giveth not to the man, but to a most infamous profession; for if he were only a man, and not a fighter of beasts, thou wouldest not give; thou honourest in him vice, not nature: so on the other hand, if thou give to the righteous, if thou give to the prophet, if thou give to the disciple of Christ any thing of which he is in want, without thinking that he is Christ's disciple, that he is God's minister, that he is God's steward; but art thinking in that case of some temporal advantage, for instance, that when perchance he shall be needful to thy cause, he may be bought for thee, because thou hast given him something; thou hast no more given to the righteous, if thou hast thus given, than he gave to the man, when he gave to the beast-fighter. The matter, then, most beloved, is quite open to us, and I conceive, that although it was obscure, it is now clear. It was to this that the Lord bound thee, when He said, *He who hath received the righteous man.* That were enough. But as the righteous may be received with another intention, when it is imagined that he may be profitable for some temporal purpose, perhaps to supply thy greedy desires, perhaps to assist in the circumvention or oppression of another man; thou perhaps receivest him, because thou art seeking some such service from him: He denied thee the reward of the righteous man, except with this addition. For He saith, *He who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man*<sup>b</sup>: that is, receiving him in consideration of his righteousness: and,

\* Oxf. Mss. add, of courtezans,  
'such may thy daughters be!'

<sup>b</sup> Oxf. Mss. add, *shall receive a  
righteous man's reward.*

*he who receiveth a prophet; and not simply receiveth a prophet, but, in the name of a prophet: honouring in him his being a prophet: lastly, whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these least ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple; that is, because he is Christ's disciple, because he is a steward of the Mystery: Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward: as therefore thou understandest, he who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; so understand, he who receiveth a sinner in the name of a sinner shall lose his reward.*

V ER.  
6.

<sup>1</sup> Cor.  
4, 1.

Mat. 10,  
40. 41.

14. Therefore, brethren, exercise mercy. There is no other bond of charity, there is no other vehicle to lead us out of this life into that country: extend your love even unto your enemies: be without apprehension. For this reason came Christ, to Whom so long before it had been said, *Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger:* where some copies read, "defender:" but "avenger" is the truer reading. The Lord wished to still the avenger, that is, him who would avenge himself, so that such an one's sins should not be remitted him. What then, sayest thou? Shall discipline sleep? Shall all punishment be removed? It shall not. For what wilt thou do with a profligate son? Wilt thou not chastise, wilt thou not scourge him? Wilt thou curb thy very servant, if thou shalt see him living ill, with some punishment, yea with strokes? Be it so, be it so: God alloweth it: indeed He blameth, if it be not done; but do it in the temper of affection, not in that of revenge. But when thou shalt have suffered from the injuries of some of the more powerful, where thou hast neither power of correcting them by discipline, nor even perhaps of admonishing and counselling: bear, bear fearlessly: hear the Gospel that hath just been read, *Blessed shall ye be when men shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake.* And He added there for whose sake, lest the revilings thou bearest be not of thine own deserving, not for the sake of God's righteousness. For a man is not righteous because he is reviled: but he who being righteous is unjustly reviled; and if he be unjustly reviled, a

Ps. 8, 2.

Mat. 5,  
11.

**PSALM** reward is given unto him. On this account therefore be  
**CIII.** merciful without fear, extend love even unto thine enemies:  
 punish those who chance to belong to thy government,  
 restrain them with affection, with charity, in regard to their  
 eternal salvation; lest while thou sparest the flesh, the soul  
 perish. Do this: and though thou have to endure many,  
 over whom thou canst not exercise discipline, because thou  
 hast no lawful authority over them; bear their injuries; be  
 without apprehension. *For the Lord executeth mercy and  
 judgment unto all them that are oppressed with wrong.*  
 Thus will He shew mercy unto thee if thou shalt have been  
 merciful: thou shalt be merciful, without the injuries thou  
 sufferest losing their punishment; *To Me belongeth vengeance,*  
**Deut.** *I will repay,* saith the Lord.  
**32, 35.**

15. Ver. 7. *He made His ways known unto Moses.*  
 What ways of His hath He made known to Moses? Why is  
 Moses here chosen? By Moses understand all the righteous,  
 all saints: He hath mentioned one, let all be understood.  
 Nevertheless, by Moses was the Law given, and the very  
 delivery of the Law hath somewhat obscure. For the Law  
 was given with this view, that the sick might be convinced  
 of his infirmity, and pray for the physician. This is the  
 hidden way of God. Thou hadst long ago heard, *Who  
 healeth all thine infirmities.* Their infirmities were as yet  
 hidden in the sick, the five books were given to Moses: the  
 pool was surrounded by five porches; he brought forth the  
 sick, that they might lie there, that they might be made  
 known, not that they might be healed. The five porches  
 discovered, but healed not, the sick; the pool healed when  
 one descended, and this when it was disturbed: the distur-  
**John 5,** bance of the pool was in our Lord's Passion. For when  
**2—4.** He came, and was unknown, when it was said by some, He  
 is Christ; by others, He is not Christ; He is righteous, He  
 is a sinner; He is a master, He is a seducer: He disturbed  
 the water, that is, the people; and in the whole of that  
 disturbance of the water one was healed, because in the  
 Lord's Passion unity is healed. He who shall be without

\* Oxf. Mss. and 5 ap. Ben. "non teous on whom thou canst not exercise  
 inultus." "Do this, and thou wilt not discipline."  
 without revenge endure those unrighteous

the pale of unity, although he shall lie in the porches, cannot be healed: although he holdeth the Law, he reacheth not salvation. Since therefore this is a mystery there, he teacheth that the Law was given that sinners might be convinced of their sin, and call upon the Physician in order to receive grace. How was he convinced, whom the Apostle Paul representeth by himself, in the words, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* For through the commandment there had been shewn to him a kind of strife within himself, whereof he saith, *I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members.* He acknowledged himself in misery, in groaning, in strife and contention; he himself not agreeing with himself, at variance with himself, recoiling from himself: and what saith he, wishing for peace, true peace, peace above? *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7, 23-25. *The grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ: for where sin abounded, ib. 5, 20. grace did much more abound.* Whence did sin abound? *The Law entered in, that sin might abound.* But why did sin abound when the Law entered in? Because men would not confess themselves sinners; when the Law was given them, they became also transgressors: for none is a transgressor, but he who hath transgressed the Law. The Apostle himself saith this: *for where no law is, there there is no transgression.* ib. 4, 15. Sin therefore abounded, that grace might still more abound. Therefore, as I had begun to say, because this is a great mystery in the Law, that it was given with this view, that by the increase of sin, the proud might be humbled, the humbled might confess, the confessing might be healed; these are the hidden ways, which He made known to Moses, through whom He gave the Law, by which sin should abound, that grace might more abound. God did not this in cruelty, but with the design of healing. For sometimes a man seemeth to himself well, when he is really ill; and since he is ill without being aware, he seeketh not a physician; the disease is increased, the trouble is augmented, the physician is sought, and the whole is healed. *He hath made His ways known unto Moses: His good*

**PSALM CIII.** *pleasure unto the children of Israel.* To all the children of Israel? To the true children of Israel; yea, to all the children of Israel. For the treacherous, the insidious, the hypocrites, are not children of Israel. And who are the children of Israel? "*Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*"

John 1, 47.

*He hath made known His good pleasure unto the children of Israel.*

16. Ver. 8. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: long-suffering, and of great mercy.* Why so long-suffering? Why so great in mercy? Men sin and live; sins are added on, life continueth: men blaspheme daily, and *He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the wicked.* On all sides He calleth to amendment, on all sides He calleth to repentance, He calleth by the blessings of creation, He calleth by giving time for life, He calleth through the reader, He calleth through the preacher, He calleth through the innermost thought by the rod of correction, He calleth by the mercy of consolation: *He is long-suffering, and of great mercy.* But take heed lest by ill using the length of God's mercy, thou treasure up for thyself, as the Apostle saith, *wrath in the day of wrath.* For this the Apostle saith: *or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Because He spareth thee, dost thou imagine that thou pleasest Him? *These things hast thou done,* He saith, *and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest of iniquity that I am even such a one as thyself.* Sins please Me not, but with long-suffering I seek good deeds. If I were to punish sinners, I should not find confessors. God therefore by His long-suffering in sparing leadeth thee to repentance: but whilst thou daily sayest, *This day is over, and thus will I be to-morrow also, for to-morrow will not be my last day; and so on the third day; then suddenly His anger cometh.* Brother, defer not to turn unto the Lord. For some there are who prepare to turn, and yet put it off, and in them crieth out the raven's voice, "*Cras! Cras!*" The raven which was sent from the ark, never returned. God seeketh not procrastination in the raven's voice, but confession in the wailing of the dove.

1 "To-morrow!  
To-mor-row!  
row!"  
Gen. 8, 7.

The dove, when sent forth, returned. How long, To-morrow! VER. 9.  
 To-morrow!? Look to thy last morrow: since thou knowest not what is thy last morrow, let it suffice that thou hast lived up to this day a sinner. Thou hast heard, often thou art wont to hear, thou hast heard to-day also; daily thou hearest, and daily thou amendest not. *But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: who will render to every man according to his deeds.* ROM. 2, 5, 6. Let not God seem to thee in such wise merciful as to forego justice. *The Lord is merciful, and a shewer of mercy.* I hear, and I rejoice: so thou sayest. Hear and rejoice; he hath added further, *long-suffering, and of great mercy: and at the end, and true.* At the former words thou rejoicest: at the latter tremble. He is long-suffering and merciful, so as also to be true. When thou shalt have treasured up unto thyself wrath in the day of wrath, shalt thou not find Him just, whom thou hast despised when merciful?

17. Ver. 9. *He will not always be chiding: neither keepeth He His anger for ever.* Since it is in consequence of His anger that we live in the scourges and corruption<sup>1</sup> of mortality: we have this in punishment for the first sin. My brethren, we ought not only to consider how we may avoid His future threats, but also His present wrath; for this is His wrath, of which the Apostle calleth himself and us sons, when he saith, *We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* EPHES. 2, 3. It is therefore in consequence of His anger that man is a pilgrim here, that he toileth. Is it not through His anger, my brethren, that *in the sweat of thy face and in toil thou shalt eat bread, and the earth shall bear thorns and thistles unto thee?* GEN. 3, 19, 20. This was said to our forefathers. Or if our life is different from this; if thou canst, turn unto some pleasure, where thou mayest not feel thorns. Choose what thou hast wished, whether thou art covetous or luxurious; to name these two alone; add a third passion, that of ambition; how great thorns are there in the desire of honours? in the luxury of lusts how great thorns? in the ardour of covetousness how great thorns? What troubles are there in base loves? What terrible anxieties here in

**PSALM** this life? I omit hell. Beware lest thou even now become  
**CIII.** a hell unto thyself. The whole of this, my brethren, is the result of His anger: and when thou hast turned thyself unto works of righteousness, thou canst not but toil upon earth; and toil endeth not before life endeth. We must toil on the way, that we may rejoice in our country. He therefore consoleth by His promises thy toil, thy labours, thy troubles, saying to thee, *He will not alway be chiding: neither will He keep His anger for ever.*

18. Ver. 10, 11. *He hath not dealt with us according to our sins.* Thanks unto God, because He hath vouchsafed this. We have not received what we were deserving of: *He hath not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses. For as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him. The Lord hath confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him, so great—as what?—as the height of heaven above the earth.* What hath he said? If the heaven can ever cease to protect the earth it covereth, at some time God may cease to protect them who fear Him. Observe the heaven: every where on every side it covereth the earth, nor is there any part of the earth not covered by the heaven. Men sin beneath heaven: they do all evil deeds beneath the heaven; yet they are covered by the heaven. Thence is light for the eyes, thence air, thence breath, thence rain upon the earth for the sake of its fruits, thence all mercy from heaven. Take away the aid of heaven from the earth: it will fail at once. As then the protection of heaven abideth upon the earth, so doth the Lord's protection abide upon them that fear Him. Thou fearest God, His protection is above thee. But perhaps thou art scourged, and conceivest that God hath forsaken thee. God hath forsaken thee<sup>d</sup>, if the protection of heaven hath forsaken the earth: *for as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him.*

19. What then hath He done? He hath not rewarded us according to our sins.

Ver. 12. *Look, how wide the east is from the west; so far*

<sup>d</sup> Oxf. Mss. repeat this: 'God hath forsaken thee.'

*hath He set our sins from us.* According to the height of <sup>viii.</sup> the heaven above the earth, hath the Lord confirmed His 15. mercy towards them that fear Him. I have said wherefore: for our protection. How so? *How wide the east is from the west, so far hath He set our sins from us.* They who know the Sacraments know this; nevertheless, I only say what all may hear. When sin is remitted, thy sins fall, thy grace riseth; thy sins are as it were on the decline, thy grace which freeth thee on the rise. *Truth springeth from the earth.* <sup>Pa. 85,</sup> What meaneth this? Thy grace is born, thy sins <sup>11.</sup> fall, thou art in a certain manner made new. Thou shouldest look to the rising, and turn away from the setting\*. Turn away from thy sins, turn unto the grace of God; when thy sins fall, thou risest and profitest. But the part of heaven which riseth, again falleth. Illustrations can not be drawn in exact analogy from all topics: but the subjects themselves may be paralleled with those which they are used to illustrate: as he said of the eagle, as of the moon, so also here. One region of the heaven falleth, another riseth: but the region which is now rising will set after twelve hours. Not like this is the grace which riseth unto us: both our sins fall for ever, and grace abideth for ever.

20. Ver. 13. But why *hath He set our sins as far as the east is from the west, so far from us,* so that while our sins fall, our grace riseth? Why, do ye conceive? *Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord had mercy on them that fear Him.* Let Him be as angry as He shall will, He is our Father. But He hath scourged us, and afflicted us, and bruised us: He is our Father. Son, if thou bewailest, wail beneath thy Father; do not so with indignation, do not so with the puffing up of pride. What thou sufferest, whence thou mournest, it is medicine, not punishment; it is thy chastening, not thy condemnation. Do not refuse the scourge, if thou dost not wish to be refused thy heritage: do not think of what punishment thou sufferest in the scourge, but what place thou hast in the Testament. *Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him.*

\* They looked toward the west, east. See St. Cyril's Catechetical while they renounced Satan before Lectures. Lect. xix. Tr. p. 259. Baptism, and then, turned away to the

PSALM CIII. 21. Ver. 14. *For He knoweth our forming*<sup>1</sup>: that is, our infirmity. He knoweth what He hath created, how it hath fallen, how it may be repaired, how it may be adopted, how it may be enriched. Behold, we are made of clay: *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.* He sent even His own Son, Him Who was made the second man, Him Who was God before all things. For He was second in His coming, first in His returning: He died after many, He arose before all. *He knoweth our forming.* What forming? Ourselves. Why sayest thou that He knoweth? Because He hath pitied. *Remember that we are but dust.* Addressing God Himself, he saith, *Remember,* as if God could forget: He perceiveth, He knoweth in such a manner that He cannot forget. But what meaneth, *Remember?* Let thy mercy continue towards us. Thou knowest our forming; forget not our forming, lest we forget thy grace. *Remember that we are but dust.*

22. Ver. 15. *Man, his days are but as grass.* Let man consider what he is; let not man be proud. *His days are but as grass.* Why is the grass proud, that is now flourishing, and in a very short space dried up? Why is the grass proud that flourisheth only for a brief season, until the sun be hot? It is then good for us that His mercy be upon us, and from grass make gold. For, *Man, his days are but as grass: for he flourisheth as a flower of the field.* The whole splendour of the human race; honour, powers, riches, pride, threats, is the flower of the grass. That house flourisheth, and that family is great, that family flourisheth; and how many flourish, and how many years do they live! Many years to thee, are but a short season unto God. God doth not count, as thou dost. Compared with the length and long life of ages, all the flower of any house is as the flower of the field. All the beauty of the year hardly lasteth for the year. Whatever there flourisheth, whatever there is warmed with heat, whatever there is beautiful, lasteth not; nay, it cannot exist for one whole year. In how brief a season do flowers pass away, and these are the beauty of the herbs! This which is so very beautiful, this quickly falleth. *All flesh is grass, and all the goodness of man is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the*

*flower fadeth; but the Word of the Lord standeth for ever.* <sup>VER.</sup>  
Inasmuch then as He knoweth as a father our forming, that <sup>16-18.</sup>  
we are but grass, and can only flourish for a time; He sent  
unto us His Word, and His Word, which abideth for ever-  
more, He hath made a brother unto the grass which abideth  
not for evermore: He hath made His Only-Begotten by  
nature, the only One born of His own Substance, brother  
unto so many adopted brethren. Wonder not that thou  
shalt be a sharer of His Eternity; He became Himself first  
a sharer of thy grass. Will He Who assumed from thee  
what was lowly, deny unto thee what is exalted in respect  
of thee? *Man* then, as far as pertaineth unto man, *his  
days are but as grass: as a flower of the field so shall he  
flourish.*

23. Ver. 16. *The wind shall go over on it, it shall not be;  
and the place thereof shall know it no more.* As it were  
a kind of destruction; as it were a kind of perishing.  
Behold he who puffeth himself up. Behold he who dwelleth  
with pride. Behold he who listeth himself up. *The wind  
shall go over him, he shall not be: and his place shall know  
him no more.* See them daily dying; and this will be all,  
this will be their end. For he is not speaking of grass,  
but of that for whose sake even the Word became grass.  
For thou art man, and on thy account the Word became  
man. *All flesh is grass: and the Word was made flesh.* <sup>John 1,</sup>  
How great then is the hope of the grass, since the Word <sup>14.</sup>  
hath been made flesh? That which abideth for evermore,  
hath not disdained to assume grass, that the grass might not  
despair of itself.

24. Ver. 17. In thy reflections therefore on thyself, think  
of thy low estate, think of thy dust: be not lifted up: if  
thou art any thing better, thou wilt be so by His Grace,  
thou wilt be so by His mercy. For hear what followeth:  
*but the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon  
them that fear Him.* Ye who fear not Him, will be grass,  
and in grass, and in torment with the grass: for the flesh  
shall arise unto the torment. Let those who fear Him  
rejoice, because His mercy is upon them.

25. Ver. 18. *And His righteousness upon children's  
children.* He speaketh of reward, *upon children's children.*

PSALM  
CIII.

How many servants of God are there who have not children, how much less children's children? But He calleth our works our children; the reward of our works, our *children's children*. *His righteousness upon children's children; even upon such as keep His covenant*. Let men beware that all may not conceive what is here said to belong to themselves: let them choose, while they have the choice. *Upon such as keep His covenant: and keep in memory His commandments to do them*. Thou wast already disposed to flatter thyself, and perhaps to recite to me the Psalter, which I have not by heart, or from memory to say over the whole Law. Clearly thou art better in point of memory than I, better than any righteous man who doth not know the Law word for word: but see that thou keep the commandments. But how shouldest thou keep them? Not by memory, but by life. *Such as keep in memory His commandments: not, to recite them; but, to do them*. And now perhaps each man's soul is disturbed. Who remembereth all the commandments of God? who remembereth all the writings of God? Lo, I wish not only to hold them in my memory, but also to do them in my works: but who remembereth them all? Fear not: He burdeneth thee not: *on two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*. But I wish to keep all the Law in my mind. Keep it, if thou canst, when and how thou canst. Whatever page thou shalt have enquired of, will answer thee this; *whatever thou hast, keep: keep charity: the end of the commandment is charity*. Think not of the multitude of boughs, hold the root, and the whole tree is in thee. *And upon such as keep in memory His commandments to do them*.

Mat. 22,  
40.

Rev. 3,  
11.

1 Tim. 1,  
5.

26. Ver. 19. *The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven*. Who but Christ hath prepared His throne in heaven? He Who descended and ascended, He Who died, and rose from the dead, He Who lifted up to heaven the manhood He had assumed, hath Himself prepared His throne in heaven. The throne is the seat of the Judge: observe therefore ye who hear, that *He hath prepared His throne in heaven*. Let each man do what he wisheth on earth, the sin will not be unpunished, righteousness will not be fruitless; since the Lord, Who was mocked before the

throne of a man His judge, hath prepared His throne in VER. heaven. *The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven: <sup>20-22.</sup> and His kingdom shall rule over all.* The kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall be the Governor among the people. Ps. 22, 28. *And His kingdom shall rule over all.*

27. Ver. 20. *Bless ye the Lord, ye Angels of His, ye that are mighty in strength: ye that fulfil His word.* By the word of God, then, thou art not righteous, nor faithful, unless when thou dost it. *Ye that are mighty in strength, ye that fulfil His commandment, and hearken unto the voice of His words.*

28. Ver. 21. *Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts: ye servants of His that do His pleasure.* All ye angels, all ye that are mighty in strength: ye that do His word: all ye His hosts, ye servants of His that do His pleasure, do ye, ye bless the Lord. For all they who live wickedly, though their tongues be silent, by their lips do curse the Lord. What doth it profit if thy tongue singeth a hymn, while thy life breatheth sacrilege? By living ill thou hast set many tongues to blasphemy. Thy tongue is given to the hymn, the tongues of those who behold thee, to blasphemy. If then thou dost wish to bless the Lord, do His word, do His will. Build upon the rock, build not upon the sand. To hear and not to do, is to build upon the sand: to hear and to do, is to build upon a rock: neither to hear, nor to do, is not to build at all. If thou buildest on the sand, thou buildest ruin: if thou buildest nothing, exposed to rain, Matt. 7, 24-27. rivers, winds, thou wilt be hurried away before thou hast gained thy footing. We must not therefore loiter, but build; nor build so, that a ruin be built; but we must build upon a rock, that temptation may not overwhelm us. If it be thus with thee, bless the Lord; if it be not thus, flatter not thy tongue; question thy life, let it answer thee. Thou findest out the evil that is in thee: groan, confess; thy confession must be a blessing of God; but let thy changed state persevere in blessing Him.

29. Ver. 22. *Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His, in all places of His dominion.* Therefore in every place. Let Him not be blessed where He ruleth not: *in all places of His dominion.* Let no man perchance say; I cannot praise

**PSALM** the Lord in the East, because He hath departed unto the  
**CIII.** West; or, I cannot praise Him in the West, because He is  
**Ps. 75,** in the East. *For neither from the east, nor from the west,*  
**6. 7.** *nor yet from the desert hills. And why? God is the*  
*Judge.* He is every where, in such wise that every where  
 He may be praised: He is in such wise on every side, that  
 we may be joyful in Him on every side: He is in such wise  
 blessed on every side, that on every side we may live well.  
*Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His.* For when in a  
 good life thou hast begun to bless the Lord, His works  
 bless Him, not thy deservings. For through thee and in  
**Philip.** thee He worketh good, as the Apostle saith: *Work out your*  
**2, 12, 13.** *own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which*  
*worketh in you.* That thou mightest not extol thyself, then,  
 because thou dost fulfil His word, because thou dost fulfil  
 His will, He chose thou shouldest be humbled, by looking  
 back to His grace, whence thou hast gained this. *In every*  
*place of His dominion: bless thou the Lord, O my soul!*  
 The last verse is the same as the first: blessing is at the  
 head of the Psalm, blessing at the end; from blessing we  
 set out, to blessing let us return, in blessing let us reign †.

**LAT.**  
**CIII.**

**PSALM CIV. †**

—  
**EXPOSITION.**  
 —

*Discourse I. on the first part of the Psalm.*

Three days since, if ye deign to remember it, ye were abundantly refreshed: but since even after so long a discourse ye left me very anxious to hear more, I think ye ought not, holy brethren, to be defrauded of what is due to you on this day: so that this will be only what is due to you, the former will be your gain. The Psalm which has been read, almost wholly consists of figures and of mysteries, and hath need not only of mine, but of your diligent attention;

† One Oxf. Mss. adds, 'Amen.' ser. 2. §. 7.

‡ At Carthage, §. 19. in his old age,

although even all that is said, may be taken literally in a religious sense. For although all the works of God are not enumerated, yet many are, and they are known to all who look upon them, who know even from these things which are made and seen, to behold in the mind His invisible things. For we see an ample fabric of the world consisting of heaven and earth, and of all the things which in them are; and from the magnitude and beauty of this fabric, we already love even though we as yet see not the inestimable magnitude and beauty of Him Who made it. For He, Who cannot as yet be seen in the purity of our heart, hath not ceased to place His works before our eyes, that seeing what we are able, we may love Him Whom we are not able to see, that by the merit of that love we may at length be enabled to see. Yet in all of what is said, a spiritual meaning must also be sought for, to discover which your longings in Christ's Name will help us; by which as it were with invisible hands ye knock at an invisible door, that it may be invisibly opened unto you, and ye may enter invisibly, and invisibly be healed.

2. Ver. 1. *Bless the Lord, O my soul*, therefore, let us all say. Let us all address our own soul: because the soul of all of us by one faith is one soul; and all of us who believe in Christ, through the unity of His body, are one man. Let our soul praise the Lord for so great blessings of His, for so numerous and so great gifts of His graces, which gifts we discover in considering this Psalm, and shaking off the cloud of carnal thought, as far as we can with mind aroused, and as far as we can with uplifted gaze, and as far as we can with the eye of our heart pure, as far as this life hindereth not, as far as desires of things present engage us not, as far as worldly lust blindeth us not. Thus eager then, we are about to hear those great, joyful, beautiful, desirable gifts of His, so full of delight and happiness; which he who had conceived this Psalm already saw in mind, and in the exultation of that sight burst forth in the words, *Bless the Lord, O my soul*.

3. *O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious*. Behold the glorious things which he is about to describe; in which glorious things He only is to be praised Who is the

- PSALM CIV.** Author of all glorious things. *Thou art clothed with confession and honour.* O Lord my God, Who art become exceeding glorious, whence hast Thou become exceeding glorious? Art Thou not always great, art Thou not always glorious? Art Thou in aught imperfect, that Thou mayest increase? Art Thou failing, so that at some time Thou mayest decrease? But because Thou art what Thou art, and truly art, Thou hast spoken Thy Name to Thy servant Moses,
- Exod. 3, 14.** I AM THAT I AM: Thou art indeed great, and Thy greatness is eternal, neither beginning nor ending; neither doth it begin from the beginning of time, nor doth it run out at the end of time, nor doth it suffer any thing in the interval: for Thy greatness is unchangeable. How then art Thou become exceeding glorious? Another Psalm teacheth us: for it
- Ps. 139, 6.** saith, *Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me.* If it be rightly said, *Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me*; it is rightly said, *Thou art become exceeding glorious, O Lord God,* from me. But this also must be further enquired into. Is my God made glorious through me? Through me then He becomes great. Our daily
- Matt. 6, 9.** prayer for our salvation teacheth us also somewhat. *Hallowed be Thy Name*: each day we ask, each day we beg, that this may be. Suppose some one were to ask us, why is it that ye ask that God's Name may be hallowed? is it then at some times not hallowed, so that it may now be hallowed? and yet unless we wished this to happen, we should not beg that it might happen. For thanksgiving is different from prayer: we give thanks for what already doth exist: we pray that what is not, may be. What then meaneth, *Hallowed be Thy Name?* and we understand the words here, *O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious.* This is the meaning of, *Hallowed be Thy Name.* May Thy Name be hallowed among men. For Thy Name is ever hallowed, but unto some unclean ones Thy Name is not yet hallowed. For the
- Titus 1, 15.** Apostle saith, *Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure.* If nothing is pure to the defiled and unbelieving, I seek the reason: but, he addeth, *even their mind and conscience is defiled.* If nothing is pure unto them, neither is God: unless indeed ye imagine that God seemeth pure unto those

who daily blaspheme Him. If He be pure, let Him please <sup>VER.</sup> them; if He pleaseth them, let Him be praised: but if He <sup>1.</sup> is blasphemed, He displeaseth them; and if He displeaseth them, how can He who displeaseth thee be pure unto thee? Why then do we pray, *Hallowed be Thy Name?* That unto those men who through their unbelief hold not as yet God's Name hallowed, it may become hallowed, unto whom He is not as yet holy, Who by Himself, and in Himself, and in His own saints, is holy. We pray for the human race, for the whole world, for all nations, who daily sit and dispute that God is not righteous, and that God judgeth not righteously; that sometime they may amend themselves, and bring a righteous heart unto His righteousness; and thus, cleaving unto Him, made straight by Him Who is straight, may no longer blame Him, but He who is righteous may please them, become righteous themselves; since, *Truly God* <sup>Ps.73,1.</sup> *is loving unto Israel:* but *unto such as are of a right heart.* When therefore the Psalmist, that is, we ourselves, the body, the limbs of Christ, saw how great gifts God had bestowed upon the human race, he who before thought not of any God, or of a false one, or of God as not so great, when he saw Him in His works; *O Lord my God,* he said, *Thou art become exceeding glorious:* that is, I who did not as yet understand Thee, understand Thee now to be great. Ever great, even when hidden; but unto me now (made manifest as)<sup>1</sup> great, when Thou hast appeared. Through me<sup>1</sup> <sup>Oxf.</sup> therefore Thou hast become exceeding glorious: as *Thy* <sup>Ms.</sup> *knowledge hath been made wonderful from me;* for it hath been made to be admired through me. I wonder at it now that I am turned towards it; but it, although I am not turned, although after conversion I again turn away, abideth whole. But I am now become great in it, and having been made whole in it when I was incomplete before, wonder at what I knew not; not that since I learnt, it hath lately become great, but that I am become great since I learnt it. Now hear wherein God seemeth to have become exceeding glorious, Who is ever glorious; for He hath become exceeding glorious in His works towards us.

4. *Thou hast clothed thyself with confession and honour.* Before honour he hath set confession, honour is in beauty.

**PSALM CIV.** Thou seekest beauty: thou art seeking a good thing. But wherefore seekest thou beauty, O soul? That thy Betrothed may love thee; for thou displeasest him by thy deformity. For what is He like? *Fairer than the sons of men.* Thou who art deformed dost wish to kiss Him Who is beautiful; but thou heedest not that thou thyself art full of iniquities. And *full of grace are Thy lips.* For thus it is said of Him:

**Ps. 45, 3.** *Fairer than the sons of men: full of grace are Thy lips; Cant. 1, for which the maidens love Thee.* There is then one who

**2.** is beautiful and fairer than the sons of men; although a son of man, yet fairer than the sons of men. Dost thou wish to please Him, O human soul, O thou one in many? Let us

**Acts 4, 32.** hear of the Church, that they had one heart and one soul unto God; the Psalm addresseth the Church. Dost thou wish to please Him? Thou canst not, as long as thou art deformed: what wilt thou do that thou mayest be beautiful?

First let thy deformity displease thee, and then thou wilt deserve beauty from Him, unto Whom it is thy wish to be pleasing by thy beauty. For He who fashioned thee, shall fashion thee anew. Heed therefore first who thou art, that thou mayest not dare in thy deformity to seek the kisses of the beautiful. Looking upon what, thou askest, shall I see myself? He hath set before thee a mirror in His Scriptures:

**Matt. 5, 8.** it is read to thee. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* A mirror hath been set before thee in this verse, see if thou art what it saith; if as yet thou art not, groan that thou mayest be. The mirror will disclose unto thee thy face: as thou wilt not find a flatterer in the mirror, so flatter not thyself.

This brightness sheweth thee the very thing that thou art: see what thou art: if it displease thee, seek that thou mayest not be such. For if while thou art deformed thou art displeasing to thyself, thou already dost please the beautiful. What then? Since thy deformity displeaseth thee, thou beginnest with confession unto Him;

**Ps. 147, 6.** as it is elsewhere said, *Begin with confession unto the Lord.*

**6.** First accuse thy deformity: for the deformity of the soul cometh of sins, of iniquities. Begin to praise Him by accusing thine own deformity, by thy confession thou beginnest to be adorned: who adorning thee, save He who is *fairer than the sons of men?*

5. But that He might render her beautiful, I venture to <sup>VER.</sup> assert, He loved her when deformed. What meaneth this, <sup>1.</sup> He loved her when deformed? *For Christ died for the* <sup>ROM. 5,</sup> *ungodly.* What a life doth He keep for thee when justified, <sup>6.</sup> Who gave thee when ungodly His own death? Lo, He, beautiful and fairer than the sons of men, because He is pre-eminently righteous above the sons of men, since He came to the deformed, to render her beautiful, (I will say this also, since I find it in Scripture,) He became Himself deformed. Not to me listen ye in this, lest I may have rashly slipped into this expression. For as I had said, He loved her even when deformed; and this I had not said as it were agreeably to some that love Him, unless testimony bore me out; I said also what the Apostle said: dost thou wish to know that He loved her even when deformed? *Christ died for the ungodly;* so also, how shall I prove what I just now asserted, that He became Himself deformed, that He might come unto her who was deformed; since the divine voice hath already spoken of Him as fairer than the sons of men? But again, I find in this very divine voice the words, *We have seen* <sup>ISA. 53,</sup> *Him: He had no form or comeliness. Fairer than the sons* <sup>2.</sup> *of men: we have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness.* <sup>3.</sup> He said not, we have not seen, and therefore we knew not whether He had form or comeliness: behold, "we have seen Him, and He had no form or comeliness." Where then did he, who said, He was fairer than the sons of men, see Him? and where did he, who said, He hath no form or comeliness, see Him? Hear where he, who spoke of Him as fairer than the sons of men, saw Him. *Being in the form* <sup>PHIL. 2,</sup> *of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* <sup>6.</sup> Justly fairer than the sons of men, because equal with God: behold, O man, understand, and acknowledge where he, who said, "Fairer than the sons of men," saw Him. For he answered us, Dost thou ask where I saw Him? "In the form of God." And by what means hast thou seen Him in the form of God? How hast thou seen Him in the form of <sup>ROM. 1,</sup> *God? Because the invisible things of Him are understood* <sup>20.</sup> *by the things that are made.* Very well: I understand, I recognise Whom thou hast seen, and in what form, where, and by what means. Whom hast thou seen? Our Betrothed.

70 *Christ, ever glorious as God, disfigured awhile as man.*

PSALM  
CIV.

In what form? *Fairer than the sons of men.* Where hast thou seen Him? When *in the form of God.* By what means? *His invisible things are understood by the things that are made.* Let us see what another prophet also, but not another spirit, (for they do not disagree with one another,) saith of Him. One hath displayed Him unto us, "fairer than the sons of men:" let the other also display Him in his own words; "We have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness." One Apostle Paul connects both prophets; one chapter of Paul gives testimony to either prophet. There

Phil. 2,  
6-8.

I find Him Who was "fairer than the sons of men:" *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* Here he speaketh of Him as another also saw Him, "having no form or comeliness:" for *He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.* Justly they saw Him, and He had not form or comeliness. Justly before the Cross they wagged their heads, asking, Is this all the

1 "Hic-  
cine est  
totus  
Filius  
Dei?"  
Mat. 27,  
39. 40.

Son of God? *If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross.* But He had not form or comeliness. Even so, O ye whom He pleaseth not, because He had no form or comeliness! O ye who wagged your heads before the Cross, and who fixed not your head upon that Head which hung upon the Cross! The head of those who mocked Him wags deservedly, until He Himself who was insulted becometh their head. Lo, He resumeth beauty and great beauty. Behold, what thou sayest is less than what He hath achieved. Thou sayest, *If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross:* behold, He hath not come down from the Cross, but hath arisen from the tomb.

6. Therefore, O soul, thou canst not be beautiful, unless thou hast confessed thy deformity to Him Who is evermore beautiful, but was for thy sake for a season not beautiful: and in such a manner not beautiful for a season in the form of a servant, as never to have abandoned that beauty which is in the form of God. Thou, therefore, O Church, hast beauty. It is said unto thee also in the Song of Songs, O 9; 8, 5. *thou fairest among women.* It is also said of thee, *Who is*

*Christ 'clothed with confession and beauty' in the Church. 71*

*this that cometh up, made white?* What meaneth, *made white?* VER. 2. Illumined : not whitened, as by a dye, even as women paint themselves white when they wish to seem other than what they are: not whitened like a whitened wall; for the whitened wall, that is, hypocrisy and semblance, shall be destroyed, as the Apostle saith. The whitened wall is clean plaster ACTS 23, without, filth within. She therefore is not thus whitened; <sup>2.</sup> but she is whitened, illumined, in that she is not of herself white. *Formerly*, he saith, *I was a blasphemer*; and, *We* 1TIM. 1, 13. *were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* Grace Eph. 2, cometh, illumining and whitening: at first thou wast black, <sup>3.</sup> but thou hast become white by His grace. For *ye were* Eph. 5, *sometimes darkness: but now are ye light in the Lord.* <sup>6.</sup> Of thee also it is therefore said, *Who is this that cometh up, made white?* She is now to be admired, now hardly to be gazed upon. For it is for one who admireth to say, *Who is this who cometh up white*, so beautiful, so luminous, so free from spot or wrinkle? Is it not she who Eph. 5, once lay in the mire of her iniquities? is it not she who <sup>27.</sup> once lay in the fornication of idols? is it not she who was once unclean in every carnal lust and desire? Who then is she who cometh up, become white? Consider who is He Who for her became without form or comeliness, and thou wilt understand how bright is this honour. If thou dost admire His humility for her sake, do not any longer wonder at her elevation on His account. How great is the happiness of this whitened one, in that even when she was black, she brought down unto herself the beautiful Betrothed, who should die for the ungodly. Our Lord then hath clothed Himself with confession and beauty, He hath clothed Himself with the Church: for the Church herself is confession and beauty. First confession, then beauty: confession of sins, beauty of good works: *Thou hast put on confession and beauty.*

7. Ver. 2. *Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment.* This is His garment, of which I have already spoken: without *spot or wrinkle*. It is called light; and this I have already said: *Ye were sometime darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord.* Not in yourselves, therefore; for in yourselves ye are darkness

**PSALM CIV.** but light in the Lord. Therefore, *Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment; and spreadest out the heavens like a skin.* How He hath clothed Himself with the light of the Church as with a garment, he wishes to describe by certain figurative emblems: let us hear, how the Church hath been made light, how she became without spot or wrinkle, how she became white, splendid, refulgent in the garb of her Betrothed, cleaving unto Him. *Thou spreadest the heaven like a hide.* Now this indeed I see; for, save God, Who spread out this heaven, which we gaze upon with our fleshly eyes? These words, *Thou spreadest it out like a hide*, refer to the ease with which it was spread out, if thou understandest it literally. For when thou hast seen this great fabric, (since if any man hath spread out even one small vault, he doth it with a great effort, with much toil and difficulty, and long work,) that human weakness might not imagine toil of this sort in the works of God, he mentioneth a thing that is easy in proportion to thy power, that thus thou mayest begin to believe that God worketh easily, and not to imagine that He hath spread out the heavens with as much toil as thou hast the roof of thy house; but that it was as easy for Him to spread out so broad a heaven, as for thee to stretch out a single hide. Wonderful ease: but even yet in thee the Spirit speaketh to one of slow comprehension. For God doth not spread out heaven, as thou dost a hide. For if He doth thus spread it out, behold the hide is placed before thee either wrinkled or rolled; command it to be spread out, by thy word spread out the hide. I cannot, thou sayest. Therefore even in spreading out the hide thou art far from the ease of God. For, *He spake, and they were made:* Ps. 148, *He said, Let there be a firmament between water and water, and it was so.* Gen. 1, 6. Yet in order to signify the ease of this work, thou mayest in the mean while take it in a literal sense, according to thy understanding.

8. But if, figuratively, we wish somewhat hidden to be revealed, and to knock at what is closed, we find that God hath spread out heaven as a hide, so that we may understand by heaven holy Scripture. This authority God first placed in His Church; thence He began to follow out the rest: for He set the heaven, and spread it out like a hide, and not

*Heaven like a hide, is Holy Writ given through mortals. 78*

like a hide without a meaning. First, He hath spread out the report of His preachers as a hide: the hide signifieth mortality: for this reason also those two first parents of ours, the authors of the sin of the human race, Adam and Eve, when in Paradise, in contempt of God's commandment, they had transgressed what God had ordered by yielding to the serpent's suggestion, being made mortal, were dismissed from Paradise; and that this mortality of theirs might be signified, they were clothed with garments of hides, for they received garments made of hides: but hides are only stripped from dead animals: by hides therefore that state of mortality is signified. What then, if divine Scripture is here signified under the name of a hide, how did God make heaven from a hide, and *spread out the heaven like a hide*? Because they by whom Scripture was preached to us, were mortal. That word of God indeed is evermore the same, ever immutable, and never failing. Behold, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Was it so, and is it not so now? It both is, and ever will be. If then the Word of God is God with God, read it if thou canst. But what sayest thou? that it is above, and that therefore thou canst not read? The Word of God is every where; it *reacheth from one end to another mightily: it passeth and goeth through all things by reason of its pureness.* He was in the world, and the world was made by Him: and when He came, He was here; for He came in the flesh, never absent in the Godhead. Why then couldest thou not read? Because *in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God*, placed there by the wisdom of God, (for therein are all things, and if that be subtracted, all things are nought,) placed there thou couldest not by wisdom know God: therefore what followeth was necessary, *It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* If they who believe were to be saved by the foolishness of preaching, God hath chosen certain mortal things, He hath chosen men mortal, and doomed unto death; using the human tongue, He hath spoken in a human voice; using the stewardship of mortals, He hath used mortal instruments, and in Him a heaven hath been made in thy sight, that thou mightest in what is mortal recognise the Immortal Word, and

VER.  
2.

Gen. 3.

John 1,

1.

Wisd. 8,

1; 7, 24.

John 1,

1. 10.

1 Cor. 1,

21.

74 *The Apostles' doctrine spread wide after their death.*

**PSALM CIV.** that thou also by sharing in the same Word mightest become immortal. Moses lived, and died: for God said unto him,

**Deut. 32, 49.** *Get thee up into this mountain, and die.* Jeremiah and so many Prophets have died; and their words though they be dead abide even to our posterity, because they were not theirs, but His by them, Who spreadeth out the heaven like a hide.

**Philip. 1, 23.** Behold the Apostle, who said, that to depart, and to be with Christ, was far better, now liveth with Christ, released from this life, even as all those Prophets live with Christ: but by what instrument did He bestow upon us what we read? By what was mortal, by mouth, by tongue, teeth, hands. All those means by which the Apostle achieved the whole work which we read of, are functions of the body, but at the command of the soul which God commanded: for this reason the heaven is spread out like a hide. We are now reading beneath the heaven, as it were beneath the hide of the divine Scriptures, when it is spread. For afterwards,

**Isa. 34, 4.** *the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.* It is not without meaning, brethren, in this passage said to be as a hide, in the former a scroll. Somewhat is here figured unto us. With respect to holy Scripture, the discourse of the dead is spread: for this reason then it is spread out as a hide; and much more spread out, since they are dead. For after death the Apostles and Prophets became more known; they were not so well known while alive; Judæa only possessed the Prophets when alive, all nations when they were dead. For while they lived, the hide was not as yet spread out, the heaven was not yet outspread, that it might cover the whole world. He, therefore, *spread out the heaven like a hide.*

9. Ver. 3. *Who covereth the upper parts of it with waters.* We read this also, and it is well understood after the letter. For when He commanded that a firmament should be made between waters and waters, it was made, so that there are lower waters which overflow the earth, and waters above, removed from our sight, but presented to our

**Ps. 148, 4. 5.** *faith. Let the waters praise Him, he saith, which are above the heavens; for He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.* The sense therefore hath been explained to the letter; for He

*covereth the upper parts of it with waters.* What is its meaning figuratively? Since we have interpreted figuratively the hide as holy Scripture, and the authority of the divine Word dispensed unto us by mortals, through whom when dead the report of the same dispensation is spread abroad; according to this exposition, in what sense doth He cover the upper parts of it with waters? The upper parts of what? Of heaven. And what heaven? The holy Scripture. What are the upper parts of holy Scripture? What do we find higher than the rest in the holy Scriptures? Ask Paul. *I shew unto you, he saith, a more excellent way.* What doth he call the more excellent way? *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.* If therefore nothing can be found in holy Scripture more excellent than charity, how are the upper parts of heaven covered with waters, if the higher commandments of Scripture are those of charity? Hear in what way; *The love of God, he saith, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* In the expression *shed abroad*, understand waters in the love of the Holy Spirit. These are the waters, respecting which it is said in a passage of Scripture: *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad in thy streets; let them be only thine own, and not stranger's with thee.* For all who are strangers from the way of truth, whether Pagans, or Jews, or heretics, and all wicked Christians, may have many good gifts, love they cannot have. How great a gift is this! not to speak of other outward gifts, which all men have, because *He maketh His sun to arise over the good and the bad:* they are the gifts of God, not only common to good and bad men, but also to beasts and to cattle. Existence itself, life, sight, feeling, hearing, and the discharge of the other functions of the senses, are God's gifts: but consider with what creatures, and with how many, they are enjoyed in common, and with those whom thou wouldest not choose to imitate. Even an acute intellect the worst men have, even the vilest stage players are skilful and industrious in their arts, even robbers have riches, many wicked men have wives and children, all are God's fair gifts, no one gainsayeth; but consider with whom

V ER.  
3.

1 Cor.  
12, 31.  
1 Cor.  
13, 1.

Rom. 5,  
5.

Prov. 5,  
16, 17.

Matt. 5,  
45.

**PSALM CIV.** they are in common. Look back upon the gifts of the Church herself. What sort of gift is that of the Sacraments, in Baptism, in the Eucharist, in the other holy Sacraments?

**Acts 8, 13.** Even the sorcerer Simon attained this gift. What sort of gift is Prophecy? Even Saul the wicked monarch prophesied, even then did he prophesy, when he was persecuting holy David. Remark: I said not, when he had persecuted him; for perchance after having persecuted him, he repented, and became worthy of the spirit of prophesying. He prophesied not when he had, nor when he was about to persecute, but whilst he was persecuting. He sent his officers to arrest David: David was at that season among the prophets, where also was holy Samuel; the messengers were filled with the spirit of prophecy, and they prophesied. But perhaps these came with good intentions, or from the necessity of their office, or not intending to execute what was commanded. He sent others also; this happened unto them too; let us understand their intentions to have been the same. Since they were long, he came in person, raving, breathing slaughter, thirsting for the blood of the innocent saint, to whom he was withal ungrateful; and he also was filled with the prophetic spirit, and prophesied. Let not therefore those men be boastful, who perchance have enjoyed without love this holy gift of God, even as holy Baptism; but let them reflect what account they will have with God, who do not use holy things holily. Among these will be those who shall say, *In Thy Name we have prophesied.* It will not

**1 Sam. 19, 18—24.** be said unto them, *Ye lie: but, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* For though I have all prophecy, and have not charity, I am nothing. Saul even prophesied, but he was working iniquity. But who worketh iniquity, except he who hath not charity? For, *Love is the fulfilment of the Law.* Therefore, *He covereth the upper parts of it with the waters.* What hath he said? In all the Scriptures charity obtaineth the most excellent way, and the most excellent place; none but the good approach it, the wicked share it not with us: they may share Baptism, they may share the other Sacraments, they may share prayer, they may share these walls and this meeting; charity they cannot share with us. For He is their own fountain to the

**Matt. 7, 22, 23.**  
**1 Cor. 13, 2.**  
**Rom. 13, 10.**

good, their own to saints, of which it is said, *Let no stranger have it in common with thee.* Who are strangers? <sup>VER. 3.</sup> All they that hear, *I know you not.* For if they are not known, doubtless they are strangers, to whom it is said, <sup>Matt. 7, 23.</sup> *I know you not.* Therefore the more excellent way of charity hath in it those who properly belong to the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the commandment of charity is above the heavens, above all books; for books are subservient to it, every tongue of the saints serves under it, and every movement of the stewards of God, both of mind and body. That way therefore is excellent above all, and is well said to 'protect in waters the upper parts of heaven,' because you find nothing higher than charity in the books of God.

10. But hear now yet more distinctly, what is the 'water.' For we said, that *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us.* <sup>Rom. 5, 5.</sup> We said also, *Let thy waters run abroad in the streets.* And some <sup>Prov. 5, 16.</sup> one saith to me, it is not there expressly said, whether I ought to understand charity: what if another understand something else? Only remember what the Apostle saith, *The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.* Whence? *By the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us.* Hear now the Lord, the Master of the Apostles: *If any one thirst, let him come and drink.* <sup>John 7, 37-38.</sup> Let Him also say, *He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* What is this? Let the Evangelist expound. <sup>ib. 39.</sup> *But this, saith he, He said of the Spirit, Which they that beliered on Him should receive. For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* Therefore, brethren, if for this reason the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified; when He is glorified and ascended into heaven, the Spirit was sent, and the Apostles were filled with charity, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who was given unto them, because the upper parts of heaven are covered with waters. And rightly, because the Lord ascended into the heavens, so as to be above the heavens, and thence to send charity. For God doth not so cover as to be in any wise sustained by that which He covereth. He listeth up, and doth not press down, whom He covereth. So, therefore, doth He cover the heaven with waters, that it is rather lifted

**PSALM** up by the Divine Spirit. What lifteth is above; what is  
**CIV.** lifted is beneath: one holdeth up, the other hangeth. If  
 then that lifteth, this hangeth; hear that this 'heaven' of the  
 Scriptures hangeth upon charity. For there are those two  
**Mat. 22,** well-known commandments of love: *On these two com-*  
**40.** *mandments hangeth all the Law and the Prophets.* "Who  
 covereth with waters the higher parts thereof."

11. Ver. 3. *Who placeth clouds His ascent.* This is  
 also well understood after the letter. The Lord visibly  
 ascended into Heaven. How were clouds set the ascents  
**Acts 1,** of heaven? *When He had said these things, a cloud*  
**9.** *received Him.* You have it also foretold of the resurrec-  
**1 Thess.** tion: *And the dead, he saith, in Christ shall rise first;*  
**4, 15.** *afterward also we that are alive shall be caught up with*  
**1 Oxf.** *them in clouds to meet Christ into<sup>1</sup> the air, and so shall*  
**Mss. in** *we ever be with the Lord.* Thou hast clouds the ascent  
 of Heaven: I will shew thee also clouds the ascent of  
 this Heaven, that is, of the Divine Scriptures. What is  
 this, brethren? I would the Lord may deign to number  
 me among those clouds, such as they be; He will see  
 how misty a cloud I am; yet all the preachers of the  
 word of truth, you are to understand, are clouds. Whoso-  
 ever therefore of their infirmity cannot ascend into this  
 Heaven, that is, to the understanding of the Scriptures, let  
 them ascend by the clouds. For perchance it is even now  
 doing in yourselves, if we effect any thing, if our labour and  
 sweat is not fruitless, ye ascend into the Heaven of the  
 Divine Scriptures, that is, into the understanding of them,  
 by our preaching. How high was the Heaven in this  
 Psalm! For no one of you saw what was that in figure:  
*He stretcheth out the Heaven like a skin, Who covereth the*  
*upper parts of it in water.* This very thing which was  
 said, *Who placeth clouds the ascent of it,* behold, is now  
 understood, so far as the Lord hath granted, by our  
 preaching; for the clouds rain not by their own gift. Do  
 ye by understanding ascend, in that ye understand bear  
 fruit; lest ye be like that vineyard of which it is said in the  
**Is. 5, 6.** Prophet, *I will command my clouds that they rain not upon*  
*it.* For a certain vineyard was accused, that for grapes it  
 had borne thorns, and had made no worthy return for sweet

rain. For he who heareth good things, and worketh evil things, is rained on with sweet rain, and beareth thorns. V ER. 3.

We may not suspect, brethren, that the Lord spake of any earthly vineyard, and of this visible kind. For these, lest under the obscurity of speech the excuse of wickedness should find shelter, the Lord Himself expounded unto what vineyard He spake, and of what vineyard He said those things. *The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, He saith, is the House of Israel.* Is. 5, 7. Why wander your hearts, ye unrighteous, over the mountains and hills of the vinedressers? I know, He saith, of what vineyard I speak, I know where I sought grapes and found thorns: without reason do ye suspect and imagine one thing and another, unwilling to understand that ye may do well. For this also is written, *He would not understand, that he might do well.* Pa. 36, 3. Away with all your guesses. *The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah His beloved plant.* Beloved when it was planted; condemned when it bore thorns. Therefore, brethren, perchance the House of Israel was a vineyard, and we are not a vineyard? With fear let us listen to what we see was said to the Jews. See how the Apostle alarms the branches grafted in, from the branches broken off; and in the case of the broken branches sets forth severity to be feared, in the grafted branches sets forth goodness to be loved. Be not unfruitful in goodness, lest, being barren, thou feel severity. But I am not a vine, thou sayest to me. Where is the saying of the Lord; *I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the Husbandman?* John 15, 1. 5. Where is the saying of the Apostle, *Who planteth a vineyard, and receiveth not of its fruit?* 1 Cor. 9, 7. Thou, O Church, thou art a vineyard, and hast God for thy Husbandman. No man that is an husbandman raineth on his own vineyard. Therefore, most beloved brethren, bowels of the Church, pledges of the Church, children of Mother Church, hear, when there is time. God threatened that vineyard with a most dreadful commination. *I will command my clouds,* He said, *that they rain not upon it.* And so it was; the Apostles came to the Jews, they rejected them, and they said to them, *Unto you we were sent, but since ye have rejected the word of God, we go to the Gentiles.* Acts 13, 48. Ye

**PSALM CIV.** see how in the same Spirit of God, He commanding within  
 Who dwells in the hearts of His own, it was commanded  
 the clouds of God that they should not rain on the vine-  
 Is. 5, 4. yard, which, when it was expected it should bear grapes,  
 bore thorns. Therefore also *He made the clouds the ascent  
 of it, and stretched forth the Heaven like a skin.* There is  
 no reason for you to complain: the authority of the Scrip-  
 tures is spread out over the world, clouds are not wanting,  
 the word of truth is preached, all things that are obscure are  
 expounded, that your hearts may ascend by the clouds.  
 Look how ye believe, look what ye receive: after the  
 preacher will come the Judge, after the dispenser will come  
 the exactor. *Who placeth clouds the ascent of it.*

12. *Who walketh above the wings of the wind.* This it is  
 now hazardous to take to the letter. Or what are the  
*wings* of the wind? Or, however, as in a picture, are we  
 to make ourselves winds flying and having wings? There is  
 no wind, brethren, but that we feel, a certain motion, and as  
 it were wave of the air, driving what it can according to its  
 strength. What wings are those of the wind? But again,  
 Ps. 36, what wings of God? And yet it was said, Under the shadow  
 7. of Thy wings they shall hope. Let us endeavour, therefore,  
 to take this also of the letter, as it was properly done in the  
 case of that creature. Perchance the swiftness of the word  
 is what the Scripture commendeth; of which swiftness we  
 have already before spoken on another Psalm, where it  
 Ps. 147, is written, *Even unto swiftness His word runneth;* because  
 15. men know nothing swifter than the wind. Even as that  
 ease was set forth in the skin; for nothing is easier for a  
 man to stretch out than a skin: so also here, signifying that  
 God, or His word, every where present, by swiftness of  
 motion leaveth not any thing, because thou knowest not any  
 thing swifter than the wind, he saith, *He walketh above the  
 wings of the wind,* that is, His swiftness surpasseth the  
 swiftness of the wind: so that by the wings of the wind  
 thou mayest understand the swiftness of the wind, and the  
 word of God thou mayest understand to be swifter than all  
 winds. And thus in the first view of consideration: let us  
 knock for something more inward, and let these literal  
 sayings point out something to us in a figure.

13. The winds indeed we understand in a figure not unfitley of souls; not that the soul is wind, but because the wind is invisible, though a bodily thing, moving bodies; yet as it evades the sight of the human eye, and the soul is invisible, therefore we may well understand souls by wind. Thence it is that God is also said to have breathed the breath of life into man, when He had formed him, *and man became a living soul*. Therefore winds are not unfitley taken in allegory for souls. But beware lest you suppose that when I named allegory, I spoke of any thing like a pantomime<sup>1</sup>. For some words, because they are words, and proceed from the tongue, are used by us in common with ridiculous and unworthy subjects, yet those words have their place in the Church, and their place on the stage. For I did not say any thing but what the Apostle said when he spoke of the two sons of Abraham: *which are*, he saith, *in allegory*. It is called *allegory*, when any thing appears to sound in words of one thing, and in meaning to signify another. As Christ is called a *Lamb*: is He cattle? Christ a *Lion*: is He a wild beast? Christ a *Rock*: is He hardness? Christ a *Mountain*: is He a swelling of the earth? and so many things seem to have one sound and another meaning, and that is called allegory. For he that thinks I said allegory with reference to the theatre, let him think that the Lord also spake "*parabola*" of the amphitheatre. Ye see what comes of a city<sup>1</sup> where shows abound! I should speak more safely in the country; for there perchance men would not have learned what allegory is, save in the Scriptures of God. Therefore, in that we say a figure is an allegory, allegory is a sacred meaning figured. And for what do we take here, *He walketh above the wings of the winds*? We said that the winds might well be taken for souls. The wings of the winds, the wings of souls, what are they but that whereby they are raised upward? The wings of souls, then, are

VER.  
3.

Gen. 2,  
7.

John 1,  
29.  
Rev. 5,  
5.  
1 Cor.  
10, 4.

<sup>1</sup> It is evident that he perceived some movement or exclamation at the word, from persons taking it in a theatrical sense.

<sup>1</sup> *Parabola*, in the amphitheatre, perhaps means the act of a 'Parabolus,' i. e. a hired fighter with wild beasts,

exposing himself to the risk of a voluntary combat. See Jul. Cæs. Bulengerus De Venatione Circi, cap. xxxi. Græv. tom. ix. p. 811. and Valesius on Soorates Eccl. H. vii. 22. note 3.

<sup>1</sup> It was at Carthage.

**PSALM CIV.** virtues, good works, right deeds. In two wings they have all their feathers, for all the commandments are in two commandments. Whoever loves God and his neighbour, has a winged soul, with free pinions, with holy love flying to the Lord. Whoever is entangled in carnal love has birdlime on his wings. For if the soul has not wings and feathers, whence saith that one groaning in his tribulations,

**Ps. 55, 6.** *Who will give me wings like a dove's? and it follows, And I will fly away, and be at rest.* Also in another place,

**Ps. 139, 7—9.** *Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I fly from Thy face? If I shall ascend into Heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into Hell, Thou art present. If I shall take my wings, like a dove, and shall fly into the uttermost parts of the sea.* As though he should say, Thus I am able to fly from the face of Thy wrath, if I shall take wings as a dove, and fly into the uttermost parts of the sea. To fly into the uttermost parts of the sea, is to carry forward hope even to the end of the world; as

**Ps. 73, 17.** he who saith, *This is a labour before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand for the last things.* And how came he into the uttermost parts of the

**Ps. 139, 10.** sea, even when he had taken wings? *For there, he saith, Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall guide me.* For even with my wings I shall fall, except Thou lead me. Therefore those souls have good and free wings, and bound with no birdlime, that well fulfil the commandments of God, *holding charity of a pure conscience and faith unfeigned.* But howsoever they be endued with the virtues

**1 Tim. 1, 5.** of charity, what is it to that love of God, with which they were loved even while they were yet entangled in birdlime? Greater therefore is the love of God toward us, than ours toward Him. Our love is our wings, but He *walketh above the wings of the winds.*

**Eph. 3, 14—17.** 14. Now the Apostle said to some, *I bend my knees for you unto the Father—that He may give you, after the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love.* He already gives them love, He already gives them wings and feathers, *that ye may be able,* He saith, *to comprehend what is the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth.* Perhaps he signifieth the

Cross of the Lord. For there was breadth, to which the hands were stretched out; a length rising from the earth, on which the Body was fixed; a height which standeth out above from that hanging beam; a depth, where the Cross was fixed, and there all the hope of our life. For breadth is in good works, length in persevering even to the end, height because of 'Lift up the heart,' that we may do all our good works, in which we persevere even to the end, having breadth in which we work well, and length in which we persevere even to the end, no otherwise than in the hope of heavenly rewards. For that is height, not to seek reward here, but above, lest it be said to us, *Verily I say unto you, they have had their reward.* But what I called depth, where a part of the Cross was fixed, which was not seen; thence arose the parts that were seen. What is that which is hidden, and is not public in the Church? The Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. For our good works even pagans see, but Sacraments are hidden from them. But from these which they do not see, arise those which they see; as from the depth of the Cross, which is fixed in the earth, rises the whole Cross which appears and is seen. And what afterwards? When the Apostle had said this, he added, *to know also the knowledge, which is above all, of the love of Christ:* when he had already said, *rooted and grounded in love.* For ye love Christ, and therefore ye work in the Cross. But do ye love as much as He loved? But by loving as much as ye do love, ye fly to Him, that ye may know how much He hath loved you: that is, that ye may know the exceeding excellency of the love of Christ. For ye love as much as ye can, and fly as much as ye can: but He walketh even above the wings of the winds. *Who walketh above the wings of the winds.*

15. Ver. 4. *Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers.* And this, although we see not the appearance of angels; for it is hidden from our eyes, and is in a certain vast realm of God's empire, yet we know that there are angels from faith, and we read it written that they have appeared to many, and we hold it, nor is it allowed us to doubt of that. But the angels are spirits, and when they are spirits they are not angels; when they are sent,

**P<sup>s</sup>ALM CIV.** they become angels. For angel is a name of office, not of nature. Thou askest the name of this nature, it is spirit; thou askest the office, it is angel; by that it is, it is spirit; by that it does, it is angel. See the same in man. Man (homo) is the name of nature, soldier of office: man (vir) is the name of nature, herald of office. For a man becometh a herald; that is, he that was before a man becomes a herald, not he that was before a herald a man. Thus, therefore, those who were already made spirits by God the Creator, them He maketh angels, by sending them to declare what He hath commanded, and He maketh a flaming fire His ministers. We read that a fire appeared in the bush. We read also that fire was sent from above, and fulfilled what was commanded. It ministered, therefore, when it fulfilled: when it existed, it was in its own nature: when it did what was commanded, it fulfilled a ministry.

**Exod. 3, 2.** Thus after the letter in<sup>1</sup> the creature.

**<sup>1</sup> Oxf. Mss. We see in.** 16. But what is it figuratively in the Church? How do we take, *Who maketh spirits His Angels, and flaming fire His ministers?* Spirits He calleth spiritual men. Well is He said to make spiritual men His Angels, that is, the messengers of His word, for *He that is spiritual judgeth all things, but himself is judged of no man.* Behold a spiritual man made an Angel of God. *I could not, he saith, speak unto you as to them that are spiritual, but as unto the carnal.* Of a certain spiritual affection He was sent unto the carnal, as though an angel from Heaven to earth. How saith he, *and a flaming fire His ministers,* save as he saith, *Fervent in spirit?* For being thus fervent in spirit, every minister of God is a flaming fire. Did not Stephen burn? With what fire did he burn? And what was that fire, when he was stoned, and prayed for them that were stoning him? When thou hearest the minister of God is a fire, dost thou think he will burn? Let him burn, but let it be thy straw, that is, all thy carnal desires let the minister of God burn up, preaching the word of God. Hear him: *Thus let a man account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.* But how did he burn when he said, *Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged?* He burned and flamed with charity, and

**1 Cor. 2, 15.**

**1 Cor. 3, 1.**

**Rom. 12, 11.**

**Acts 7, 59.**

**1 Cor. 4, 1.**

**2 Cor. 6, 11.**

went towards them to set them on fire. This fire the Lord <sup>VER.</sup> said He would send on earth when He said, *I came to send* <sup>5.</sup> *fire on earth.* As a sword, so fire. The sword divideth <sup>Luke 12,</sup> carnal affection, the fire consumeth it. Understand the <sup>49.</sup> whole in the Word of God, know the whole in the Spirit of God. Begin to be fervent with charity through the Word of God which thou hearest, and see what effect the fire, the minister of God, hath had on thee. *Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire his ministers.*

17. Ver. 5. *He hath founded the earth upon its firmness, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever.* To take this of this earth, I know not if there be any opening; whether it be rightly said, *It shall not be bowed for ever and ever*, whereof it is said, *Heaven and earth shall pass away.* Here there is <sup>Mat. 24,</sup> a difficulty, if you try to take it to the letter. For as to that <sup>35.</sup> He saith, *He hath founded the earth upon its firmness*; perchance there is some firmness hidden from us, which upholdeth the earth; and this he meant by *founded*. Upon what? Upon the firmness of the earth itself, which He put under it that it might be upheld, which perchance escapeth thine eyes. Let there be then dark things in the creature, the Creator shall not be hidden from the darkness of the creature. What we are able let us see; from these which we see, let us praise Him and love Him. Let us turn ourselves to seek something here put in a figure. *He hath* <sup>Ps. 24,</sup> *founded the earth*, I understand the Church. *The earth is* <sup>1.</sup> *the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* I understand the Church by the earth. She is that thirsty land, she it is that <sup>Ps. 143,</sup> saith in the Psalms; for one saith it from all; *My soul is* <sup>6.</sup> *like earth without water unto Thee.* What is, *without water?* Thirsty. So doth my soul thirst toward Thee, as earth without water: for unless it thirsteth, it will not be rightly watered. Rain on a drunken soul is a deluge, she must be <sup>Mat. 5,</sup> thirsty. For, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after* <sup>6.</sup> *righteousness.* And she must say, *My soul is as earth* <sup>Ps. 42,</sup> *without water unto Thee*: because she saith elsewhere, *My* <sup>2.</sup> *soul hath thirsted for the living God.* The earth, therefore, I understand the Church. What is *its firmness*, on which it is founded, save its foundation? Do we unfitly understand the firmness on which the earth is founded of the

**PSALM** foundation on which the Church is established? What  
**CIV.** is that foundation? *Other foundation, he saith, can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* There, therefore, we are founded. Truly, because we are there founded, we shall not be bowed for ever and ever: for nothing is firmer than that foundation. Weak thou wast, but a firm foundation beareth thee. In thyself thou couldst not be firm: thou wilt be firm always, if from that firm foundation thou depart not. *It shall not be bowed for ever and ever.*

**1 Tim.** It is the predestined *pillar and ground of the truth.*  
**3, 15.**

18. Ver. 6—17. *The deep, as a garment, is its clothing: above the mountains shall the waters stand.* 7. *From Thy rebuke they shall flee, from the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid.* 8. *The mountains go up, and the plains descend, into the place which Thou hast founded for them.* 9. *Thou hast set a bound, which they shall not pass, nor return to cover the earth.* 10. *Who sendest out waters in the valleys, between the midst of the mountains shall the waters pass through.* 11. *All the beasts of the field shall drink, the wild asses shall take for their thirst.* 12. *On them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit, from the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice.* 13. *Watering the mountains from His higher places: from the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied.* 14. *Bringing forth hay for the cattle, and herb for the service of men.* 15. *That he may bring out bread from the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man. That He might brighten His face with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart.* 16. *The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, and the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted.* 17. *There the sparrows shall build nests: the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them.* Ye observe the heaven stretched out. Ye wish to ascend in understanding, and I see it. Yet how high it is, I think that your love observeth, as well as myself. For therefore I thought fit to pronounce a number of verses, that ye may see how high aloft are placed the mysteries of God, lest we should disdain them when offered, lest when at hand they be held cheap, that always after seeking, though with difficulty, they may be found with the greater pleasure. Amongst other things, however,

*That of the 'waterfowl' mentioned, to stimulate enquiry. 87*

brethren, which may be taken to the letter; on this too, **VER.**  
which was said, *There the sparrows shall build nests, the* 6-17.  
*house of the waterfowl is the leader of them.* Is the house  
of the waterfowl the leader of sparrows? or is the house of  
the waterfowl the leader of cedars? For this also is there,  
*And the cedars of Libanus, which He hath planted, there*  
*the sparrows shall build nests, the house of the waterfowl is*  
*the leader of them.* And indeed in the Latin language we  
cannot understand *of them* (masculine) of the *cedars*; for  
cedars are of the feminine gender. The house of the water-  
fowl, therefore, how is it the leader of sparrows? For this  
can in no wise be understood of that creature which is  
before our eyes. For we know that waterfowl<sup>1</sup> are birds of<sup>1</sup> **Fulica**  
the sea or of lakes. Let the house of the waterfowl be the  
nest of the waterfowl: how then is the house of the waterfowl  
the leader of sparrows? Wherefore doth the Holy Spirit  
mix up amongst the visible things some that are in a manner  
absurd, if it be not that from that which we cannot take to  
the letter, He may compel us to enquire into those things in  
a spiritual sense?

19. Therefore if, as I said before, ye desire to ascend  
unto the *heaven* in understanding, unto that *skin extended*,  
and *He hath made clouds the ascent thereof*; this cloud  
which speaketh unto you is not able this day to explain all  
those things. Make allowance, if not for your own, at least  
for my infirmity. Your eagerness, indeed, I see to be such,  
that ye are always ready to hear, but there are two things of  
which the consideration is not to be despised. For both  
the weakness of our body is to be considered, and our  
memory of the very things that are under exposition.  
Meanwhile think upon what ye have heard. What did I  
say? Ruminateth that ye have eaten. For thus will ye be **Lev. 11,**  
clean animals, and fit for the feasts of God. But your fruit<sup>3</sup>  
observe in your works. For he digesteth very ill, who heareth  
well, and worketh not well: because the Lord our God  
faileth not to feed. It is known to all, that of the bread  
which we have received, and which we expend, we shall  
have to give account. Your love knoweth very well, for the  
sacred page is not silent toward us, nor doth God flatter us.  
From this place ye may take notice how free we are toward

**PSALM CIV.** you: and if perchance I am not free enough, or if all we, that speak to you in this place, are wanting in freedom, certainly the word of God itself feareth no man. But we, whether we fear or are free, are compelled to announce Him Who feareth no man. This not men but God gave you, that even by the fearful ye should hear Him that is free. Excuse in God's Judgment ye will have none, unless ye shall have practised yourselves in good works, and borne some fruit suitable to the rain, as it were, of the things ye have heard. Suitable fruit are good works; suitable fruit is unfeigned love, not only of a brother, but also of an enemy. Scorn none that entreateth thee, and when thou canst not give any that he asketh, spurn him not: if thou canst give it, give; if thou canst not, shew thyself affable. God crowneth will within, when He findeth not ability. Let no one say, 'I have nothing.' Charity is not served out from the bag: because whatsoever things we say, and whatsoever we have said, and whatsoever we shall ever be able to say, either we, or any after us, or they that were before us, have no end save charity; because *the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.* Question your own hearts, when ye pray to God: see how ye utter that verse. *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.* Thou wilt not be praying, unless thou sayest that (prayer): if thou sayest another, He heareth thee not; because it is not the one which the Advocate<sup>1</sup> Whom He sent thee dictated. It is necessary therefore that even when we say our own words in prayer, we pray after the manner of that, and that when we say the very words, we should rightly understand what we say, because God willed that it should be manifest. If therefore ye shall not pray, ye will have no hope: if ye shall pray otherwise than the Master taught, or if ye shall be false in prayer, ye shall not obtain. Therefore ye must both pray, and ye must say truth, and ye must so pray as He taught. Whether thou wilt or wilt not, thou wilt be saying daily, 'Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.' Wouldest thou say it without fear? Do what thou sayest.

<sup>1</sup> Tim.  
1, 5.

Matt. 6,  
12.

<sup>1</sup> Juris-  
peritus

## PSALM CIV.

*Discourse II.*

I know that ye hold us debtors, not by necessity, but, what is stronger, by charity. But we owe this in the first place to the Lord our God, Who dwelling also in you requireth these things of us, next to our Lord and Father who is present, and bids me, and prays for me; and then to your violence, by which ye extort it even from our insufficient strength. Yet, so much as the Lord may grant, Who I pray may grant strength to you also as ye pray, since we have already treated of the first parts of this Psalm on the day lately past, what follows too must be taken up, and by His help in Whose name we began must be finished. Now we had set before you all, who were present, that the whole of this Psalm was inwoven with figured mysteries, whence that which is sought with more labour useth to be found with more pleasure. Nor think ye that these things are hidden from you by obscurity, but seasoned by difficulty, for this purpose, which we have often mentioned before, that it may be given to them that ask, and that they that <sup>Matt. 7,</sup> seek may find, and they that knock have entrance. <sup>7. 8.</sup> But we have need of somewhat more both of silence and of patience from you, that the few words we have to say may not, through the noise, take up too much time. For the straitness of the time compels us to say but little, because your Love also knoweth that we owe the solemn attendance to the funeral of the body of a Believer. See then, let us not be compelled now to repeat what has been said, and to expound the same again; if any were absent, there would not be wanting some who have not heard; but it is good perhaps for them that they do not hear now, what those heard who were present, that they also may learn to be here. Let us then read it cursorily.

2. Ver. 1. *Bless the Lord, O my soul.* Let the soul of us all, made one in Christ, say this. *O Lord my God, Thou art magnified exceedingly!* Where art Thou magnified? *Confession and beauty Thou hast put on.* Confess ye, that ye may be beautified, that He may put you on. (Ver. 2.)

**PSALM CIV.** *Clothed with light as a garment.* Clothed with His Church, **II.** because she is made *light* in Him, who before was darkness **Eph. 5,** in herself, as the Apostle saith; *Ye were sometime darkness,* **8.** *but now light in the Lord.*

*Stretching out the heaven like a skin:* either as easily as thou dost a skin, if it be 'as easily,' so that thou mayest take it after the letter; or let us understand the authority of the Scriptures, spread out over the whole world, under the name of a skin; because mortality is signified in a skin, but all the authority of the Divine Scriptures was dispensed unto us through mortal men, whose fame is still spreading abroad now they are dead.

**3. Ver. 3.** *Who covereth with waters the upper parts thereof.* The upper parts of what? Of Heaven. What is Heaven? Figuratively only we said, the Divine Scripture. What are the upper parts of the Divine Scripture? The **Mark 12, 31.** commandment of love, than which there is none more exalted. But wherefore is love compared to waters? **Rom. 5,** Because *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the* **5.** *Holy Spirit Who is given unto us.* Whence is the Spirit **John 7,** Himself water? because *Jesus stood and cried, If any man* **37.** *thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* Whence do we prove that it was said of the Spirit? Let the Evangelist himself declare, who followeth it up, and saith, *But this spake He of the Spirit, which they were to receive, who should believe on Him.*

*Who walketh above the wings of the winds;* that is, above the virtues of souls. What is the virtue of a soul? Love itself. But how doth He walk above it? Because the love of God toward us is greater than ours toward God.

**4. Ver. 4.** *Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers:* that is, those who are already spirits, who are spiritual, not carnal, He maketh His Angels, by ending them to preach His Gospel. *And flaming fire His ministers.* For unless the minister that preacheth be on fire, he enflameth not him to whom he preacheth.

**5. Ver. 5.** *He hath founded the earth upon its firmness.* He hath founded the Church upon the firmness of the Church. What is the firmness of the Church, but the

foundation of the Church. What is the foundation of the Church, but that of which the Apostle saith, *Other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* <sup>VER. 6.</sup>  
<sup>1 Cor. 3, 11.</sup> And therefore, grounded on such a foundation, what hath she deserved to hear? "*It shall not be bowed for ever and ever.*" *He hath founded the earth upon the firmness of it.* That is, He hath founded the Church upon Christ the foundation. The Church will totter if the foundation totter; but when shall Christ totter, before Whose coming unto us, and taking flesh on Him, *all things were made by Him,* <sup>John 1,</sup> *and without Him was not any thing made;* Who holdeth <sup>3.</sup> all things by His Majesty, and us by His goodness? Since <sup>Heb. 1,</sup> Christ faileth not, *she shall not be bowed for ever and ever.* Where are they<sup>1</sup> who say that the Church hath perished <sup>1 Dona-</sup> from the world, when she cannot even be bowed. <sup>tists</sup>

6. But whence did the Lord begin to maintain this Church, to reveal, to commence, to display, to spread her abroad? Whence did He begin this? What was in the first place? because *He hath founded the earth on its firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever.*

Ver. 6. *The deep, like a garment, is its clothing.* Whose? Is it perchance God's? But he had already said of His clothing, *Clothed with light as with a garment.* I hear <sup>ver. 2.</sup> of God clothed in light, and that light, if we will, are we. What is, if we will? if we are no longer darkness. Therefore if God is clothed with light, whose clothing, again, is the deep? For an immense mass of waters is called the deep. All water, all the moist nature, and the substance every where shed abroad through the seas, and rivers, and hidden caves, is all together called by one name, the Deep. Therefore we understand the earth, of which he said, *He hath founded the earth upon the firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever.* Of it I believe he said, *The deep, like a garment is its clothing.* For the water is as it were the clothing of the earth, surrounding it and covering it. But some time in the deluge this clothing of the earth so increased, that it quite covered over all things, and rose above the highest mountains, as the Scripture witnesseth, by <sup>Gen. 7,</sup> about fifteen cubits. Perchance it was that very time this <sup>20.</sup>

92 *The 'Deep' covered the spiritual 'Earth' in Persecutions.*

PSALM CIV.  
II. Psalm signified, when he said, *The deep, like a garment is its clothing.*

7. *Above the mountains the waters shall stand*: that is, the clothing of the earth, which is the deep, so increased, that the waters stood even above the mountains. We read of this taking place, as I said, in the deluge. Is the prophet speaking of that? Was he relating to us past events, or foretelling future? But if he were relating the past, he would not say to us, *Above the mountains the waters shall stand*; but, 'above the mountains the waters did stand.' For that the past tense useth to be put for the future in the Scriptures, the Spirit foreseeing things that are to come, in such wise as if they had already taken place, we are accustomed to read. Thence it is that we all know, that in another Psalm, where there is as it were a Gospel recited, *They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones, upon My vesture did they cast lots*. All things are commemorated as already done, which in fact were foreseen as yet to come. But how much can our diligence effect? Nay, what can be done with so much occupation? or when are we so at leisure that we can say for certain it is so? We have observed the Prophets often express in the past tense things that were future, but that they express the past in the figure of the future doth not easily occur to one in reading. I dare not say there is no instance; but I would certainly point out to students in such learning what they may look for. If they shall have found it, and brought it to us, we busy old men shall congratulate the young on their studies, and shall learn something ourselves too from their ministering to us. For we do not disdain it, since Christ teaches from all. This therefore he saith: *Above the mountains the waters shall stand*. The Prophet minding to foretel future things, not to relate the past, therefore said it, because he would have it understood that the Church should be in a deluge of persecutions. For there was a time when the floods of persecutors had covered God's earth, God's Church, and had so covered it, that not even those great ones appeared, who are the mountains. For when they fled every where, how did they but cease to appear? And perchance of those waters is that

Ps. 22,  
16. 17.

saying, *Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul.* Especially the waters which make the sea, <sup>VER. 7.</sup> stormy, unfruitful. For whatsoever earth the sea-water may have covered, it will not rather make it fruitful than bring it to barrenness. For there were also mountains beneath the waters, because above the mountains waters stood<sup>1</sup>. The <sup>1</sup> Oxf. resisting nations had conquered the authority of all that <sup>Ms. shall</sup> every where boldly preached the word of God, the waters <sup>stand</sup> had covered them, and the waters stood over them; they said "Press," "Press," and they pressed: "Extinguish! Let them no more be seen!" They said these things, and they prevailed over the Martyrs, and the Christians fled every where, and in some sort of flight even the Apostles were hidden. Why were the Apostles hidden by flight? Because *above the mountains the waters stood*<sup>2</sup>. The power of the <sup>2</sup> Oxf. waters was great, but how long? Hear what followeth. <sup>Ms. shall</sup>

8. Ver. 7. *From Thy rebuke they shall fly.* And this <sup>stand</sup> was done, brethren; from God's rebuke the waters did fly; that is, they went back from pressing on the mountains. Now the mountains themselves stand forth, Peter and Paul: how do they tower! They who before were pressed down by persecutors, now are venerated by emperors. For the waters are fled from the rebuke of God; because *the heart of kings is in the hand of God, He hath bent it whither He would*; He commanded peace to be given by them to the Christians; the authority of the Apostles sprang up and towered high. Had the greatness of the mountains failed even when the waters were above? But yet, my brethren, that all might see the height of the mountains, through which mountains salvation was to come to the human race, because *I have lifted up mine eyes unto the hills, whence shall come help for me*; the waters fled from the rebuke of <sup>Ps. 121,</sup> God. *From the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid.* Now who is there that would not be afraid, from the voice of God through the Apostles, the voice of God through the Scriptures, through His clouds? The sea is quieted, the waters have been made afraid, the mountains have been laid bare, the emperor hath given the order. But who would have given the order, unless God had thundered? Because God willed, they commanded, and it was done.

**PSALM CIV.** Therefore let no one of men arrogate any thing to himself;  
**II.** *the waters were afraid, but from the voice of Thy thunder.*

For behold, when God would, the waters fled, no longer to press the mountains. Before that was done, even under the waters the mountains were firm.

9. Ver. 8. *The mountains ascend, and the plains go down, into the place which Thou hast founded for them.* He is still speaking of waters. Let us not here understand mountains as of earth; nor plains, as of earth: but waves so great that they may be compared to mountains. The sea did sometime toss, and its waves were as mountains, which could cover those mountains the Apostles. But how long do the mountains ascend and the plains go down? They raged, and they are appeased. When they raged they were mountains: now they are appeased they are become plains: for He hath founded a place for them. There is a certain channel<sup>h</sup>, as it were a deep place, into which all those lately raging hearts of mortals have retired. How many now are both salt and bitter, and yet quiet? How many are there who are unwilling to grow sweet? Who are they that will not grow sweet? They that still will not believe in Christ. And although there are many, who have not yet believed, what do they to the Church? They were mountains formerly, now they are plains: yet, my brethren, even a dead calm<sup>1</sup> is sea. For wherefore are they not now violent? wherefore do they not rage? Wherefore do they not try, if they cannot overthrow our earth, at least to cover it? Wherefore not? Hear. (Ver. 9.) *Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over, neither shall they turn again to cover the earth.*

<sup>1</sup> Mala-  
cia

10. What then, because now the bitterest waves have received a measure, that we must be allowed to preach such things even with freedom; because they have had their due limit assigned, because they cannot pass over the bound that is set, nor shall they return to cover the earth; what is doing in the earth itself? What workings take place therein, now that the sea hath left it bare? Although at its beach slight waves do make their noise, although Pagans still

<sup>h</sup> 'Meatus' Ben. All the Mss. 'Metus' 'a certain fear,' which may be the true reading.

murmur round; the sound of the shores I hear, a deluge I dread not. What then; what is doing in the earth? (Ver. <sup>VER.</sup> 10.) *Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys. Thou sendest out*, he saith, *springs in the little valleys.* Ye know what little valleys are, lower places among the lands. For to hills and mountains, valleys and little valleys are opposed in contrary shape. Hills and mountains are swellings of the land: but valleys and little valleys, lownesses of the lands. Do not despise low places, thence flow springs. *Thou sendest out springs in the little valleys.* Hear a mountain. The Apostle saith, *I laboured more than they* <sup>1 Cor. 15, 10.</sup> *all.* A certain greatness is brought before us: yet immediately, that the waters may flow, he hath made himself a valley: *Yet not I, but the grace of God with me.* It is no contradiction that they who are mountains be also valleys: for as they are called mountains because of their spiritual greatness, so also valleys because of the humility of their spirit. *Not I*, he saith, *but the grace of God with me.* *Not I*, is the valley, and *the grace of God with me* is the spring. *Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys.* That which I just now quoted was said of the Spirit, *If any man* <sup>John 7, 37.</sup> *thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink: He that believeth in Me, from his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* But this He said of the Spirit, which they that were to believe in Him should receive. Let us see if they be valleys, that springs may be sent forth in the valleys. Hear the Prophet: *Upon whom shall My Spirit rest, save on the humble and* <sup>Is. 66, 2.</sup> *quiet one, and him that feareth My word?* What is, *Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Upon the humble and quiet one.* Who shall have My spring? The little valley.

11. *Between the midst of the mountains the waters shall pass through.* Thus far the Psalm was recited by the Reader. Thus far let it suffice your love. This we will say, and in the Name of God will end our discourse. What is, *In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through?* We have heard who are the *mountains*, the great Preachers of the word, the exalted Angels of God, though still in mortal flesh; lofty not by their own power, but by His grace; but as far as relates to themselves, they are valleys, in their humility they send forth springs. *In the*

PSALM CIV. II. *midst, he saith, between the mountains, the waters shall pass through.* Let us suppose this said thus, "In the midst between the Apostles shall pass through the preachings of the Word of Truth." What is, *in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through*? What is, in the midst between the Apostles? What is called in the midst, is common. A common property, from which all alike live, is in the midst, and belongs not to me, but neither belongs it to thee, nor yet to me. Therefore we speak thus also of some men. They have peace between themselves, they have good faith between themselves, they have love between themselves: so certainly we speak. What is, between themselves? In the midst of themselves. What is, in the midst of themselves? It is common to them. Hear the waters in the midst between the mountains. Because the faith was common to them, nor had each one the waters as if appropriated and his own. For if they are not in the midst, they are as it were private, they flow not for public use, and I have mine, and he has his own, it is not in the midst for both me and him to have it; but such is not the preaching of peace. But that in the midst between the mountains waters may flow, hear the voice of a mountain: *The God of peace, he saith, grant you to be of one mind toward one another.* And again, *That ye may be all of one mind, and that there be no divisions among you.* What I think, thou thinkest, the water floweth in the midst: I have it not as private of my own, nor thou private of thy own. Let the Truth be neither my private property nor thine, that it may be both thine and mine. *In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through.* Hear the Mountain himself, as I said, because in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through. *But whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.* Fearless he said, *whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye have believed;* for in the midst between the mountains the waters flowed; there was no disagreement of the mountains about the waters, but the peace of consent, and the partnership of charity. But if any one wished to preach another thing, then he would be preaching of his own, not of that in the midst. And hear what is said of him even by Him Who

<sup>1</sup> Oxf.  
Mess.  
add,  
'What  
is,' &c.

Rom.  
16, 5.

1 Cor.  
1, 10.

sent forth springs in the little valleys: *He that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own.* Therefore lest any mountain should be accepted sending forth a stream of his own, not from the midst, the Apostle saith, *Whosoever shall have preached unto you a Gospel other than ye have received, let him be anathema.* And behold how he would not that there should be any presuming upon the mountain; lest perchance a mountain depart from the waters running through the midst, and choose to flow in with any thing of his own. *Yea even if we—* (and how great a mountain said this! How abundantly did water flow from his valley! Yet he would have this run in the midst between the mountains, and that there should be the certain faith of the nations, the same which the Apostles held amongst themselves in the midst and in common)—*Yea even if we,* he said. And thou, Paul, canst thou preach any thing otherwise? The question is of Paul; hear what followeth: *Yea even if we, or an Angel from Heaven, shall have declared unto you otherwise than ye have received, let him be anathema.* If a mountain come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized: if any Angel come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized. Whence this? Because he hath chosen to give a stream of his own, not from the midst. And this, perchance a man hampered with the clouds of the flesh, and driven from the common fountain to his own falsehood, may do: can an Angel too? Truly, can an Angel too? If an Angel, streaming forth of his own, had not been listened to in Paradise, we had not been cast down into death. The water was placed in the midst for men, the commandment of God. The water in the midst, water in a manner public, was good without deceit, as we said to your Love, it flowed without taint, without mire. If that same water were always drunk, there were life for evermore. An angel came, fallen from Heaven, become a serpent, because he wished now insidiously to scatter his venom: he gave out his venom; he spake of the private stock, of his own; because *he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own;* and the unhappy creatures, by hearing him, lost what was common, what made them blessed; and they were reduced to what was their own, while wishing, perversely, to be like

V. R. 10  
John 8, 44.  
Gal. 1, 9.

John 8, 44.

PSALM CIV. III. *as gods ;*) desiring what they were not, they lost what they had received. Therefore, brethren, let what we have said to your Love serve to this purpose, because of the springs : that they may flow from you, be ye valleys, and communicate with all that which ye have from God. Let the waters flow in the midst, envy ye no one, drink, be filled, flow forth when ye are filled. Every where let the common water of God have the glory, not the private falsehoods of men.

PSALM CIV.

*Discourse III.*

That for the treating of the remaining parts of this Psalm we are debtors, your Love remembereth. There is no need, then, that I should engage your attention by any preface. For I see that ye are in the suspense of full eagerness to understand the prophetic mysteries, nor is there any need for my discourse to make those attentive, whom the Spirit of God has already made so. This rather let us do, which is needful. Of the springs sent forth in the little valleys, and of the waters passing through in the midst of the mountains, we have already spoken : but thus far have we spoken, from this point forward let us begin.

2. Ver. 11. For it follows, *All the beasts of the wood shall drink.* What shall they drink ? The waters passing through in the midst between the mountains. What shall they drink ? Springs sent forth in the little valleys. And who shall drink ? The beasts of the wood. We do indeed see this also in the visible creation, that the beasts of the wood drink of springs, and of streams that run between the mountains : but now since it hath pleased God to hide His own wisdom in the figures of such things, not to take it away from earnest seekers, but to close it to them that care not, and open it to them that knock ; it hath also pleased our Lord God Himself to exhort you by us to this, that in all these things which are said as if of the bodily and visible creation, we may seek something spiritually hidden, in

which when found we may rejoice. The beasts of the wood, we understand the Gentiles, and Holy Scripture <sup>VER. 11.</sup> witnesses this in many places. But yet two most evident proofs readily occur, namely, that in Noah's ark, by which <sup>Gen. 7, 2. 14.</sup> no one of us doubts but the Church was prefigured, there would not have been included all sorts of animals, unless in that unity of structure all nations were signified: unless perchance we think that if all such things had been utterly destroyed by the deluge, God would have wanted the power to bid the earth produce them, as at His first word it had <sup>Gen. 1, 24.</sup> produced. Not therefore in vain, not by chance, not by any want in God, or lack of power, were those animals ordered to be shut up in the ark. For after that the time came; (for now we must add also another most evident testimony;) when, therefore, the time came for that which had been prefigured in the ark now to be fulfilled in the Church, Peter the Apostle, hesitating to give the Sacrament of the Gospel to uncircumcised Gentiles; nay, not doubting, but altogether thinking it was not to be given; on a certain day being hungry, when he wished to dine, went up to pray. This in the Acts of the Apostles is known to all that read well and hear well. He, then, praying, there came on him that transport of mind which the Greeks call ecstasis; that is, his mind was turned from corporeal usage to contemplate a certain vision, being transported out of present things. Then he saw a certain vessel, like a sheet, let down by four cords from Heaven, where were all animals, beasts of every kind; and a voice sounded to him, *Peter, Acts 10, kill and eat.* <sup>13, &c.</sup> But he, who had been instructed in the Law, and had grown up in Jewish practice, and held the commandment given through Moses the servant of God, and had kept it faithfully all his life, answered, *Far be it from me, O Lord; never did any thing common enter into my mouth.* But that 'common' means unclean with the Jews and with the Law, they know well who have studied the learning of the Church. And the voice said to him, *What God hath chosen, that call not thou unclean.* But this was done thrice, and that circle<sup>1</sup> was taken away, which was <sup>discus</sup> shewn thrice let down from Heaven. The circle that was held by four lines, is the round world, in its four parts.

**PSALM CIV. III.** These four parts Scripture doth often mention, the East and the West, the North and the South. Therefore because the whole world was called by the Gospel, four Gospels were written. But the vessel thrice let down from Heaven signifies this, that it was said to the Apostles, *Go ye, and baptize all nations, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Thence is formed, as ye already know, also the number twelve, the number of the Disciples. For it was not without cause that He would have twelve: and so consecrated was that number, that in the place of one that fell there could not be but another ordained. Wherefore twelve Apostles? For because there are four parts of the world, and the whole world was called in the Gospel, whence four Gospels were written, and the whole world is called in the name of the Trinity, that the Church may be gathered; four taken thrice, make twelve. Let us not therefore wonder if of those waters passing in the midst between the mountains, in that teaching of the Apostles which flows in the midst, because of the agreement of communion, all beasts of the field drink. For all were in the ark, all in the round vessel; all doth Peter kill and eat; because Peter is the rock, the rock the Church. What is it to kill and eat? To kill in them that they were, and to take them into one's own bowels. Thou hast persuaded a pagan to leave his sacrileges, thou hast slain that he was: by giving him the Sacrament of Christ, thou hast taken him into the body of the Church, thou hast eaten him.

3. These beasts, then, drink those waters, but passing; not staying, but passing; for all that teaching which in all this time is dispensed passeth. Thence the Apostle saith, *Both knowledge shall be done away, and prophecy shall be made void.* Wherefore shall those things be made void? *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be made void.* Unless perchance your Love thinketh that in that city to which it is said, *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion; for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates;* when the bars are now strengthened and the city closed, whence, as we said some

<sup>1</sup> See on Ps. 85, 10. and on Ps. 147, on ver. 13. *Ben.*

time since, no friend goeth out, no enemy entereth; that there we shall have a book to read, or speech to be explained as it is now explained to you. Therefore is it now treated, that there it may be held fast: therefore is it now divided by syllables, that there it may be contemplated whole and entire. The Word of God will not be wanting there: but yet not by letters, not by sounds, not by books, not by a reader, not by an expositor. How then? As, *in John 1, the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* For He did not so come to us as to depart from thence; because He was in this world, and the world was made by Him. Such a Word are we to contemplate. For *the God of gods shall appear in Zion.* Ps. 84, 7. But this when? After our pilgrimage, when the journey is done: if however after our journey is done we be not delivered to the Judge, that the Judge may send us to prison. But if when our journey is ended, as we hope, and wish, and endeavour, we shall have reached our Country, there shall we contemplate What we shall ever praise; nor shall That fail Which is present to us, nor we, who enjoy: nor shall he be cloyed that eateth, nor shall that fail which he eateth. Great and wonderful shall be that contemplation, and who speaketh worthily of it in this time, while the waters flow between the mountains? In the mean time, therefore, let the waters flow between the mountains, and pass: when the waters pass through, there is drink for us in our pilgrimage, lest for thirst on the way we faint. *All the beasts of the wood shall drink.* Thence ye came, from the wood ye were gathered. And what a wood? No man used to pass there, because no prophet had been sent thither. But to build the Ark, timbers of the wood were cut: *Gen. 6,* thence were the timbers, thence the beasts, thence ye came. <sup>14.</sup> Therefore drink. *All the beasts of the wood shall drink.*

4. *The onagers shall take for their thirst.* By onagers he meaneth some great beasts. For who knoweth not that wild asses are called onagers? He meaneth, therefore, some great untrained ones. For the Gentiles had no yoke of the Law: many nations lived after their own customs, ranging in proud boastfulness as in a wilderness. And so indeed did all the beasts, but the wild asses are put to

**PSALM CIV. III.** signify the greater sort. They too shall drink for their thirst, for for them too the waters flow. Thence drinks the hare, thence the wild ass: the hare little, the wild ass great; the hare timid, the wild ass fierce: either sort drinks thence, but each for his thirst. The water doth not say, 'I am enough for the hare,' and refuse the wild ass; nor doth it say, 'Let the wild ass come, the hare, if he cometh, shall be swept away.' So faithfully and gently doth it flow, as at once to satisfy the wild ass, and not to alarm the hare. The sound of Tully's voice rings out, Cicero is read, it is some book, it is a dialogue of his, whether his own, or Plato's, or by whatever such writer: some hear that are unlearned, weak ones of less mind; who dareth to aspire to such a thing? It is a sound of water, and that perchance turbid, but certainly flowing so violently, that a timid animal dare not draw near and drink. For

**Gen. 1, 1.** whom hath sounded, *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth*, and he hath not dared to drink? To whom soundeth a Psalm, and he saith, It is too much for me? Behold now what the Psalm soundeth; certainly they are hidden mysteries, yet so it soundeth, that even children are delighted to hear, and the unlearned come to drink, and when filled burst forth in singing. These drink, then, lesser hearts and greater; but the greater more largely, because *the wild asses shall take for their thirst.*

**Eph. 5, 25.** Let the lesser drink that which is said, *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ hath loved the Church. Let the women be subject to their own husbands.* Let the lesser

**Mat. 19, 3, &c.** drink. It was said unto the Lord, *Is it lawful to put away a wife for every cause?* The Lord forbade, and said that it was not lawful. *Know ye not*, said He, *that God from the beginning made them male and female? What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.* Then He added, *Whosoever shall have put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and if he shall have taken another, he committeth adultery.* He hath confirmed the word: this is expedient to him that is bound; he should have looked to it sooner not to be bound. *Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed.* If thou art not yet a wild ass, and art free from

**1 Cor. 7, 27.**

a wife, thou hast there what thou mayest drink even as <sup>VER.</sup> a hare: *and if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast* 12. *not sinned.* But when the Disciples heard it said by the Lord, that it was not lawful for marriages to be loosed in any wise except for the cause of fornication, *If such,* <sup>Mat. 19,</sup> they said, *is the case with a wife, it is not expedient to take* <sup>9. 10.</sup> *one.* But are only the wild asses to drink? *Not all men receive this saying,* many receive it not. And who are they that receive it? *The wild asses shall take for their thirst.* <sup>ib. 12.</sup> What is, *The wild asses shall take for their thirst?* "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

5. Then the Psalm goes on in its text, (ver. 12.) *Upon them<sup>1</sup> the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit.* Upon which? <sup>1 illud</sup> Upon the wild asses, or rather upon the mountains? For from them the sense runs, *In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through; all the beasts of the wood shall drink; the wild asses shall take for their thirst: upon them the fowls of the air shall have their habitation.* We more suitably understand it, upon the mountains, because this is also like this creation. Upon the mountains fowls may inhabit, not upon wild asses: this we should understand, if necessity compelled. Upon the mountains, then, the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We see these birds dwell upon the mountains, but many of them dwell in plains, many in valleys, many in groves, many in gardens, not all upon mountains. There are some fowls that dwell not save on the mountains. Some spiritual souls doth this name denote. Fowls are spiritual hearts, which enjoy the free air. In the clearness of heaven these birds delight, yet their feeding is on the mountains, there will they dwell. Ye know the mountains, they have been already treated of. Mountains are Prophets, mountains are Apostles, mountains are all preachers of the truth. Whosoever would be spiritual, there let him dwell: let him not wander away in his own heart; let him inhabit, let him carry by flying. We have birds that signify something spiritual. It is not in vain that it is said, *Thy youth shall* <sup>Ps. 103,</sup> *be renewed like the eagle's.* Not in vain is it said of <sup>6.</sup> Abraham, *But the birds he divided not.* Abraham, in that <sup>Gen. 15,</sup> <sup>10.</sup> very mystical sacrifice, took three animals, a ram of three

PSALM  
CIV.  
III.

years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old, and a turtle dove and a pigeon. The ram was divided, and the parts placed opposite each other; the she goat was divided, and equally the parts were placed opposite one another; the heifer was divided, and it was done in like manner with its flesh: and the Scripture hath added, *but the birds he divided not.* Then it is said, a ram of three years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old; of the age of the birds there is no mention. Whence, I pray you, but that in the birds are denoted some spiritual ones, whose temporal age is therefore not named, because they meditate on eternal things, and in longing and understanding go beyond all temporal things? *Spiritual men* are they that *judge of all things, and are judged of no man*: therefore they alone are not divided into heresies and schisms. In the ram are understood they that are set over others, for they lead the flocks. In the cow is understood the common people of the Jews, for it had the yoke of the Law, under which it laboured. In the she goat is understood the Church from the Gentiles; for it used to leap with a kind of free springings, and to feed on the bitter wild olive. These animals were said to be of three years old, because in the third period grace was revealed. For the first was before the Law; the second from the time the Law was given; the third, that which now is, since the kingdom of Heaven hath been preached. What then do we say, that the ram is not divided? Have not bishops been authors of schisms and heresies? Then, however, if the people themselves had not been divided, that is, if the cow were not divided, they might perchance have been put to shame in their divisions, and returned to the bond of unity. The leaders are divided, the peoples are also divided, that the blind may follow the blind, and they may fall together into the ditch; they are placed opposite one another. But the birds he divided not: spiritual men have no division, they do not think of schisms: there is peace in them, they keep it in others as much as they can; when they fail in others, they keep it in themselves. *If there shall be there, He saith, a son of peace, your peace shall rest upon him: if not, it shall return unto you.* He is not a son of peace, he hath chosen

1 Cor.  
2, 15.

Mat. 15,  
14.

Luke  
10, 6.

to be divided, thy peace shall return unto thee; because V. R. 12. the birds he divided not. The furnace also shall come, for Abraham sat there until the evening, and the great terror of the Day of Judgment came. For that evening is the end of the world, and that furnace that came the Day of Judgment. The furnace also divided between the midst of those things that were divided. If the furnace passed between the midst of them, it separated some to the right, others to the left. There are therefore some that are carnal, and yet are held in the bosom of the Church, living after a certain manner of their own, for whom we fear lest they be seduced by heretics. For as long as they are carnal, they are liable to division. The birds, that is, he divided not: the carnal are divided. *I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but* 1 Cor. 3, 1. *as unto carnal.* And how is it proved that carnal ones come to be divided? He addeth, *for when each one of you* ib. 4. *saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* I ask you, brethren, listen, and improve; shake yourselves out of the carnal place, go to the turtle dove and the pigeon; for *the birds he divided not.* But whosoever shall have remained such, and after a certain manner of life suited to the carnal, and not departed from the bosom of the Church, and not been led away by heretics, so as to be divided on the contrary part, the furnace shall come, and he will not be able to be put on the right side without the furnace. But if he would not suffer the furnace, let him go to the turtle dove and the pigeon. *He that can receive it, let him receive it.* But if Mat. 19, 12. it shall not be so, and *he shall have built on the foundation* 12. *wood, hay, stubble,* that is, hath built worldly attachments on the foundation of his faith; yet if Christ be in the foundation, so that He have the first place in the heart, and nothing absolutely is preferred to Him; even such are borne, even such are tolerated. The furnace shall come, it shall burn the wood, the hay, the stubble: *But himself, he saith, shall* ib. 15. *be saved, yet so as by fire.* This shall the furnace do, some it shall sever to the left, others it shall in a manner melt out to the right. *But the birds he divided not.* But let the birds see whether they are such birds as dwell upon those mountains: they must not follow the height of their own

PSALM heart, like those of which it is said, *They have set their*  
 CIV. *mouth unto heaven.* Lest they be taken up by the winds,  
 III. let them rest on the mountains. They have the authority of  
 Ps. 73, the Saints, let them rest on the mountains, on the Apostles,  
 8. on the Prophets: there let such birds dwell, because in the  
 mountains they find rocks, certain firm places of command-  
 ments. For as that One Rock is Christ, the Word of God, so  
 are many words of God, many rocks, and those rocks in the  
 mountains. Behold, the birds there dwelling: upon them  
 the fowls of heaven shall have their habitation.

6. But think not that those *fowls of heaven* follow their  
 own authority; see what the Psalm saith: *From the midst*  
*of the rocks they shall give their voice.* Now, if I shall say  
 to you, Believe, for this said Cicero, this said Plato, this  
 said Pythagoras: which of you will not laugh at me? For  
 I shall be a bird that shall send forth my voice not from the  
 rock. What ought each one of you to say to me? what  
 Gal 1,9. ought he who is thus instructed to say? *If any one shall*  
*have preached unto you a gospel other than that ye have*  
*received, let him be anathema.* What dost thou tell me of  
 Plato, and of Cicero, and of Virgil? Thou hast before thee  
 the rocks of the mountains, from the midst of the rocks give  
 me thy voice. *From the midst of the rocks they shall give*  
*their voice.* Let them be heard, who hear from the rock:  
 let them be heard, because also in those many rocks the One  
 1 Cor. Rock is heard: for *the Rock was Christ.* Let them therefore  
 10, 4. be willingly heard, giving their voice from the midst of the  
 rocks. Nothing is sweeter than such a voice of birds.  
 They sound, and the rocks resound: they sound; spiritual  
 men discuss: the rocks resound, testimonies of Scripture  
 give answer. Lo! thence the fowls give their voice from  
 the midst of the rocks, for they dwell on the mountains.

7. The mountains themselves, and those rocks, whence  
 have they a voice? For that we may be watered with the  
 Scriptures, we fly to the Apostle Paul. Whence hath he  
 them? We fly to Isaiah. Isaiah whence? Hear whence.  
 (Ver. 13.) *Watering the mountains from the higher places.*  
 Now if a Gentile uncircumcised man comes to us, about to  
 believe in Christ, we give him baptism, and do not call him  
 back to those works of the Law. And if a Jew asks us why

we do that, we sound from the rock, we say, This Peter did, <sup>1</sup> VER.  
 this Paul did: from the midst of the rocks we give our voice. 13.  
 But that rock, Peter himself, that great mountain, when he  
 prayed and saw that vision, was watered from above. Paul  
 the Apostle saith to the Gentiles, *If ye be circumcised,* Gal. 5, 2.  
*Christ shall profit you nothing.* Paul saith this as a  
 mountain: thence we say it, sounding from the rock. Let  
 the Lord water the rock itself from His higher places. For  
 when that rock was yet rough in unbelief, willing to bedew  
 it from His higher places, that water might flow in the  
 valley, He cried, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* He Acts 9, 4.  
 did not read to him a Prophet, He did not read to him  
 another Apostle; for the great mountain would despise all  
 those things: He watered him from his higher places; and  
 immediately, when watered, and willing to flow, *Lord,* he ib. 6.  
 said, *what biddest Thou me to do?* Take that mountain or  
 rock, whence thou mayest be able to give thy voice; take  
 him, and see him watered from above, and flowing out  
 below. Hear this also in one place. *Whether,* he saith, *we* 1 Cor.  
*be out of our minds unto God, or whether we be sober unto* 5, 13.  
*you.* What he saith, *we be out of our minds,* ye cannot  
 understand. For we have gone out of all those carnal  
 things, ye are yet carnal. To God, therefore, we have gone  
 out of our minds, and what we see when we are out of our  
 minds, we cannot utter. For there he heard unutterable 2 Cor.  
 words, which it is not permitted a man to speak. What 12, 4.  
 then, say those carnal ones, those hares, are we not to be  
 watered? shall nothing come to us? And how doth He  
 send out springs in the little vallies? and how in the midst  
 between the mountains shall the waters pass? To this  
 therefore belongs, *whether we be sober unto you.* Whence 2 Cor.  
 is this? Whom do we imitate? 'The love of Christ, he saith, 5, 14.  
 compelleth us. Thou a partaker of the word, although to-  
 day spiritual, yesterday carnal, disdainest thou to descend  
 to the carnal, when *the Word Itself was made flesh, to dwell* John 1,  
*among us.* 14.

8. Let us therefore bless the Lord, and praise Him Who  
 watereth the mountains from the higher places. Thence  
 shall come watering for the earth, thence also the low places  
 shall be satisfied. For He proceedeth,

PSALM CIV. III. *From the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied.*  
 I Cor. 1, 31. What is, *From the fruit of Thy works?* Let no man glory in his own works: but *he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* With Thy grace he is satisfied, when he is satisfied: let him not say that grace was given for his own merits. If Rom. 4, 4, 5. it is called grace, *it is gratuitously given*; if it is returned for works, wages are paid. Freely therefore receive, because ungodly thou art justified. *From the fruit of Thy works the earth shall be satisfied.*

9. Ver. 14. *Bringing forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men.* This is true, I perceive; I recognise the creation: the earth doth bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. But I perceive other cattle of the Lord also, which are signified by the words, *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn*: for one of these very cattle saith, *Doth God take care for oxen? For our sakes therefore the Scripture saith it.* How then doth the earth bring forth grass for the cattle? Because *the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* He I Cor. 9, 9. sent preachers, saying unto them, *Eat such things as are set before you of them: for the labourer is worthy of his hire.* For when He had said, *Eat such things as are set before you*; that they might not say, Shall we be importunate beggars at other men's tables when we are in want, wilt Thou have us so shameless? No, He replieth, it is not their gift, but your wages. Wages for what? What do they give, and what do they receive? They give spiritual, they receive I Cor. 9, 11. carnal things; they give gold, they receive grass. For, *All flesh is grass; and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.* All the temporal things whereof thou hast abundance and superfluity are the grass of the cattle. Why? Because they are carnal? Hear unto what cattle the grass doth belong. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?* This the Apostle said, a preacher so laborious, so indefatigable, so well tried, that he giveth this very grass to the earth. *Nevertheless, he saith, we have not used this power.* He sheweth that it is due to him, yet he received it not; nor hath he condemned those who have received what was

due. For those were to be condemned who exact what is not due, not they who accept their recompense: yet he gave up even his own recompense. Thou dost not cease to owe to another, because one hath given up his dues, otherwise thou wilt not be the watered earth which bringeth forth grass for the cattle. *The earth, he saith, shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works, bringing forth grass for the cattle.* Be not thou barren, bring forth grass for the cattle: if the cattle decline thy grass, nevertheless let them not find thee barren. Thou receivest spiritual things, give carnal things in return: to the soldier they are due, to the soldier thou returnest them; thou art the paymaster<sup>e</sup> of Christ. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? I speak not thus, that it should be so done unto me.* There has been such a soldier as gave up his rations of food even to the paymaster: yet let the paymaster pay the rations. But to use the figure of this Psalm, I will call them cattle: *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn. Bringing forth, he saith, grass for the cattle; and as if in exposition of this he addeth, and green herb for the service of men: lest thou shouldest not understand the words, it bringeth forth grass for the cattle, he hath by the repetition explained what he placed first. For the word green herb answereth to grass: and for the cattle findeth its equivalent in for the service of men. For the service then, and not for freedom. What meaneth then, ye have been called unto liberty? But hear the very same Apostle; for though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To whom said he, Ye have been called unto liberty? and what hath he added? Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. Those whom he had called free, he maketh servants; not by their condition, but by Christ's redemption; not by necessity, but by love; By love, he saith, serve one another. But, he saith, we serve Christ mutually: not the people, not the carnal, not the weak. Thou servest Christ well, if thou servest those*

VFR.  
14.

1 Cor.  
9, 7. &c.

Ib. 15.

Deut.  
25, 4.

Gal. 5,  
13.

1 Cor. 9,  
7-19.

Gal. 5,  
13.

\* *Provincialis.* See note on Exposition of Psalm XCI. Exposition I. n. 10.

PSALM CIV. whom Christ hath served. Was it not said of Him, *well*  
 III. *servings many?* It is a Prophet we read: it is usually  
 Is. 53, understood of none save Christ. Nevertheless, let us hear  
 11. LXX. His actual words in the Gospel: *Whosoever*, He saith,  
 Mat. 20, 26. *will be chief among you, let him be your servant.* He  
 hath made thee my servant, who made thee free with His  
 own blood. Say this to us, for ye say the truth. Hear  
 2 Cor. 4, 5. Him in another passage: *but ourselves your servants for*  
*Jesus' sake.* Love well your servants, but in your Lord.  
 May He enable us to serve well! For whether we will or  
 no, we are servants: and, nevertheless, if we are willing, we  
 serve not by compulsion, but from love. The servant's  
 pride seemed in some measure offended, when our Lord  
 Mat. 20, 26. said, *Whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your*  
*minister.* For the sons of Zebedee were already seeking  
 the highest seats; one wished to sit on the right hand, the  
 other on the left, expressing through their mother their own  
 desires. The Lord did not grudge them those seats, but  
 first He shewed the valley of lamentation, as much as if  
 He said, Ye wish to reach unto where I am? Come by  
 the same path as I. What is, Come by the same path as I?  
 By humility. I descended from on high, and having been  
 humbled, I ascend: I found you on earth, and ye wish to  
 fly before ye be fed; first be reared, brought up, bear to be  
 in the nest. For what said He? How did He recal those  
 Mat. 20, 22. to humility, who were already seeking exaltation? *Are ye*  
*able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?* They, proud  
 Mat. 26, 35. 69. even in this, reply, *We are able.* Just as Peter said, *I will*  
*go with Thee, even unto death.* Valiant man he was, until a  
 woman said, *This man also was with them.* Thus they also:  
*We are able.* Are ye able? *We are able?* And He then  
 Mat. 23, 23. said, *Ye shall drink indeed of My cup,* although ye cannot  
 John 13, 36. now, *ye shall drink indeed;* as He said unto Peter, *Thou*  
*canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me after-*  
*wards. Ye shall indeed drink of My cup; but to sit on*  
*My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give.* What  
 meaneth, *Is not Mine to give?* It is not Mine to give to the  
 proud. At present ye to whom I speak are proud; on this  
 Mat. 20, 20—27. account I said, *It is not Mine to give.* But perhaps they  
 might say, We will be humble. In that case ye will not be

yourselves: I said, *to you*. I said not, I will not give to the humble, but I will not give to the proud. But he who from <sup>V. RR.</sup> 14. having been proud hath become humble, is not the man he was.

10. The preachers of the word then are both cattle and servants. Let the earth, if it hath been watered, bring forth *grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men*. For this is the fruit, that what was said in the Gospel may happen, *That they may receive you into everlasting ha-* <sup>Luke</sup> 16, 9. *bitations*. Beware what thou dost with the grass, beware what thou buyest for this poor stuff. *That they may receive you*, He saith, *into everlasting habitations*: where they will be themselves, there they will receive you. Wherefore this? Because, *he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a* <sup>Mat. 10,</sup> 41. 42. *righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; and he that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.* What reward shall he not lose? "They shall receive you into everlasting habitations." Who would not hasten? who would not run more eagerly? If ye are earth, be watered with the fruit of God's works: say not, There are none with whom we may deal thus; our preachers, the cattle who tread out the corn, the men who serve, have no need of us. Make enquiry nevertheless, whether there be no man that wanteth: lastly, let him who wanteth not, find in thee what he may not wish to receive. For he receiveth good will, while thou receivest peace; for though he desireth not a gift, yet he requireth a return of <sup>Philip.</sup> 4, 17. fruit. Enquire, however, lest there be any that may want: and say not, if he ask, I will give. Dost thou then wait for him to ask? Dost thou feed God's cattle, as a passing beggar? Thou givest him when he asketh, because it is written, *Give to every man that asketh of thee*. What is <sup>Luke 6,</sup> 30. written of this man? *Blessed is the man that considereth* <sup>Ps. 41,</sup> 1. *the poor and needy*. Seek for some one unto whom to give: *for, blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy, who doth anticipate the words of him who is about to beg.* If the soldiers of Christ are so poor among you, that they

even beg: beware lest they judge you, before they beg. PSALM CIV. 111. How, thou sayest, am I to enquire? Be inquisitive, provident; look before thyself, mark whence each man liveth, whence his subsistence, whence his means; this inquisitiveness of thine will not be blamed; thou wilt be earth that *bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men*. Be inquisitive, and consider the poor and needy. One man cometh to thee to beg; anticipate another, that he may not beg. For as it is said respecting him who Luke 6, 30. seeketh thee, *Give to every man that asketh of thee*; so is it said of him whom thou shouldest search for: *let alms toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man* to give them to. For since thou must give to these poor also when they beg; for God hath not withheld alms from them, since Luke 14, 13, 14. Christ saith of them, *When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the lame, the maimed, the blind; who have no means to recompense thee; and thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just*: invite these even, feed these even; feast, when they feast; be delighted when they are being satisfied; they with thy bread, thou with the righteousness of God. Let no man tell you: Christ commanded that it be given to the servant of God, not given to the beggar. God forbid; such are the words of a very wicked man. Give to the one, but much more to the other. For the one doth beg, and at the sound of his begging thou dost recognise one unto whom thou mayest give: but the less the other doth beg, the more must thou watch to anticipate his begging: or perhaps he will not beg now, and at a future time will condemn thee. Be therefore, my brethren, inquisitive respecting these things; ye will find want in many servants of God, only if ye have the will to find. But ye find not, because ye are pleased with the excuse, in which ye like to say, we knew not of any.

11. Our Lord Himself had money bags, in which what was needful was put, and money was possessed for the uses of those who were with Him and His: for the Evangelist Matt. 4, 2, and 21, 10. when he said, *He was an hungred*, spake no untruth. He chose to be hungry on thy account, that thou mightest not be hungry in Him, Who became poor, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be enriched. He had 2 Cor. 8, 9.

*Our Lord's purpose in accepting helps, and shewing pain.* 113

money-bags; and it is said of certain religious women, that they walked on the track of His evangelizing feet, and ministered unto Him of their own substance. These women are mentioned by name in the Gospel; among them was also one the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. Consider what was the reason of this. Paul was to come after, who never sought any such aid, and who granted all to the paymasters'. But since many weak ones were doomed to seek this relief, Christ preferred to represent the weak. Paul was very exalted in his conduct; was he more so than Christ? Christ was the more exalted, for His act was more merciful. For since He saw that Paul would not seek this aid, He provided that he who should seek it should not be condemned, and gave an example to the weak; just as, when He saw many would eagerly and joyfully go to the Martyrdom of suffering, would exult in the suffering itself, brave ones, men of a hundred-fold fruit ripe for the barn; yet He chose to represent those weak ones in His Passion, who He saw might be disturbed by their destined Martyrdom, that they might not faint, but rather join their human will to the will of the Creator; saying, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death*; and again, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me!* He hath taught us what the weak one would say, but in the following verse He hath shewn what the weak man should do: *nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt, Father.* As therefore in His Passion He sustained the person of the weak, which was prefigured in His body, since these too are His limbs; for it was not said without meaning, *Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect: and in Thy book shall they all be written*: thus in keeping money-bags, and exacting in a certain manner provision, not to be sought<sup>2</sup>, but rather paid as due, He took on Him indigence. Zacchæus received Him, and with joyfulness. To whom was this a blessing? To Christ, or to Zacchæus? Verily, if Zacchæus received Him not, would there be no place where the Creator of the world might remain? or if Zacchæus fed Him not, would He be in want, who filled so many thousands of men with five loaves? When therefore any man receiveth a saint, it is not bestowed upon the person who is received, but upon

V. 14.

Luke 8, 3.

provincialibus.

Mat. 26, 38. 39.

Ps. 139, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Oxf. Mass. not by seeking, but rather by bestowing, Luke 19, 6.

**PSALM CIV. III.** him who receiveth. Was not Elias fed in that famine? did not the raven bring bread and meat, the creature serving the servant of God? Yet he was sent to the widow to be fed; not that aught might be bestowed upon the soldier, but upon the paymaster.

12. Since then, brethren, we were speaking of feeding the poor; although our Lord had money-bags, yet when **John 13, 27-29.** He said to Judas who was about to betray Him, *What thou dost, do quickly*; the rest, who did not understand what He had said, imagined that He had ordered him to prepare somewhat to be given to the poor. For he had the money-bags; this is written in the Gospel. Could they have supposed thus, had it not been usual with our Lord? But of what then was given, and put into the bags, charity was bestowed on those poor, who God taught were not to be despised. But if thou despisest not the poor man, how much less wilt thou despise the ox by whom this floor is threshed? how much less wilt thou despise thine own servant? He is not in want of meat; perhaps he is of clothes. He wanteth not clothes, perhaps he wanteth a roof, perhaps he is building a church, perhaps he is designing somewhat useful in the house of God; he expecteth that thou wilt heed, and consider the poor and needy. Thou, on the contrary, hard, stony earth, unwatered, or watered in vain, dost reserve this excuse to thyself. I was not aware of it, I knew it not: no man told me. No man told thee! Christ ceaseth not to tell thee: the Prophet ceaseth not to tell thee: *Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy*. Thou seest not the empty chest of thy spiritual master: yet thou surely seest the rising fabric, into which thou art to enter and to pray. Is not this brought before thine eyes<sup>m</sup>? Unless, perhaps, ye imagine that your pastors are laying up treasures: yet we have known many who lay not up treasure, in want of daily necessities, of whom no one believes this; whom ye also might find, if ye were zealous, if ye would look round, if ye would watch for occasion of yielding fruit. I have said what I could, in what measure I could. But I suppose ye are well aware, that, as the Apostle saith, we

<sup>m</sup> Ed. Ben. refers to the Exposition possibly allude to the present words. of Psalm lxxxii. §. 4. which may

are not speaking thus, that ye may deal thus towards us. **VER.**  
**May God grant that I may not have spoken this in vain!** 15.  
**May God grant that ye may be a watered soil, not a stony**  
**one, like that of the Jews, whence they deserved to receive**  
**tables of stone; but a fruitful soil, a soil which when**  
**watered, may yield return to the farmer! Even they**  
**with that stony heart, an emblem of which were their**  
**tablets of stone, gave a tenth. Ye even groan, and yet there**  
**is no issue. If ye groan, travail: if ye travail, bring forth.**  
**Why are your groans in vain? why are they barren? Your**  
**bowels are wrung: is there nothing within to come forth?**  
***He watereth the hills from His higher places: the earth***  
***shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works.* Blessed are they**  
**who do so; blessed are they who hear these words and bear**  
**fruit; blessed are they who cry not out in vain. *The earth***  
***shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works: it bringeth forth***  
***grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men.***  
**Why so? *That it may bring forth bread out of the earth.***  
**What bread? Christ. Out of what earth? From Peter, from**  
**Paul, from the other stewards of the truth. Hear that it is**  
**from the earth: *We have*, saith St. Paul, *this treasure in* <sup>2</sup>**Cor. 4,**  
***earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of***  
***God, and not of us.* He is the bread Who descended from**  
**heaven, that He might be brought forth out of the earth,**  
**when He is preached through the flesh of His servants.**  
**The earth bringeth forth grass, that it may bring forth bread <sup>John 6,</sup>**  
**from the earth. What earth bringeth forth grass? Pious, <sup>41.</sup>**  
**holy nations. That bread may be brought forth out of what**  
**earth? The word of God out of the Apostles, out of the**  
**stewards of God's Sacraments, who still walk upon the earth,**  
**who still carry an earthly body.****

13. Ver. 15. *And wine maketh glad the heart of man.*  
Let no man prepare himself for intoxication; nay, let every  
man prepare him for intoxication. *How excellent is Thy* <sup>Ps. 23, 5.</sup>  
*cup which maketh drunk!* We choose not to say, Let no  
man be drunk. Be intoxicated; yet beware, from what source.  
If the excellent cup of the Lord doth intoxicate you, your  
intoxication shall be seen in your works, it shall be seen in  
the holy love of righteousness, it shall, lastly, be seen in  
the estrangement of your mind, but from things earthly to

PSALM heavenly. *To make him a cheerful countenance with oil.*  
 CIV. I see what land it is, and how much fruit it beareth, if it bear  
 III. grass for the cattle. Those servants sell not what they  
 give; for they are not sellers of the Gospel; freely they  
 give, since freely they have received. They rejoice in your  
 Phil. 4, good works; for this is profitable for you; for they seek not  
 17. a gift, but desire *fruit*. What is the making the countenance  
 cheerful with oil? The grace of God; a sort of shining for  
 1 Cor. manifestation; as the Apostle saith, *The Spirit is given*  
 12, 7. *to every man for manifestation*. A certain grace which  
 men can clearly see in men, to conciliate holy love, is  
 termed oil, for its divine splendour; and since it appeared  
 most excellent in Christ, the whole world loveth Him;  
 Who though while here He was scorned, is now worshipped  
 Ps. 22, by every nation: *For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He*  
 28. *shall be Governor among the people*. For such is His  
 grace, that many, who do not believe on Him, praise Him,  
 and declare that they are unwilling to believe on Him, be-  
 cause no man can fulfil what He doth command. They who  
 with reproaches once raged against Him, are hindered by His  
 very praises. Yet by all is He loved, by all is He preached;  
 because He is excellently anointed, therefore He is Christ:  
 for He is called Christ from the Chrism or anointing which  
 He had. Messiah in the Hebrew, Christ in the Greek,  
 Unctus in the Latin: but He anointeth over His whole  
 Body. All therefore who come, receive grace, that their  
 countenances may be made glad with oil.

14. *And bread strengtheneth man's heart.* What is this,  
 brethren? As it were, he hath forced us to understand what  
 bread he was speaking of. For while that visible bread  
 strengtheneth the stomach, feedeth the belly, there is  
 another bread which strengtheneth the heart, in that it is the  
 bread of the heart. For he had said of the bread above, *to bring*  
*forth bread out of the earth*, but he had not said what sort of  
 bread that was. *And wine maketh glad the heart of man.*  
 Seemingly he here speaketh of spiritual wine; for that  
 maketh glad the heart of man. But let it as yet be thought  
 to mean this wine, because the drunken seem as it were to  
 appear glad in heart. Would that they would rejoice, and  
 not quarrel! Thou sayest to me, What is more joyful than

an intoxicated man? yea, what is more insane than a drunken man? what usually is more irritable? There is therefore a wine that truly maketh glad the heart, and knoweth not to do aught else than to gladden the heart. But that thou mayest not imagine that this indeed should be taken of the spiritual wine, but not of that spiritual bread; He hath shewn this very point, that it is also spiritual: *and bread*, he saith, *strengtheneth man's heart*. So understand it therefore of the bread as thou dost understand it of the wine; hunger inwardly, thirst inwardly: *Blessed are they*, saith our Lord, *who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled*. That bread is righteousness, that wine is righteousness: it is truth, Christ is truth. *I am*, He said, *the living bread, Who came down from heaven*; and, *I am the Vine, and ye are the branches*. *And bread strengtheneth man's heart*.

VER.  
16. 17.

Matt. 5,  
6.

John  
14, 6.  
ib. 6, 11.  
ib. 15, 5.

15. Ver. 16. *The trees of the plain shall be satisfied*: but with this grace, brought forth out of the earth. *The trees of the plain*, are the lower orders of the nations. *And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted*. The cedars of Libanus, the powerful in the world, shall themselves be filled. The bread, and wine, and oil of Christ hath reached senators, nobles, kings; the trees of the plain are filled. First the humble are filled; next also the cedars of Libanus, yet those which He hath planted; pious cedars, religious faithful; for such hath He planted. For the ungodly also are cedars of Libanus; for, *The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus*. For Libanus is a mountain: there are those trees, even according to the letter most long-lived and most excellent. But Libanus is interpreted, as we read in those who have written of these things, a brightness; and this brightness seemeth to belong to this world, which at present shineth and is refulgent with its pomps. There are the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted; those which the Lord hath planted shall be filled. For, saith our Lord, *Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*.

Ps. 29, 5.

Mat. 15,  
13.

*And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted*.

16. Ver. 17. *There shall the sparrows build their nests: their leader is the house of the coot*. Where shall the sparrows build? In the cedars of Libanus. We have

**PSALM CIV. III.** already heard what the cedars of Libanus are, nobles of the world, exalted in race, in power, in honours: and the cedars themselves are filled, those which He Himself hath planted. In these cedars the sparrows build their nests. Who are the sparrows? Sparrows are birds indeed, and fowls of the air, but small fowls are wont to be called sparrows. There are therefore some spiritual ones that build in the cedars of Libanus: that is, there are certain

**Mat. 19, 21.** servants of God who hear in the Gospel, *Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me.* And not only have the great heard this, but the humble have also heard, and the humble have chosen to do this also, and to be spiritual; not to be connected with wives, and tormented with the care of sons; not to have habitations of their own to bind them down, but to betake themselves to a sort of common life. But what have these sparrows resigned? For the little ones of this world are like sparrows. What have they resigned? what great thing have they resigned? One man hath turned himself, hath left the poor hut of his father, hardly one bed and one chest, yet he hath turned himself, he hath become a sparrow, he hath sought spiritual things. Well, very well; let us not mock him, let us not say, thou hast resigned nothing. Let him who hath resigned many things, not be proud. We know that Peter was a fisherman: what then could he give up, to follow our Lord? Or his brother Andrew, or John and James the sons of Zebedee, themselves also fishermen; and yet what

**Mat. 4, 18, 21.** did they say? *Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee.* Our Lord said not to him, Thou hast forgotten thy

**Mat. 19, 27.** poverty; what hast thou resigned, that thou shouldst receive the whole world? He, my brethren, who resigned not only what he had, but also what he longed to have, resigned much. For what poor man doth not swell with hope of this life? Who doth not daily desire to increase what he hath? That desire was cut off: it was exceeding all bounds, it received a limit, and yet was nothing resigned? Peter did indeed resign the whole world: and Peter did indeed receive the whole world. They were like men who had nothing, and yet possessed all things. Many do this:

**2 Cor. 6, 10.**

men who have little act thus, and come and become useful sparrows. They seem small: because they have not the loftiness of secular dignity: they build their nests in the cedars of Libanus. For the cedars of Libanus also, the noble, and rich, and exalted of this world, since they hear with awe the words, *Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy*; take thought on their own possessions, their villas, and all their superfluous wealth, by which they seem exalted, and they give them to the servants of God; they give lands, they give gardens, they build churches, monasteries, collect sparrows, that the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus. Therefore *the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted are filled, and therein shall the sparrows build their nests*. Observe the whole earth, and see whether it be not thus. That I might speak these things, I have not only believed, but I have also seen; I have learned by my experience to understand. Ye who know, ask over the broadest lands, and see in how many cedars of Libanus those sparrows, of whom I have spoken, build.

VER.  
17.

17. But nevertheless, my brethren, if these sparrows are spiritual, although they may build their nests in the cedars of Libanus, they ought not to esteem at too high a rate the cedars of Libanus, and to think those above them by whom their necessaries are supplied. For they are sparrows; but those are cedars of Libanus. Therefore *the coot's house is the leader of the sparrows*. Although the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus, yet the cedars of Libanus are not the chiefs of the sparrows. Behold the trees of the plain, all nations shall be filled; and the cedars of Libanus, planted by the Lord, all the noble and exalted ones who are faithful, shall be filled. *There*, that is, in the cedars of Libanus, *shall the sparrows build*. They shall devote the branches of their wealth to gathering together the little spiritual ones. They bestow these things, the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted do these things; they do so, and they do so willingly; they know what they are doing, and they know what they receive. But although the sparrows will build in the cedars of Libanus, *the house of the coot is their leader*. What is the house of the coot? The coot, as we all know,

PSALM  
CIV.  
III.

is a water bird, dwelling either among the marshes, or on the sea. It hath rarely or never a home on the shore; but in places in the midst of the waters, and thus usually in rocky islets, surrounded by the waves. We therefore understand that the rock is the fit home of the coot, it never dwelleth more securely than on the rock. On what sort of rock? One placed in the sea. And if it is beaten by the waves, yet it breaketh the waves, is not broken by them: this is the excellency of the rock in the sea. How great waves beat on our Lord Jesus Christ? The Jews dashed against Him; they were broken, He remained whole. And let every one who doth imitate Christ, so dwell in this world, that is, in this sea, where he cannot but feel storms and tempests, that he may yield to no wind, to no wave, but remain whole, while he meets them all. The home of the coot, therefore, is both strong and weak. The coot hath not a home on lofty spots; nothing is more firm and nothing more humble than that home. Sparrows build indeed in cedars, on account of actual need: but they hold that rock as their leader, which is beaten by the waves, and yet not broken; for they imitate the sufferings of Christ. And if perchance the cedars of Libanus shall be angry, and have caused any trouble or scandal to God's servants in their boughs, the sparrows indeed will fly from thence; but woe to the cedar that abideth without the nests of the sparrows. For the sparrows shall not suffer shipwreck, they shall not perish; because *the house of the coot is their leader.*

18. Ver. 18. What then followeth? *The loftiest hills are for the stags.* The stags are mighty, spiritual, passing in their course over all the thorny places of the thickets and woods. *He maketh my feet like harts' feet, and setteth me up on high.* Let them hold to the lofty hills, the lofty commandments of God; let them think on sublime subjects, let them hold those which stand forth most in the Scriptures, let them be justified in the highest: for those loftiest hills are for the stags. What of the humble beasts? what of the hare? what of the hedgehog? The hare is a small and weak animal: the hedgehog is also prickly: the one is a timid animal, the other is covered with prickles. What do the prickles signify, except sinners? He who sinneth daily,

although not great sins, is covered over with the smallest prickles. In his timidity he is a hare: in his being covered with the minutest sins, he is a hedgehog: and he cannot hold those lofty and perfect commandments. For *the loftiest hills are for the stags*. What then? do these perish; No. For as *the highest hills are for the stags, so is the rock the refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares*. For the Lord is a refuge for the poor. Place that rock upon the land, it is a refuge for hedgehogs, and for hares: place it on the sea, it is the home of the coot. Every where the rock is useful. Even in the hills it is useful: for the hills without the rock's foundation would fall into the deep. Was it not above said of the hills, *There shall the fowls of Heaven have their habitation; from the midst of the rocks shall they give forth their voices?* Every where therefore the rock is our refuge: whether it be raised aloft on the hills, or whether it be beaten with the waves upon the sea, it is not broken, or whether it be fixed firm upon the ground; to it the stags, to it the coot, to it the hare and the hedgehog fly. Let the hares beat their breasts, and let the hedgehogs confess their sins; although they be covered over with certain minute and daily sins, yet the Rock, which taught them to say, *Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us*, is not wanting to them. *The rock is the refuge for hedgehogs and hares.*

VER.  
19.

Ps. 9, 9.

Matt. 6,  
19.

29. Ver. 19. *He appointed the Moon for certain seasons.* We understand spiritually the Church increasing from the smallest size, and growing old as it were from the mortality of this life; yet so, that it draweth nearer unto the Sun. I speak not of this moon visible to the eye, but of that which is signified by this name. While the Church was in the dark, while she as yet appeared not, shone not forth as yet, men were led astray, and it was said, This is the Church, here is Christ; so that *while the Moon was dark, they shot their arrows at the righteous in heart*. How blind is he who now, when the Moon is full, wandereth astray? *He appointed the Moon for certain seasons.* For here the Church temporarily is passing away: for this subjection to death will not remain for ever: there will some time be an end of waxing and waning; it is appointed for certain seasons. *And the sun knoweth his going down.* And what sun is this, but

Ps. 11, 2.

PSALM that Sun of righteousness, whom the ungodly will lament on  
 CIV. the day of judgment never having risen for them ; they who  
 III. will say on that day, *Therefore we wandered from the way  
 Wisd. 5, 6. of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not on us, and  
 the sun did not arise upon us.* That sun riseth for him, who  
 understandeth Christ. But Christ doth recede from the  
 comprehension of him, who shall have been so angry with  
 Pa. 4, 5. his brother, as to retain his ill will. *Be angry, therefore, and  
 sin not.* Although charity is sometimes angry that she may  
 chasten, she is not held guilty ; since anger hath not grown  
 so old, as to be changed into hatred. But if anger hath  
 been changed into hatred, the sun hath gone down upon  
 Eph. 4, your anger. *Let not the sun, therefore, go down upon your  
 26. wrath.*

20. Nor think, brethren, that the sun ought to be  
 worshipped by some men, because the sun doth sometimes  
 in the Scriptures signify Christ. For such is the madness  
 of men ; as if we said that a creature should be worshipped,  
 when it is said, the sun is an emblem of Christ. Then  
 1 Cor. 10, 4. worship the rock also, for it also is a type of Christ. *He  
 was brought as a lamb to the slaughter :* worship the lamb  
 Is. 53, also, since it is a type of Christ. *The Lion of the tribe  
 7. of Judah hath prevailed ;* worship the lion also, since it  
 Rev. 5, 5. signifieth Christ. Observe how numerous are the types of  
 Christ: all these are Christ in similitude, not in essence.  
 John 1, Dost thou seek the essence of Christ ? *In the beginning was  
 1. the Word, and the Word was with God.* Behold the essence of  
 Christ, by which thou wast made. Wouldest thou have also  
 that essence of His through which thou wast new made ?  
 John 1, *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* The  
 14. rest are similitudes. Understand, know how to hold  
 Scripture, so that thou mayest see one thing put before  
 thine eyes, another hinted to thy heart.

21. That Sun, therefore, we now say it without apprehension,  
 that Sun of Righteousness, doth not without cause refuse  
 to rise to the ungodly, even though they wish: for Wisdom  
 herself saith, *The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not  
 Prov. 1, 28. 29. find me; they shall seek, and shall not find.* And wherefore?  
 For they hate wisdom. Wisdom herself speaketh, and saith,  
*The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not find me ; for*

*that they hated wisdom.* If they hate it, then, why do they seek it? They seek it, not that they may use it, but that they may be puffed up; they seek it in their discourses, but they hate it in their conduct: for the Holy Spirit of discipline will free from the hypocrite, and will withdraw Itself from the thoughts that are without understanding. That sun then riseth not for the ungodly, riseth not for the wicked. But what is said of the (visible) sun? *He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* Concerning therefore the Sun of righteousness doth this Psalm signify somewhat mystically, for we see that these things happen in the creation even according to the appearance of things visible. *The sun knoweth his going down.* What meaneth this? Christ knew His Passion: the going down of Christ is the Passiou of Christ. But hath the Sun gone down, so that it will not rise again? *Shall not He who sleepeth rise also?* Hath He not said, *I slept undisturbed?* and is it not said of Him, *Set thyself up, O God, above the heavens?* Therefore, *the sun knoweth his going down:* what means, *Knoweth?* He hath approved, it hath pleased Him. And whence do we shew that He knew it, that is, that it pleased Him? For what doth not God know? what doth not Christ know? and yet He will say unto some in the end, *I know you not.* As there, 'I know you not,' means not, ye are unknown to Me, but, ye please Me not; so here also, *He knoweth His going down,* meaneth His going down pleaseth Him. For if not, how would He suffer? For although a man be not pleased with his suffering, yet, since he is not that Sun, he suffers what he wishes not. But He would not suffer, unless it pleased Him; that is, unless He knew His going down, He would not go down; forasmuch as He Himself saith: *I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.* Therefore, *He knoweth His going down.*

22. Ver. 20, 21. What then, when the sun went down, when our Lord suffered? There was a sort of darkness with the Apostles, hope failed, in those to whom He at first seemed great, and the Redeemer of all men. How so? *Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move. The lion's whelps roaring after their*

PSALM CIV. III. *prey, do seek their meat from God.* What shall I spiritually understand by lion's whelps, save spiritual powers of wickedness? What am I to understand, save the evil demons, which demons feed upon the errors of men? For there are princes of the evil spirits, and there are some evil spirits that are contemptible. These demons seek to seduce souls, but when the Sun hath not risen; for they are darkness. And while the darkness is, the lion's whelps seek whom they may devour. What is said of the greater lion himself, the prince of all such lions? *Know ye not that your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour?* Therefore, *seeking their meat from God*; since no man can even be tempted by the devil, unless by God's permission. Holy Job was before the devil, and yet he was far from him: in aspect before him, in power removed from him. When would he have dared even to assail his flesh, or the wealth which he possessed, had he not received power? But why is power given? Either to condemn the ungodly, or to prove the pious. The Lord doth all this justly; and the devil hath not power over any man, or over aught of his, unless by His permission, whose Power is chief and above all things. Thus neither the devil nor man hath any power over man, unless it be given from above. The Judge of the quick and the dead stood before a human judge, and that human judge prided himself when he saw Christ before him, saying, *Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and that I have power to release Thee?* To which He, Who had come to teach even His judge, replied, *Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.* Both man and the devil only injure when they have received power, and all devils also whatsoever; but they hurt not those who<sup>1</sup> live well. To the wicked they are as fire to the hay; to the good, as fire to gold. Judas was devoured as hay; Job was tried as gold. *Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move.* Here the beasts of the forest are used in different ways: for these things are always understood in varying senses; as our Lord Himself is at one time termed a lion, at another a lamb. What is so different as

Eph. 6, 12.

1 Pet. 5, 8.

John 19, 10, 11.

<sup>1</sup> profi-  
oienti-  
bus.

a lion and a lamb? But what sort of lamb? One that <sup>VER.</sup> could overcome the wolf, overcome the lion. He is the Rock, <sup>20, 21.</sup> He the Shepherd, He the Gate. The Shepherd entereth by the gate: and He saith, *I am the good Shepherd*: and, <sup>John 10,</sup> *I am the Door of the Sheep*. The term lion signifieth the <sup>7, 11.</sup> Lord: as, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed*; and <sup>Rev. 5,</sup> also the devil; *The young lion and the adder shalt Thou* <sup>5.</sup> *tread under Thy feet*. Learn thus to understand, when <sup>Ps. 91,</sup> these things are spoken figuratively; lest perchance when <sup>13.</sup> ye have read that the Rock signifieth Christ, ye may understand it to mean Him in every passage. In one place it meaneth one thing, another in another, just as we can only understand the meaning of a letter by seeing its position. <sup>1 Cor.</sup> If thou hast heard the first letter in the word Deus, and <sup>10, 4.</sup> thinkest it must always belong to it alone, thou wilt blot it out in the word Diabolus. For the word Deus beginneth with the same letter as the word Diabolus; and nothing is so far apart, as God from the devil. Consider how utterly ignorant of things both human and divine he must be, who shall say of the letter D, it ought not to be used in the beginning of the word devil; and when thou hast asked the reason, replieth, I read that letter in the name of God. Such a man is laughed at: for he is not worthy of an argument. Do not then so childishly interpret these divine things, as if any of you were to think, from my having said above that the beasts of the forest signify the Gentiles, while I now say that they signify devils and the angels of disobedience, that I am contradicting what I said before. For they are only figures, and wherever they occur, are explained by the context they have\*. *Wherein shall all the beasts of the forest move.* Where? In the night which the Lord hath made, for *the sun knoweth his going down.* *The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God.* Justly then our Lord, when nigh unto His going down, the very Sun of Righteousness recognising His going down, said to His disciples, as if darkness being about to come, the lion would roam about to seek whom he might devour, that that lion could devour no man, unless with leave: *Simon, said He, this night Satan* <sup>Luke 22,</sup>

\* Circumstantia sui exponuntur. <sup>31. 32.</sup>

**PSALM CIV. III.** *hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* When **Mat. 26. 70. 74.** Peter thrice denied, was he not already between the lion's teeth? *The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God.*

23. Ver. 22. *The Sun hath arisen.* He Who said, *I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; knew His going down, and laid down His life: the Sun arose, and He took it again. The Sun arose, because the Sun went down, but the Sun was not extinguished. Still unto those who understand not Christ it is night. Still to them the Sun hath not risen: let them press on, that they may understand, lest they fall a prey to the roaring lion. For behold, the lion's whelps dare not assail those unto whom He hath risen. For it goeth on; The Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens.* More and more as the Sun riseth, so that Christ is recognised by the round world, and glorified therein, do the lion's whelps get them away together; those devils recede from the persecution of the Church, who instigated men to persecute the house of God, by working in the sons of unbelief. For it is said, *according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* Now that none of them dareth persecute the Church, *the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together.* And where are they? *And they lay them down in their dens.* Their dens are the hearts of the unbelieving. How many carry lions crouching in their hearts? They burst not forth thence, they make no assault upon the pilgrim Jerusalem. Wherefore do they not so? Because the Sun is already risen, and is shining over the whole world.

**Ephes. 2, 2.**

24. Ver. 23. See therefore what followeth, *for the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens.* What art thou doing, O man of God? thou, O Church of God? what art thou, O body of Christ, whose Head is in Heaven? what art thou doing, O man, His unity? *Man, he saith, shall go forth to his work.* Let therefore this man work good works in the security of the peace of the Church, let him work unto the end. For

sometime there will be a sort of general darkening, and a sort of assault will be made, but in the evening, that is, in the end of the world: but now the Church doth work in peace and tranquillity; for *man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour, unto the evening.*

25. Ver. 24. *O Lord, how great are made Thy works!* Justly great, justly sublime! where were those works made, that are so great? what was that station where God stood, or that seat whereupon He sat, when He did those works? what was the place where He worked thus? whence did those so beautiful works proceed at the first? To take it word for word, every ordained creation, running by ordinance, beautiful by ordinance, rising by ordinance, setting by ordinance, going through all seasons by ordinance, whence hath it proceeded? whence hath the Church herself received her rise, her growth, her perfection? In what manner is she destined to a consummation in immortality? with what heralding is she preached? by what mysteries is she recommended? by what types is she concealed? by what preaching is she revealed? where hath God done these things? I see great works. *How great are made Thy works, O Lord!* I ask where He hath made them: I find not the place: but I see what followeth: *In Wisdom hast Thou made them all.* All therefore Thou hast made in Christ. He Who was despised, Who was buffeted, He Who was spit upon, He Who was crowned with thorns, He Who was crucified, all things Thou hast made in Him. I hear, I hear, what Thou dost announce to men by this Thy Soldier; what Thou dost preach unto the Gentiles by that holy Preacher, *Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* Let the Jews laugh at Christ crucified, because unto them He is a stumbling-block: let the heathen laugh at Christ crucified, for to them He is foolishness. *But we, he saith, preach Christ* <sup>1 Cor. 1,</sup> *crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the* <sup>23. 24.</sup> *Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. In wisdom Thou hast made them all.*

26. *The earth is full of Thy creation.* The earth is full of the creation of Christ. And how so? We discern how: for what was not made by the Father through the Son?

**PSALM CIV.** Whatever walketh and doth crawl on earth, whatever doth swim in the waters, whatever flieth in the air, whatever doth revolve in heaven, how much more then the earth, the whole universe, is the work of God. But he seems to me to speak here of some new creation, of which the Apostle saith, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new.* And *all things are of God.* All who believe in Christ, who put off the old man, and put on the new, are a new creature. *The earth is full of Thy works.* On one spot of the earth He was crucified, in one small spot that seed fell into the earth, and died; but brought forth great fruit. Alone Thou wast, Lord Jesus, until Thou hadst passed away: in another Psalm I recognise Thy voice, saying, *I am alone, until I pass away.* Alone then Thou wast, until Thou hadst passed away: alone, when Thou didst know Thy going down; but from Thy going down Thou didst pass to a rising. Thou didst arise, shinedst, wast glorified, when Thou didst ascend into heaven, and *the whole earth was filled with Thy creation.* We have not yet finished the Psalm, my brethren: but some of it let us defer in Christ's name unto the Lord's day.

### PSALM CIV.

#### *Discourse IV.*

Ye remember, beloved, that although there be one language of God spread abroad in all the Scriptures, and though one Word doth sound through many mouths of the saints, Which, since It is God with God in the beginning, hath not in that respect syllables, because It hath not times; and though we ought not to wonder, that on account of our infirmity It hath descended to the particles of our sounds, since It hath descended to assume the infirmity of our body: nevertheless, this Psalm hath already occasioned us many discourses, and the opening, unto those who knock, the mysteries which are herein concealed hath caused no slight delays for some days, while they were being declared, praised, shewn to be concealed, opened,

John 1,  
1. 14.

drawn forth, displayed; you remember, beloved, as I said, <sup>VER.</sup> that we could not on this account on the former day either 24, 25. arrive at the end of this Psalm, and that we put it off unto this day. The Lord hath willed both to shew us a day of payment of our promise, and that I the debtor should discharge my debt, and thus make my creditors more secure: may He, therefore, give us good to return, Who hath not returned unto us whatever evil we have done.

2. Ver. 24, 25. Our inmost hearts, as ye know, as ye remember with piety and joy, cried out with the Psalm, cried out and said, *O Lord, how great are made Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy creation.* Whatever hath been made by God, hath been made in Wisdom, and hath been made by Wisdom. Whatever knoweth Wisdom, and whatever knoweth not Wisdom, and yet is in the creation of God, is made in Wisdom, and is made by Wisdom. They who know wisdom, have Wisdom for their light; they who know It not, have yet Wisdom for their Creator, although they be themselves held down by folly: and they who have It for their light, have It also for their Creator; I do not say all who have Wisdom for their Creator, have It also for their light. And indeed there are many among men who are made sharers of it, and are called wise; many void of it, are called fools. They are therefore called fools, a term implying fault, because if they study wisdom, if they seek it, if they look for it, if they knock at the door, they may reach to the sharing of it: for it is not denied to their nature, but to their negligence. But there are other creatures, which cannot become partakers in wisdom; as all beasts, all cattle, all trees, which have not even any understanding. Because they cannot share in Wisdom, is that any reason that they were not made in Wisdom, and by Wisdom? God doth not then exact understanding in the horse and the mule; but unto men He saith, *Be not like to horse and mule,* Pr.32,9. *which have no understanding.* What is nature to the horse, is a reproach unto man. God then saith this: I do not exact a share of My wisdom from those whom I have not made in My image; but where I have made, there I exact, and demand the using of that thing which I have given.

130 *God claims His own Image. How He gives Wisdom.*

PSALM C1V.  
IV.  
Mat. 22, 21. Men, therefore, who render unto God the things that are God's, if unto Cæsar they render the things that are Cæsar's; that is, rendering unto Cæsar his image, unto God His Image, raise their mind, not unto themselves, but to their Creator, and to the light whence they are, and to that spiritual fervour whence they glow, removed from whence they grow cold, receding whence they are darkened, returning whither they are enlightened: and, as they said piously,  
Ps. 18, 28. *Thou, O Lord, shalt light my candle: Thou, my God, shalt make my darkness to be light.* Having flung aside the darkness of earthly folly, opening their mouth, and drawing in breath, they raise up, as I said, the faithful eye of the heart; and in their mind see the whole universe, the earth, the sea, and the heavens, and seeing all things beautifully disposed, travelling in a course ordained, distributed in species, maintained by seeds, changed in successions, running in seasons, the Creator doth so please them in this way, that they themselves become pleasing unto their Creator in His creation: and exclaim in their great joy, because truly nothing can be compared with this pleasure, *O Lord, how great and many are Thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all!* Where is that Wisdom in which Thou hast made all things? by what understanding is It reached? by what eye is It discerned? by what exertion is It sought? by what merit is It gained? How, do you imagine, but by His grace? He Who granted us to be, granteth us to be good. He granteth it to the converted: and did not He seek them before they were converted, and when turned aside from Him, they were going after ways of their own? did He not come down? did not The Word  
John 1, 14. become flesh, and dwell in us? did He not light the lamp of His flesh, while He was hanging on the Cross, and seek  
Luke 15, 8. the lost piece of silver? He sought, and found it: His neighbours rejoicing with Him, that is, every spiritual creature which doth approach nearly unto God. To the joy of the neighbours the piece of silver was found; to the joy of the angels the human soul was found. It was found, let it therefore rejoice, and say, *O Lord, how great are made Thy works: in Wisdom hast Thou made them all!*

3. *The earth is full of Thy creation.* Of what creation

of Thine is the earth full? Of all trees and shrubs, of all <sup>V ER.</sup> animals and flocks, and of the whole of the human race; 24, 25. the earth is full of the creation of God. We see, know, read, recognise, praise, and in these we preach of Him; yet we are not able to praise respecting these things, as fully as our heart doth abound with praise after the beautiful contemplation of them. But we ought rather to heed that creation, of which the Apostle saith, *If any man be in <sup>2 Cor. 5,</sup> Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; <sup>16, 17.</sup> behold, all things are become new.* What *old things have passed away?* In the Gentiles, all idolatry; in the Jews themselves, all that servitude unto the Law, all those sacrifices that were harbingers of the present Sacrifice. The oldness of man was then abundant; One came to renovate His own work, to melt His silver, to form His coin, and we now see the earth full of Christians believing in God, turning themselves away from their former uncleanness and idolatry, from a past hope to the hope of a new age: and behold it is not yet realised, but is already possessed in hope, and through that very hope we now sing, and say, *The earth is full of Thy creation.* We do not as yet sing this in our country, nor yet in that rest which is promised, the bars of the gates of Jerusalem not being as yet made fast; but still in our pilgrimage gazing upon the <sup>Ps. 147,</sup> whole of this world, upon men who on every side are <sup>13.</sup> running unto the faith, fearing hell, despising death, loving eternal life, scorning the present, and filled with joy at such a spectacle, we say, *The earth is full of Thy creation.*

4. But this world is as yet tossed by the waves of temptation, is as yet disturbed by the tempests and storms of tribulations and heavings: yet this is our road. Let the sea threaten, and swell with waves, and be pregnant with storms; this is our road, the Wood is granted us to sail in: *The earth is full of Thy creation.* But we are not yet in the land of the living, this is as yet the land of the dying; but we cry out, and say, *Thou art my hope, and my portion <sup>Ps. 142,</sup> in the land of the living. <sup>5.</sup>* My hope in the land of the dying, my portion in the land of the living. Behold this earth which is full of the creation of God. He who is as yet in this land of the dying, not as yet in the living, how

PSALM  
CIV.  
IV.

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doth he pass over? Hear the following: *So is the great and wide sea also; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* He speaketh of the sea as terrible; *therein are things creeping innumerable.* Snares creep in this world, and surprise the careless suddenly; for who numbereth the temptations that creep? They creep, but beware, lest they snatch us away. Let us keep watch on the Wood; even in the water<sup>b</sup>, even on the waves, we are safe: let not Christ sleep, let not faith sleep; if He hath slept, let Him be awakened; He will command the winds; He will calm the sea; the voyage will be ended, and we shall rejoice in our country. *Wherein are creeping things innumerable, both small beasts and great.* For I see in this terrible sea unbelievers still; for they dwell in barren and bitter waters: but they are both small and great. We know this: many little men of this world are still unbelievers, many great men of this world are so: there are living creatures, both small and great, in this sea. They hate the Church: the name of Christ is a burden to them: they rage not, because they are not permitted; the cruelty which cannot burst forth in deeds, is shut up within the heart. For all, whether small or great, *creeping things, both small and great*, who at present grieve at the temples being shut, the altars overthrown, the images broken, the laws which make it a capital crime to sacrifice to idols; all who mourn on this account, are still in the sea. What then of us? And by what road then are we to journey unto our country? Through this very sea, but on the Wood. Fear not the danger; that wood which holdeth together the world doth bear thee up. Listen therefore: *the great and wide sea: wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* Fear not, be not terrified; long for thy country, understand this as thy pilgrimage.

Matt 8,  
24—26.

5. Ver. 26. *There shall go the ships.* Lo, ships float upon that which alarmed you, and sink not. By ships we understand churches; they go among the storms, among the tempests of temptations, among the waves of the world, among the beasts, both small and great. Christ on the wood of His cross is the Pilot. *There shall go the ships.* Let not the

<sup>b</sup> Some Mss. add, 'On the cross let us sail;' but this may be a gloss.

ships fear, let them not much mind where they float, but by Whom they are steered. *There shall go the ships.* What voyage do they find tedious, when they feel that Christ is their Pilot? They will sail safely, let them sail diligently, they will reach their promised haven, they will be led to the land of rest.

6. There is also in that sea somewhat which transcends all creatures, great and small. What is this? Let us hear the Psalm: *There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him.* There are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts; there shall the ships go, and shall not fear, not only the creeping things innumerable, and beasts both small and great, but not even the serpent which is there; *whom Thou*, he speaketh unto God, *hast made to make sport of him.* This is a great mystery; and yet I am about to utter what ye already know. Ye know that a certain serpent is the enemy of the Church: ye have not seen him with the eyes of the flesh, but ye see him with the eyes of faith. It is he who is also styled a lion: of him the Scripture saith, *The lion and the dragon shalt Thou tread under Thy feet.* He is made subject to thy Head, he shall be made subject also to His body: only let the members still cling to their Head, so that they be His members. It is said of the first woman, whom this serpent led astray; viz. that Eve unto whom he gave counsel of death, and by his cunning persuasion crept like a serpent into her female heart. That was done which we well know, which even we ourselves did there; which we deplore. For the whole human race is in those two persons: thence sprang the offspring of death, thence even in children, debts, trespasses. For *who is clean*, saith the Scripture, *in Thy sight? Not even the child, who hath but the life of one day upon the earth.* The transmission of sin is a transmission of death from the first sin. For ye know what was said to the woman, or rather to the serpent, when God heard the sin of the first man: She shall watch for thy head, and thou shalt watch for her heel. These words are a great mystery, spoken in figure of the future Church, which was made from the side of Her Husband, and that while He slept. But Adam was the figure of Him that was to come; as the

VER.  
26.

Ps. 91,  
13.

Job 14,  
4. 5.

Gen. 3,  
15.

134 *The Church taught to tread on the Serpent's head.*

PSALM CIV. IV. Apostle saith, *who is the figure of Him that was to come.*  
 Rom. 5, the Church was made out of the side of the Lord sleeping  
 14. on the Cross. For from the stricken side of Him Who was  
 John 19, crucified, the Sacraments of the Church flowed forth. What  
 34. then is said unto the Church? Now hear at once, understand, and beware: She shall watch for thy head, and thou for her heel. O Church, watch for the head of the serpent. What is the serpent's head? The first suggestion of sin. Something unlawful hath come into thy mind; keep not thy mind there, consent not. What hath come into thy mind is the serpent's head; trample upon his head, and thou shalt escape the rest of his efforts. What is, Tread upon his head? Spurn the very suggestion. But he suggested gain: there is great gain there, much gold; commit this fraud, and thou shalt be rich. It is the serpent's head, trample upon it. What is, trample upon it? Spurn what he hath suggested. But he suggested much gold. And *what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Let the world's gain perish, that it become not the loss of the soul. In speaking thus, thou hast watched the serpent's head, and trampled on him. But the devil watcheth for thy heel. What meaneth this? He watcheth when thou mayest slip from the path of God. Thou dost watch the first suggestion, he watcheth thy slip; for if thou hast slipped, thou shalt fall; if thou hast fallen, he will gain thee. But that thou mayest not fall, go not out of the way. God hath made for thee a narrow path; whatever is beyond it, is slippery. On this account Christ is the light, and John 1, Christ is the way: *That was the true light, that lighteth*  
 9. *every man that cometh into the world;* and, *I am the way,*  
 John 14, *the truth, and the life.* Through Me thou comest, unto Me  
 6. thou comest. If therefore He is the light, and He is the way: if thou depart from Him, thou wilt neither be in the light nor in the way. And what followeth thee? That Ps. 35, 6. which one of the Psalms saith of the wicked; *Let their way be dark and slippery.*

7. This serpent then, our ancient enemy, glowing with rage, cunning in his wiles, is in the mighty sea. *Here is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of*

*him.* Do thou now make sport of the serpent: for for this end was this serpent made. He falling by his own sin from the sublime realms of the heavens, and made devil instead of angel, received a certain region of his own in this mighty and spacious sea. What thou thinkest his kingdom, is his prison. For many say: wherefore hath the devil received so great power, that he may rule in this world, and prevaileth so much, can do so much? How much prevaileth he? How much can he do? Unless by permission, he can do nothing. Do thou so act, that he may not be allowed to attack thee; or if he be allowed to tempt thee, he may depart vanquished, and may not gain thee. For he hath been allowed to tempt some holy men, servants of God: they overcame him, because they departed not from the way, they whose heel he watched, fell not. That holy Job sat upon a heap of dung, and was running on his way: consider how he watched the devil's head, and how the devil watched his heel. The one repelled the tempter, the other hoped he would fall: he attacked his wife also; he carried away all he had, he left only as his own assistant one who was not the consoler, but rather the tempter, of her husband; he took her as his prey while she watched not his head. For she was still Eve; though he was no longer Adam. When all had been taken away, Job remained with his wife, through whom he was tempted; and with God, by Whom he was governed. If thou lookest to his home, what ever became suddenly more destitute? what richer than he, if thou regardest his heart? Consider the poverty of his house, with every thing swept away. Consider the riches of his heart: *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.* "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:" he knew his ruler and his tempter; he knew Him Who allowed the tempter to assail him. Let the devil, he saith, take nothing to himself; he hath the will to hurt, but unless he received the power, he would not have it; I suffer just in proportion as he hath received power: I suffer not from him then, but from Him Who gave the power; let the pride of my tempter be despised, the rod of my Father be endured. The tempter was repelled, his head was watched, he could not penetrate into the heart. He

PSALM  
CIV.  
1V.

besieged from without a walled city, but reduced it not. Another temptation was added: the devil was allowed to assault his body, and smote him with a severe wound from head to foot: he wasted away with sore boils, he was full of worms, leaving his home he sat on a dung-heap. There Eve taken captive, set on by the devil not to help her husband, but to cause him to fall, suggests to him to blaspheme God. She first suggested in Paradise to despise God: now to blaspheme God. She then prevailed over one in full strength, she is now beaten by one covered with boils; the devil was the conqueror in Paradise, and conquered on the dung-heap. But that serpent watched whether Job would slip with his tongue; for every man setteth foot in that which he doeth: wherein he moveth, there as it were he walketh. He said many things; how many were Job's words, they who read, know: in these so numerous words the serpent watched the heel for the fall of the man. But he, who kept watch on the serpent's head, repelled every suggestion. He also answered the woman, as she deserved answering:

Job 2,  
10.

*Thou speakest, he saith, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?* And in all this that he said, Job did not slip, which many persons do not understand in these words, and take some of them in such a sense, as if Job had said something hard against God.

Job 9,  
33.

8. For among many things he said this also, as if indignant against God, as it seemed to those who understood it not: but Job was bearing the high character of an exalted prophecy: *Would that, he saith, speaking unto God, there were some days-man between us!* What meaneth this; *Would that there were some days-man between us?* One who might judge between us, and under whose judgment my cause might conquer. Thus it is understood at the first sound: but examine thyself, that thou slip not; for that serpent is ever on the watch for thy heel. What did Job seem to have said? Would that there were some days-man between us! Would that there were some umpire to judge between me and Thee! This the speech of a man unto God, of a man sitting on a dung-heap! This the speech even of an angel in heaven unto God! Would that we had a days-man between

us! But what did he foresee? what did he wish? *Many*, V ER. 26.  
 saith the Lord, *prophets and righteous men have desired to* Mat. 13, 17.  
*see those things which ye see, and have not seen them.* He  
 desired an umpire. What is an umpire? One who goeth  
 between to settle a cause. Were we not enemies of God, and  
 had we not a bad cause against God? Who could settle  
 this bad cause, except that intervening Mediator, without  
 Whose advent the path of mercy had been lost? Of Whom  
 the Apostle speaketh: *For there is one God, and one* 1 Tim. 2, 5.  
*Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.* If  
 He be not a Man, He is not a Mediator, for He is God  
 coequal with the Father. He saith in another passage:  
*Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.* Gal. 3, 20.  
 A mediator is between two: Christ therefore is Mediator  
 between man and God. Not because He is God, but  
 because He is Man: for in that He is God, He is coequal  
 with the Father; but one coequal with the Father is not  
 a mediator. To become a mediator, let Him descend from  
 the higher to the lower, from equality with the Father; let  
 Him do what the Apostle saith: *He made Himself of no* Phil. 2, 7.  
*reputation, but took upon Himself the form of a servant,*  
*and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in*  
*fashion as a man.* Let Him pour forth His blood, let Him  
 blot out the handwriting that was against us, let Him Colos. 2, 14.  
 mediate between God and us; correcting our will unto  
 righteousness, bending His sentence unto mercy. Since  
 therefore we have explained this one point, as far as the  
 Lord hath allowed, which seemed to have been hardly  
 spoken by Job; so also the other words which there seem  
 hard and blasphemous, have a sense of their own; which  
 we should imagine to be otherwise, unless God gave His  
 testimony, both before Job spoke, and after he had spoken  
 the whole. God in the first place gave His testimony, in  
 these words: *A perfect and upright man, one that truly* Job 1, 8.  
*serveth God.* God spoke thus, and that before his tempt-  
 ation. But lest any one from misrepresentation by chance  
 might stumble in these words, and might think that Job was

c Oxf. Mss. and some others, "not because He is God, but because He is Man: not because He is God, equal to the Father, but because He is Man, less than the Father. If He is equal to the Father, He is not a Mediator."

PSALM CIV. IV. indeed a righteous man before his temptation, but that he sank under heavy temptation, and fell into sacrilegious blasphemy; after all the discourses were concluded, both of Job himself, and of his friends by whom consolation was offered to him, the Lord giveth His testimony, that they spoke not the truth, like His servant Job. *Ye have not spoken, He saith, of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath.* He then ordereth that Job offer up sacrifices for them, by which their sins may be atoned for.

Job 42, 8.

9. He then, my brethren, who doth wish to watch the serpent's head, and safely to pass this sea; for it must be that this serpent dwelleth here, and, as I had commenced saying, the devil when he fell from heaven received this region; let him watch his head, on the part of the fear of the world, and of the lusts of the world. For it is hence that he suggesteth some object of fear or of desire; he trieth thy love, or thy fear. If thou fearest hell, and lovest the kingdom of God, thou wilt watch his head. The head avoided, thou wilt be safe; nor will he gain thy fall, or rejoice in thy ruin. But let no man say, as I said; he hath great power. For men see how much power he hath received; what he lost, they see not. That holy Job in his mystical and deeply hidden words, speaking of that power which the devil is said to have, and describing it in many ways in the forms of similitudes, while he explaineth what he is, and what power he hath, addeth this also: *Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels.* (God there speaketh in the Book of Job.) *Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels. He seeth all the deep: and is himself king over all that are in the waters.* With which testimony this passage in the Psalm agreeth. For while he was speaking of the mighty and spacious sea, where are beasts great and small, where are creeping things without number, where the ships sail safe in their wood; he saith, *there is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him.* If to make sport of him, how doth God make sport of him? Did He give him up to be mocked? We might imagine that God made sport of him, had not the Scripture of Job solved the question; for it is there said, *for the making sport of*

Job 41, 33, 34. LXX.

*him by My angels.* Dost thou wish to mock the serpent? V. B. B. 26. become an angel of God. But thou art not as yet an angel of God. Until thou art, if thou holdest on that course that thou mayest be so, there are angels to mock the serpent, that he may not injure thee. For there are angels of heaven set over the powers of the air; and this is the source of the expression in the text. For they look upon a law fixed, a law eternal, that commandeth without writing, without syllables, without sound, ever fixed and permanent; the angels look upon it with a pure heart, and according to it do all that is done here, and powers from the highest to the lowest are ordered by it. And if the powers of the highest heavens are ruled by the Word of God, how much more the lower and earthly powers? In the wicked, therefore, nothing but the wish to do harm remaineth. This wish to injure, this will to work ruin, a man hath in his power. But if he hath succeeded in injuring any one, let him not boast; he did not injure of his own power: the power was given him. It hath once been said, and it remaineth sure: *There is no power but of God.* What then fearest thou? Rom. 13, Let the dragon be in the waters, let the dragon be in the sea: thou art to pass through it. He is made so as to be made sport of, he is ordained to inhabit this place, this region is given him. Thou thinkest that this habitation is a great thing for him, because thou knowest not the dwellings of the angels whence he fell<sup>d</sup>: what seemeth to thee his glory, is his damnation.

10. Hear a similitude in a few words: for indeed it is a great thing to know and understand this. Imagine the whole of this government of creation to be a large house: this large house hath a master, hath slaves, and among those slaves those nearest the master provided with ampler stores of garments, treasures, barns, great possessions; it hath also slaves engaged in the lowest offices, powers being so subject to one another, that it hath some even for cleaning the sewers: how many gradations are there from the highest officers to these the lowest of employments. Suppose then some high officer offend, and, by the punishment of his lord,

<sup>d</sup> *Oxf. Mss. add, 'Thou admirest the dwellings of the dead where he is cast down.'*

**PSALM CIV. IV.** for example's sake, become a doorkeeper in some very low station; if, in the exercise of the power entrusted him, he harass those who wish to enter or depart, according to the measure of authority which he hath received from his master, while they know not that he once was a high officer; they imagine that his power is great, because they know not what he hath lost. And yet, my brethren, this doorkeeper of whom I spoke, according to the image of this great earthly house, may do something without the knowledge of his lord, and harass some one without his command: but that other one is not placed at that door, by which we enter unto God. For Christ is that Door, and through Christ we enter into life eternal. But there is a certain door, through which we enter into this life, a sort of gate of mortality: among the things in which this infirm flesh hath its waste and refuse, at this gate there is, as it were, a doorkeeper; he hath power in this sea, where the ships come and go, but not such power as that he can do any thing without the knowledge or without the will of his Lord. So that no man may say, He has indeed lost the great power of the higher services; but I am among these lowest officers, he may hold me in his power, I must needs serve him. Be not deceived: thy Lord knoweth thee, and so knoweth thee, that He hath the hairs of thy head numbered. What then fearest thou? Perhaps he is about to try thy flesh: it is the scourge of thy Lord, not the power of thy tempter. His wish is to injure that salvation which is promised: but he is not allowed: but that he may not be allowed, have Christ for thy Head; repel the serpent's head: consent not unto his suggestion, slip not from thy path. *There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him.*

**John 10. 9.**  
**Mat. 10. 30.**  
 11. Ver. 27—29. Dost thou wish to see how incapable he is of hurting thee, unless permitted? *These*, he saith, *wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season.* And this serpent wisheth to devour, but he devoureth not whom he wisheth. *All wait upon Thee, O Lord, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season;* both the creeping things innumerable, and small and great beasts, and the serpent himself, and all Thy creation with which Thou hast filled the earth; *These wait all upon*

*Only men of earthly affections, dust for the serpent.* 141

*Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season,* <sup>V ER.</sup>  
to each his own meat. Thou hast thine own meat: the <sup>27—29.</sup>  
serpent also hath his own meat. If thou live well, thou  
wilt have Christ for thy food; if thou depart from Christ,  
thou wilt be food for the serpent. *These all wait upon  
Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season.*  
What is said unto the serpent himself? *Dust thou shalt  
eat.* It is said to the serpent; *Dust shalt thou eat all the  
days of thy life.* Thou hast heard what the serpent's meat  
is. Thou dost not wish that God give thee to be devoured  
by the serpent; become not the serpent's food: i. e. forsake  
not the Word of God. For where it is said to the serpent,  
*Dust thou shalt eat,* it is said to the transgressor, *Dust thou* <sup>Gen. 3,</sup>  
*art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* Thou dost not wish <sup>14. 19.</sup>  
to be the serpent's food? be not dust. How, thou repliest,  
shall I not be dust? If thou hast not a taste for earthly  
things. Hear the Apostle, that thou mayest not be dust.  
For the body which thou wearest is earth: but do thou  
refuse to be earth. What meaneth this? *If ye then be risen* <sup>Col. 3,</sup>  
*with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ* <sup>1. 2.</sup>  
*sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affection on  
things above, not on things on the earth.* If thou dost not  
set thy affections on earthly things, thou art not earth: if  
thou art not earth, thou art not devoured by the serpent,  
whose appointed food is earth. The Lord giveth the  
serpent his food when He will, what He will: but He  
judgeth rightly, He cannot be deceived, He giveth him not  
gold for earth. *These wait all upon Thee, O Lord, that  
Thou mayest give them meat in due season. When Thou  
hast given it them, they gather it.* It is before them: but  
they will not gather, unless when Thou hast given leave.  
Job was before the devil; and indeed he devoured not Job,  
but dared not even tempt him, unless when the Lord had  
given leave. *They wait all upon Thee: when Thou hast  
given it them, they shall gather it;* if Thou hast not given  
it them, they shall not gather.

12. And what of us? What meat have we, brethren? What  
followeth is concerning our meat. *When thou openest Thy  
hand, they shall all be filled with good.* What is it, O Lord,  
that Thou openest Thy hand? Christ is Thy hand. *To* <sup>Is. 53, 1.</sup>

**PSALM CIV.** *whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* To whom it is revealed, unto him it is opened: for revelation is opening.

**IV.** *When Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good.* When Thou revealest Thy Christ, *they shall all be filled with good.* But they have not good from themselves; this is oftentimes proved unto them. *When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled.* Many filled with good have attributed to themselves what they had, and have wished to boast as in their own righteousnesses, and have said to themselves, I am righteous; I am great: and have become

**1 Cor. 4.** *self-complacent.* Unto these the Apostle speaketh: *What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?* But God, wishing to prove unto man that whatever he hath he hath from Him, so that with good he may gain humility also, sometimes troubleth him; He turneth away His face from him, and he falleth into temptation; and He sheweth him that his righteousness, and his walking aright, was only under His government. *When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled.* Consider what he saith in another Psalm also: *In my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed.* He presumed upon himself; he was filled with blessings; all of which he thought came from himself, and said, *I shall never be removed.* But since he was now aware that he had received

**Ps. 30,** *returned thanks: O Lord, in Thy good pleasure Thou hast granted strength to my glory.* **6. 7. 12.** *Thou didst turn Thy face from me: and I was troubled.* And here also, *When Thou openest Thy hand; Thou shalt open Thy hand, and they shall all be filled with good;* not by their own hand, but by Thy hand opened. But *when Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled.*

13. But wherefore dost Thou do this? wherefore dost Thou hide Thy face, that they may be troubled? *Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail.* Their breath was their pride; they boast, they attribute things to themselves, they justify themselves. Hide, therefore, Thy face, that they may be troubled: take away their breath,

**Ps. 143,** *and let them fail; let them cry unto Thee, Hear me, O Lord,* **7.** *and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint: hide not Thy face from me.* *Thou shalt take away their breath, and*

*they shall fail, and shall be turned to their dust.* The man <sup>V RR.</sup> who repenteth of his sin discovereth himself, that he had <sup>30, 31.</sup> not strength of himself; and doth confess unto God, saying, that he is earth and ashes. O proud one, thou art turned to thine own dust, thy breath hath been taken away; no longer dost thou boast thyself, no longer extol thyself, no longer justify thyself; thou seest that thou art made of dust, and when the Lord turneth away His face, thou hast fallen back into thine own dust. Pray, therefore, confess thy dust and thy weakness.

14. Ver. 30. And see what followeth: *Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit<sup>1</sup>, and they shall be made.* Thou shalt<sup>1</sup> or take away their spirit, and send forth Thine own: Thou <sup>'breath.'</sup> shalt take away their spirit: they shall have no spirit of their own. Are they then forsaken? *Blessed are the poor<sup>2</sup>, in spirit:* but they are not forsaken: *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* They refused to have a spirit of their own: they shall have the Spirit of God. Such were our Lord's words to the future martyrs: *When they take you<sup>3</sup> and deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* Attribute not your courage to yourselves. If it is yours, He saith, and not Mine, it is obstinacy, not courage. *Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made.* For we are His workmanship, saith <sup>Eph. 2,</sup> the Apostle, *created unto good works.* From His Spirit we <sup>10.</sup> have received grace, that we may live unto righteousness: for it is He that justifieth the ungodly. *Thou shalt take<sup>4</sup> away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send<sup>5</sup> forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth:* that is, with new men, confessing themselves to have been justified, not righteous of their own power, so that the grace of God is in them. Consider what manner of men they are, by whom the face of the earth hath been renewed. Paul saith, *I laboured<sup>1</sup> more abundantly than they all.* What is this, Paul? Give <sup>1 Cor. 15, 10.</sup> heed, whether it be thyself, whether thy spirit. *Yet not I, he saith, but the grace of God which was with me.*

15. Ver. 31. What then? When He hath taken away

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IV. our spirit, we shall be turned again to our dust, beholding to our edification our weakness, that when we receive His Spirit we may be refreshed. See what followeth: *Be the glory of the Lord for ever.* Not thine, not mine, not his, or his; *Be the glory of the Lord,* not for a season, but *for ever.* *The Lord shall rejoice in His works.* Not in thine, as if they were thine: because if thy works are evil, it is through thy iniquity; if good, it is through the grace of God. *The Lord shall rejoice in His works.*

10. Ver. 32. *Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke.* O earth, thou wast exulting in thy good, to thyself thou didst ascribe thy fulness and opulence; behold, the Lord looketh on thee, and causeth thee to tremble. May He look on thee, and make thee tremble: for the trembling of humility is better than the confidence of pride. Consider how the Lord beholdeth the earth, and causeth it to tremble. The Apostle speaketh to the earth as if it trusted and exulted in itself: *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* “With fear and trembling;” *for it is God Which worketh in you.* Thou sayest, O Paul, Work: thou commandest us to work: wherefore with trembling? For it is God, he saith, Which worketh in you. For this reason then with trembling, because God worketh in you. Because He gave, because what thou hast cometh not from thee, thou shalt work with fear and trembling, for if thou fearest not Him, He will take away what He gave. Work, therefore, with trembling. Hear another Psalm: *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling.* If we must rejoice with trembling, God beholdeth us, there cometh an earthquake; when God looketh upon us, let our hearts tremble; then will God rest there. Hear Him in another Ps. 2, 11. Is. 66, 2. passage: *Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even on him that is lowly and quiet, and who trembleth at My Word.*

*Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke.* The hills were proud, and boastful of themselves, God had not touched them: He toucheth them, and they shall smoke. What meaneth the smoking of the hills? That they pray unto the Lord. Behold great hills, proud hills, vast hills, prayed

not to God: they wished themselves to be entreated, and entreated not Him Who was above them. For what powerful, arrogant, proud man is there upon earth, who deigneth humbly to entreat God? I speak of the ungodly, not of the *cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted*. Every ungodly man, unhappy soul, knoweth not how to entreat God, while he wisheth himself to be entreated by men. He is a hill; it is needful that God touch him, that he may smoke: when he hath begun to smoke, he will offer prayers unto God, as it were the sacrifice of his heart. He smoketh unto God, he then beateth his breast: he beginneth to weep, for smoke doth elicit tears. *He toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke.*

17. Ver. 33. *I will sing unto the Lord in my life.* What will sing? Every thing that is willing. Let us sing unto the Lord in our life. Our life at present is only hope; our life will be eternity hereafter: the life of mortal life, is the hope of an everlasting life. *I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will praise my God while I have my being.* Since I am in Him for ever and ever, while I have my being, I will praise my God. Let us not imagine that, when we have commenced praising God in that state, we shall have any other work: our whole life will be for the praises of God. If we become weary of Him Whom we praise, we may also become weary of praising. If He is ever loved, He is ever praised by us: *I will praise my God while I have my being.*

18. Ver. 34. *Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: my joy shall be in the Lord. Let my discourse be pleasing to Him:* what is the discourse of man unto God, save the confession of sins? Confess unto God what thou art, and thou hast discoursed with Him. Discourse unto Him, do good works, and discourse. *Wash you, make you clean,* Isai. 1, 16—18. *put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. And come, and let us discourse together.* What is it to discourse unto God? Unfold thyself to Him Who knoweth thee, that He may unfold Himself to thee who knowest not Him? *Let my discourse be pleasing to Him.*

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IV.

Behold, it is thy discourse that pleaseth the Lord; the offering of thy humility, the tribulation of thy heart, the holocaust of thy life, this pleaseth God. But what is pleasing to thyself? *My joy shall be in the Lord.* This is that discoursing which I meant between God and thyself: shew thyself to Him Who knoweth thee, and He sheweth Himself unto thee who knowest not Him. Pleasing unto Him is thy confession: sweet unto thee is His grace. He hath spoken Himself unto thee. How? By the Word. What Word? Christ. It was unto thee that He spake, and Himself that He spake. In that He sent Christ, He spake Himself. So, clearly, let us hear the Word Himself: *He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.*

John 14,  
2.

*But my joy shall be in the Lord.*

19. Ver. 35. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth.* He seemeth angry! O holy soul, which here doth sing and groan! Would that our soul were with that very soul! Would that it were coupled with it, associated, conjoined with it! It shall behold also his lovingkindness when he is angry. For who, but he who is filled with charity, understandeth this? *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth.* Thou tremblest, because he curseth. And who doth curse? A saint. Without doubt he is listened to. But it is said unto the saints, *Bless, and curse not.* What is then the sense of the words, *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth?* Let them utterly be consumed; let their spirit be taken away, that He may send forth His own Spirit, and they may be restored. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly, so that they be no more.* In what that they be no more, save as wicked men? Let them therefore be justified, that they may no longer be ungodly. The Psalmist saw this, and was filled with joy, and repeateth the first verse of the Psalm: *Bless thou the Lord, O my soul.* Let our soul bless the Lord, brethren, since He hath deigned to give unto us both understanding and the power of language, and unto you attention and earnestness in hearing. Let each, as he can recall to mind what he hath heard, by mutual conversation stir up the food ye have received, ruminate on what ye have heard, let it not descend in you into the bowels of forgetfulness. Let the treasure to

Rom.  
12, 14.

be desired rest upon your lips. These matters have been sought out and discovered with great labour, with great labour have they been announced and discoursed of; may our toil be fruitful unto you, and may our soul bless the Lord.

## PSALM CV.

LAT.  
CIV.

## EXPOSITION.

1. Ver. 1. The 104th Psalm is the first of those to which is prefixed the word Allelujah; the meaning of which word, or rather two words, is, Praise the Lord. For this reason he beginneth with praises: *O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name*; for this confession is to be understood as praise, just as these words of our Lord, *I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth*. For after commencing with praise, calling upon God is wont to follow, whereunto he that prayeth doth next add<sup>e</sup> his longings: whence the Lord's Prayer itself hath at the commencement a very brief praise, in these words, *Our Father, Which art in Heaven*. The things prayed for, then follow. Thus it is said elsewhere in a Psalm: *Unto Thee, O God, will we confess, and will call upon Thy Name*. And this is elsewhere more clearly said: *I will call upon the Lord with praises: so shall I be safe from my enemies*; so in the text, *O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name*; which is the same as if he were to say, Praise the Lord, and call upon His Name. For He heareth him when he calleth, whom He seeth praising Him: He seeth him praise Him, whom He hath proved to love Him. And in what way did the Lord will the love of a good servant towards Himself to be shewn chiefly, save in this command which He giveth him, *Feed My sheep*: whence this also followeth, *Tell the people what things He hath done*; or rather, to translate literally from the Greek, as other Latin copies too have it,

<sup>e</sup> Oxf. Mss. 'the sinner doth allege.'

**PSALM C.V.** *Preach the Gospel of His works among the Gentiles. Unto whom is this addressed, save unto the Evangelists in prophecy?*

2. Ver. 2, 3. *O sing unto Him, and play on instruments unto Him.* Praise Him both by word and deed; for we sing with the voice, while we play with an instrument, that is, with our hands. *Let your talking be of all His wondrous works; be ye praised in His holy Name.* These two verses may without any absurdity seem paraphrases of the two words above; so that, *Let your talking be of all His wondrous works*, may express the words, *O sing unto Him*; and what followeth, *be ye praised in His holy Name*, may be referred to the words, *and play on instruments unto Him*; the former relating to the 'good word' wherewith we sing unto Him, in which His wondrous works are told; the latter to the good work, in which sweet music is played unto Him, so that no man may wish to be praised for a good work on the score of his own power to do it. For this reason, after saying, *be ye praised*, which assuredly they who work well deservedly may, he added, *in His holy*

1 Cor. 1, *Name, since he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

31. Let them, therefore, who wish to play not unto themselves, but unto Him, beware of doing their righteousness before men, that they may be seen by them; otherwise they will

Matt. 6, receive no reward with the Father Which is in Heaven; but

1. let their works shine before men, not with the view that they themselves be seen by men, but that others may see

Matt. 5, their good works, and glorify their Father Which is in

16. Heaven. This is to be praised in His holy Name. Whence

Ps. 34, we read also in another Psalm: *My soul shall be praised in*

2. *the Lord: let the meek hear thereof, and be glad; which here in a sense followeth, Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord: for thus the meek are glad, who do not rival with a bitter jealousy those whom they imitate as already workers of good.*

3. Ver. 4. *Seek the Lord, and be strengthened (confortamini).* This is very literally construed from the Greek, though it may seem not a Latin word: whence other copies have, 'be ye confirmed;' others, 'be ye corroborated.' So

Ps. 18, 1. it is said to Him elsewhere: *My strength; and, My strength*

Ps. 49, 9.

will I ascribe unto Thee: that by seeking Him and approaching Him, we may be both enlightened and strengthened; that we may not from blindness be unable to see what ought to be done, or from weakness accomplish not even what we see. While these words, then, *Come unto Him, and be enlightened*, apply to seeing; those in the text relate to doing: *Seek the Lord, and be strengthened*. Seek, he saith, *His face evermore*. What is the face of the Lord, save the presence of God? Like the face of the wind, or the face of fire; for it is said, *Like as the stubble before the face of the wind*; and, *like as wax melteth before the face of the fire*. Many other instances occur in Scripture, where nothing else is intended to be understood by the face of the things named, than their presence. But what meaneth, *Seek His face evermore*? I know indeed that to cling unto God is good for me; but if He is always being sought, when is He found? Did he mean by *evermore*, the whole of the life we live here, whence we become conscious that we ought thus to seek, since even when found He is still to be sought? To wit, faith hath already found Him, but hope still seeketh Him. But love hath both found Him through faith, and seeketh to have Him by sight, where He will then be found so as to satisfy us, and no longer to need our search. For unless faith discovered Him in this life, it would not be said, *Seek the Lord*; and when ye have found Him, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts*. Also, if when discovered by faith, He were not still to be diligently sought, it would not be said, *For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*; and that which John saith, *We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is*. Or when we shall have seen Him face to face as He is, will He still have to be sought, and to be sought without end, because to be loved without end? For we say to any one present, 'I am not looking for you;' meaning, I do not like you. And thus he who is loved, is sought even when present, while there is constant love, which busies itself that he never become absent. Besides, he who loveth any one, even when he seeth him, without ever being tired of him, wisheth him ever to be

V ER.  
4.

Ps. 34, 4.

Ps. 83,

13.

Ps. 68, 2.

Ps. 73,

27.

Is. 55,

6, 7.

Rom. 8,

25.

1 John

3, 2.

PSALM present, that is, he always seeketh his presence. And  
CV. truly this is the sense of the words, *Seek His face evermore*; meaning that discovery should not terminate that seeking, by which love is testified, but with the increase of love the seeking of the discovered One should increase.

4. Ver. 5. This fervid praiser of God doth now moderate himself, while he cometh down to wider expressions, nourishing his weak and infant love with the temporal wonders of God. *Remember*, he saith, *His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.* This passage seemeth like that, when He had replied to the question of Moses as to who He was, 'I AM THAT I AM,' and, *Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you:* (an expression which in ever so small part scarce a mind<sup>f</sup> taketh in:) then mentioning His own Name, He mercifully mingled in His grace towards men, saying, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; this is My Name for ever.* By which He would have it to be understood, that they whose God He declared Himself, lived with Him for ever, and He said this, which might be understood even by children, that they who by the great powers of love knew how to seek His face for evermore, might according to their capacity comprehend, I AM THAT I AM. If therefore it be of great concern to you either to see or to seek what He is, *Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.*

Exod. 3,  
14. 15.

5. Ver. 6, 7. Unto whom is it said, *O ye seed of Abraham His sercant, ye children of Jacob His chosen?* Ye, the seed of Abraham, ye, the seed of Jacob, *remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.* But that no man might attribute this to the single race of the Israelites in the flesh, and not understand that the sons of promise are the seed of Abraham rather than the seed of the flesh, to the former, of whom the Apostle speaketh, in addressing the Gentiles, *Then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise;* he next addeth, *He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world.* This is said through Isaiah unto the free

Gal. 3,  
29.

<sup>f</sup> 'Rara mens.' Oxf. Mss. read 'a pure mind.'

Jerusalem, our mother, *Thy Redeemer, even thy God; of the whole earth shall He be called.* Is He the God of the Jews only? God forbid! *He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world:* because the Church, where His judgments are preached, is in all the world. What then doth he say in another Psalm: *He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, neither hath He made known unto them His judgments.* This is said, because he wished one nation to be understood as belonging to the seed of Abraham: which has been called indeed from all nations, and all nations are so expressed in it, that there is one nation called into adoption. Beyond that nation He made known His judgments unto none; for although declared, they were not made known to those who believed not; because unless they believe, they will not understand.

6. Ver. 8—11. *He hath been alway mindful of His covenant.* Other copies read, *for evermore;* and this arises from the ambiguity of the Greek. But if we are to understand *alway* of this world and not of eternity, why, when he explaineth what covenant He was mindful of, doth he add, *The word that He made to a thousand generations?* Now this may be understood with a certain limitation; but he afterwards saith, *Even the covenant that He made with Abraham: and the oath that He swore unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament.* Where there is no room for doubt: for the Greek has *αἰώνιον*, which our interpreters have never rendered by any other word than eternal; though scarce any authors in any passage have used *αἰώνιος* in the sense of everlasting. Unless perhaps, because they render *αἶων* as meaning time, in a more familiar way, they may choose to interpret *αἰώνιον*, not eternal, but ‘for an age;’ which I do not remember any one having ventured to do. But if in this passage the Old Testament is to be understood, on account of the land of Canaan; for thus the language of the Psalm runneth, *And appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament; saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan: the lot of your inheritance:* how is it to be understood as everlasting, since

162 *What is the 'everlasting covenant,' and 'a thousand generations.'*

<sup>Psal. 138</sup>  
<sup>C.V.</sup> that earthly inheritance could not be everlasting? And for this reason it is called the Old Testament, because it is abolished by the New. But a thousand generations do not seem to signify any thing eternal, since they involve an end; and yet are also too numerous for this very temporal state. For by howsoever few years a generation is limited, such as in Greek is called *γενία*, whereof the shortest period some have fixed is at fifteen years, after which period man hath the power of generation; what then are those *thousand generations*, not only from the time of Abraham, when that promise was made him, unto the New Testament, but from Adam himself down to the end of the world? For who would dare to say that this world should last for 15000 years?

7. Hence it seemeth to me that we ought not to understand here the Old Testament, which it said through the prophet was to be cancelled by the New: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Jacob, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I led them out of the land of Egypt; but the covenant of faith, which the Apostle praiseth, when he setteth before us Abraham to imitate, and doth convict those who boasted in the works of the Law, in that Abraham believed in God even before his circumcision, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Lastly, after saying, He hath been mindful of His covenant unto an age; which we ought to understand as lasting for evermore, the covenant, namely, of justification and an eternal inheritance, which God hath promised to faith; he addeth, and the Word that He commanded<sup>1</sup> unto a thousand generations. What meaneth commanded? For the words, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, is not a command, but a promise: now a command is that which we ought to execute, a promise that which we should receive.*

<sup>Jer. 38</sup>  
<sup>31. 32.</sup>

<sup>Gal. 3,</sup>  
<sup>5. 6.</sup>

<sup>1 man-</sup>  
<sup>davit</sup>

<sup>Rom. 1,</sup>  
<sup>17.</sup>

The command then was faith, that the righteous should live by faith; and an eternal inheritance is set before this faith. *A thousand generations*, then, are, on account of the perfect number, to be understood for all; that is, as long as generation succeedeth generation, so long is it commanded to us to live by faith. This the people of God doth observe,

the sons of promise who succeed by birth, and depart by death, until every generation be finished; and this is signified <sup>V KR.</sup> 8—11. by the number thousand; because the solid square of the number ten, ten times ten, and this taken ten times amounts to a thousand. *Even the covenant, he saith, which He made with Abraham: and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob, that is, Jacob himself, for a law.* These are the very three patriarchs, whose God He calleth Himself in a special sense, whom the Lord also doth name in the New Testament, where He saith, *Many* <sup>Matt. 8,</sup> *shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down* <sup>11.</sup> *with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.* This is everlasting inheritance. For here also, where he saith, *He appointed the same unto Jacob for a law;* he sheweth that it is the law of faith, for he would not call a promise a law. For if there be work in the law, there is a reward in the promise. *This is the work of God,* <sup>John 6,</sup> *saith our Lord, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.* <sup>29.</sup> This word therefore which He hath commanded, *alway mindful of His covenant,* that is, “the word of faith which we preach,” *He appointed it unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,* that is, because in the fulfilment of this very promise and law He was to give something eternal. *Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.* How then is this eternal, unless it signifieth something eternal? For the land of promise is described as one flowing with milk and honey. <sup>Exod. 3,</sup> *All this signifieth that grace, by which we taste how sweet is* <sup>8, 17.</sup> *the Lord, which belongeth not to all men; for all men have* <sup>Ps. 33, 8.</sup> *not faith.* For this reason he added, *the lot of your inheritance.* <sup>2 Thess. 3,</sup> <sup>2.</sup> Whence in another Psalm, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, is understood to speak, where he saith, *The* <sup>Ps. 16, 6.</sup> *lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage.* Why the land is called Canaan, the interpretation of the word doth disclose; for Canaan meaneth *humble.* Now if it be referred to that declaration of holy Noah, when he announced that this same Canaan should be his brother's <sup>Gen. 9,</sup> <sup>25.</sup> *servant, to this belongs also servile fear.* But *the servant* <sup>John 8,</sup> *abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for* <sup>35.</sup> *ever.* Therefore the Canaanite is excluded, and the land of

PSALM CV. promise given to the seed of Abraham. For perfect love  
 1 John 4, 18. casteth out fear, so that the Son abideth in the house for  
 ever. Whence it is said, *And to Israel for an everlasting  
 testament.*

8. Ver. 12. He next followeth out the history well known  
 in the truth of the holy Scriptures. *When they were in small  
 numbers, very few, and they strangers in the land*; that is,  
 in the land of Canaan. While the patriarchs, Abraham,  
 Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt there, before they received this  
 inheritance, in their own families they were very few, and  
 they strangers in the land. But some copies have the words  
<sup>1 paucis-</sup>*very few, and they strangers*, in the accusative case<sup>1</sup>, the  
<sup>simos et</sup> translator having turned the Greek phrase too literally into  
<sup>incolas</sup> Latin. If we were to render the whole clause in this way,  
 we must say, *that they were very few, and they strangers*;  
 but the phrase, *while they were*, is the meaning of the Greek;  
 and the verb, *to be*, takes not an accusative, but a nominative  
 after it. For we cannot say, '*cum essent paucissimos*,' but  
 '*cum essent paucissimi.*'

9. Ver. 13—15. *When therefore they were in small num-  
 ber, (or small in number,) very few, and they strangers in the  
 land, what time as they went from one nation to another,  
 from one kingdom to another people.* This is a repetition of  
 what he had said, '*from one nation to another.*' *He suffered  
 no man to do them harm: but reproveth even kings for their  
 sakes. Touch not, He said, Mine anointed, and do My  
 prophets no harm.* He declareth the words of God chiding  
 or reproving kings, that they might not harm the holy  
 fathers, while they were small in number, very few, and  
 they strangers in the land of Canaan. Although these words  
 be not read in the books of that history, yet they are to be  
 understood as either secretly spoken, as God speaketh in the  
 hearts of men by unseen and true visions, or even as an-  
 nounced through an Angel. For both the king of Gerar and the  
 king of the Egyptians were warned from Heaven not to harm  
 Gen. 12, Abraham, and another king not to harm Isaac, and others  
 17—20; not to harm Jacob; while they were very few, and strangers,  
 20, 8. Gen 26, before he went over into Egypt to sojourn with his sons:  
 8—11. Gen. ch. which is understood to be herein mentioned; *they went*  
 32. 33.

† LXX. "ἐν τῶ ἐλίαι αὐτοῦς."

from one nation to another : from one kingdom to another VER. 13—16.  
people. But since it occurred to ask, before they passed over and multiplied in Egypt, how so few in number, and those strangers in a foreign land, could maintain themselves: he next addeth, *He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reproveth even kings for their sakes. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.*

10. But it may well excite a question, in what sense they were styled (Christs, or) anointed, before there was any unction, from which this title was given to the kings; which began with Saul, to whom David succeeded in the kingdom; and from thence the rest of the kings, both of Judah and Israel, were anointed in the continuation of the sacred custom: in which unction was figured the one true Anointed (Christ), unto Whom it is said, *God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.* Ps. 45, 8. Whence then were those patriarchs at that time called anointed? For that they were prophets, we read concerning Abraham; and certainly, what is manifestly said of him, should be understood of them also. Are they styled Christs, because, even though secretly, yet they were already Christians? For although the flesh of Christ came from them, nevertheless Christ came before them; for He thus answered the Jews, *Before Abraham was, I am.* But how could they not know Him, or not believe in Him; since they are called prophets for this very reason, because, though somewhat darkly, they announced the Lord beforehand? Whence He saith Himself openly, *Your father Abraham desired to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad.* John 8, 56. For no man was ever reconciled unto God outside of that faith which is in Christ Jesus, either before His Incarnation, or after: as it is most truly defined by the Apostle; *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.* 1 Tim. 2, 5.

11. Ver. 16. He then beginneth to relate how it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. *He called, he saith, for a famine upon the land: and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bondservant.* Thus it happened that they went from one

**PSALM CV.** nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. But the expressions of the holy Scriptures are not to be negligently passed by. *He called*, he saith, *for a famine upon the land*; as if famine were some person, or some animated body, or some spirit that would obey Him Who called; whereas famine is a wasting that cometh for want of food, and is such in those who suffer from it, as any disease. For as the cessation of a disease usually is effected by medicine, thus also famine is healed in a manner by nourishment. What then meaneth, *He called for a famine*? Have then the evils which men suffer, certain evil angels set over them? (for in another Psalm also he saith, that God afflicted men by sending evil angels among them, His judgment being far from erring;) and perhaps these words, *He called for a famine*, mean the angel set over famine, and styled from the name of the office over which he was set. Under this impression the old Romans consecrated some such deities, as the goddess Fever, and the god Paleness. Or meaneth it, as is more credible, He said there should be famine; so that calling be the same thing as mentioning by name; mentioning by name, as speaking; speaking, as commanding? For He called for a famine, Who *calleth those things which are not as though they were*. Nor doth the Apostle say here, He calleth those things which be not, that they may be; but, as though they were. For with God that hath already happened which, according to His disposition, is fixed for the future; for of Him it is elsewhere said, *He Who made things to come*. And here when famine happened, then it is said to have been called, that is, that that which had been determined in His secret government, might be realized. Lastly, he at once expounds, how He called for the famine, saying, *He brake all the staff of bread*.

Ps. 78,  
49.

Rom. 4,  
17.

Isa. 45,  
11.

12. Ver. 17. *But He had sent a man before them*. What man? *Even Joseph*. How did He send him? *Joseph was sold to be a bond-servant*. When this happened, it was the sin of his brethren, and, nevertheless, God sent Joseph into Egypt. We should therefore meditate on this important and necessary subject, how God useth well the evil works of men, as they on the other hand use ill the good works of God.

13. Ver. 18, 19. Next he doth relate the story, mentioning <sup>VER.</sup> what Joseph suffered in his low estate, and how he was 18—22. raised on high. *His feet they hurt in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul, until his word came.* That Joseph was put in irons, we do not indeed read; but we ought no ways to doubt that it was so. For some things might be passed over in that history, which nevertheless would not escape the Holy Spirit, Who speaketh in these Psalms. We understand by the iron which entered into his soul, the tribulation of stern necessity; for he did not say body, but *soul*. There is a somewhat similar expression in the Gospel, where Simeon saith unto Mary, *Behold, this Child is set for* <sup>Luke 2,</sup> *the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign* <sup>34. 35.</sup> *which shall be spoken against: yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.* That is, the Passion of the Lord, which was a fall unto many, and in which the secrets of many hearts were revealed, since their sentiments respecting the Lord were extorted from them, without doubt made His own Mother exceeding sorrowful, heavily struck with human bereavement. Now Joseph was in this tribulation, *until his word came*, with which he truly interpreted dreams: whence he was introduced to the king, that unto him also he might foretell what would happen in respect to his dreams. But <sup>Gen. 41.</sup> since he said, *Until his words were heard*, that we might not altogether so understand *his*, that any one might think so great an event was to be ascribed unto man; he at once added, *The word of the Lord inflamed him*; or, as other copies have it more closely from the Greek, *The word of the Lord fired him*, that he also might be reputed amongst those, to whom it is said, "Receive ye praise in His holy <sup>ver. 3.</sup> Name." *The word of the Lord inflamed him.* With reason when the Holy Ghost was sent by our Lord, *there* <sup>Acts 2,</sup> *appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire*; and the <sup>3.</sup> Apostle saith, *fervent in spirit*. From that fire those <sup>Rom. 12,</sup> depart, of whom it is said, *The love of many shall wax cold.* <sup>11.</sup> <sup>Mat. 24,</sup>

14. Ver. 20. 22. *The king sent and loosed him, the prince* <sup>12.</sup> *of the peoples, and let him go free.* The king is the same as the prince of the peoples: he loosed him from his bonds, and let him go free from his prison. *He made him lord*

PSALM *also of his house: and ruler of all his substance. That he*  
 CV. *might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his*  
*old men wisdom. The Greek hath, and teach his elders*  
*wisdom. Which might altogether be rendered to the letter*  
*thus; Might inform his princes like unto himself, and make*  
*his elders wise. The word translated old men being pres-*  
*byters or elders, not gerontas, old men: and to teach wisdom*  
*being from the Greek to sophize, which cannot be ren-*  
*dered by a single word in Latin, and is from the word*  
*sophia, wisdom, different from prudence, which is in*  
*Greek phronesis. Yet we do not read this in the high*  
*elevation of Joseph, as we read not of fetters in his low*  
*estate. But how could it happen that so great a man, the*  
*worshipper of the One True God, whilst in Egypt, should*  
*have been intent upon the nourishing of bodies, and the*  
*government of carnal matters only, and have felt no anxiety*  
*for souls, and how he could render them better? But those*  
*things are written in that history, which, according to the*  
*intention of the writer, in whom was the Holy Spirit, were*  
*judged sufficient for signifying future events in that*  
*narration.*

15. Ver. 23. *Joseph also came into Egypt, and Jacob*  
*was a stranger in the land of Ham. Israel is the same*  
*with Jacob, as is Egypt with the land of Ham. Here it is*  
*very plainly shewn, that the Egyptian race sprang from the*  
*seed of Cham, the son of Noah, whose first-born was Canaan.*  
*So that in those copies wherein in this passage Canaan is*  
*read, we must alter the reading. It is better construed, was*  
*a stranger, than dwell, as other copies have it: which would*  
*be the same as 'was an inhabitant,' for it meaneth nothing*  
*different; the very same word is used in the Greek passage*  
*above, where it is said, Very few, and they strangers in the*  
*land. Moreover, the state of an 'incola' or 'accola' doth not*  
*signify a native, but a stranger. Behold how they went*  
*from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another*  
*people. What had been briefly proposed, hath been briefly*  
*explained in the narration. But from what kingdom they*  
*passed over to another people may well be asked. For they*  
*were not yet reigning in the land of Canaan, because the*  
*kingdom of the people of Israel had not yet been established*

there. How then can it be understood, except by anticipation, because the kingdom of their seed was destined there <sup>VER.</sup> 24. 25. to exist?

16. Ver. 24. Next is related what happened in Egypt. *And He increased*, he saith, *His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies.* Even the whole of this is briefly set forth, in order that the manner in which it took place may be afterwards related. For the people of God was not made stronger than their enemies the Egyptians, at the time when their male offspring were slain, or when they were worn out with making bricks; but when by His powerful hand, by the signs and portents of the Lord their God, they became objects of fear and of honour, until the opposition of the hardened king was overcome, and the Red Sea overwhelmed the persecutor with his army.

17. Ver. 25. As if we should ask, how that which he had briefly expressed in the words, *He made His people stronger than their enemies*, happened, he begins now to say, and determines this too in his narration: *And He turned their heart so, that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants.* Is it to be in any wise understood or believed, that God turneth man's heart to do sin? is it not a sin, or is it a slight sin, to hate the people of God, and to deal untruly with His servants? who would say it is not? Is therefore God in any wise the author of these so heavy sins, Who is not to be believed to be the author of any even the very slightest sin? *Who is wise, and he will understand* <sup>Ps. 107.</sup> *these things?* For this is that wonderful goodness of God, <sup>43.</sup> by which He useth for good even the wicked, either angels or men. For while they themselves are wicked by their own fault, He doeth good out of their wickedness. For they were not good before they hated His people; but being malignant and ungodly, they were such as would readily envy their prosperous sojourners. And so, in that He multiplied His own people, this bountiful act turned the wicked to envy. For envy is the hatred of another's prosperity. In this sense, therefore, He turned their heart, so that through envy they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. It was not then by making their

**PSALM CV.** hearts evil, but by doing good to His people, that He turned their hearts, that were evil of their own accord, to hatred. For He did not pervert a righteous heart, but turned one perverted of its own accord to the hatred of His people, while He was to make a good use of that evil; not by making them evil, but by lavishing blessings upon those, which the wicked might most readily envy. The following verses, which are sung in praise of Him when Allelujah is chanted, shew how He used this hatred of theirs, both for the trial of His own people, and for the glory of His Name, which is profitable for us.

18. Ver. 26. *He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen him. Whom He had chosen,* would be sufficient; but there is no difficulty in the addition of *him*.

**Numb. 18, 20. Levit. 18, 8.** It is a phrase of Scripture, as, *The land in which they shall dwell in it*: a phrase which the divine pages are full of.

19. Ver. 27. *He set forth in them the words of His tokens, and of His wonders in the land of Ham.* We ought not to understand by *the words of His tokens*, words literally, words with which the tokens and wonders were worked, that is, which they uttered, that these tokens and wonders might take place. For many were performed without words, either with a rod, or with outstretched hand, or by ashes sent towards heaven. But since their deeds were not destitute of some signification, even as the words we speak; for this reason they also are called words, not relating to voices and sounds, but to tokens and wonders. *He set forth in them*, that is, He wrought through them.

20. Ver. 28. *He sent darkness, and made it dark.* This is also written among the plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten. But what followeth, is variously read in different copies. For some have, *and they provoked His words*; while others read, *and they provoked not His words*; but the reading first mentioned we have found in most; while, where the negative particle is added, we could hardly discover two copies. But perhaps the false reading has abounded owing to the easy sense; for what is easier understood than this, *They provoked His words*, that is, by their contumacious rebellions? We have endeavoured to explain the other reading also according to some true sense: and

this for the present occurs; *They provoked not His words*, that is, in Moses and Aaron; because they most patiently bore with a very stiffnecked people, until all things which God had determined to work by them, were fulfilled in order. VER.  
29—36.

21. Ver. 29, 30. *He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in the king's chambers:* as if he were to say, He turned their land into frogs. For there was so great a multitude of frogs, that this might well be said by hyperbole.

22. Ver. 31. *He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters.* If it be asked when He spake, it was in His Word before it took place; and there it was, without time, at what time it should take place: although even then He commanded it to be done, when it was to be done, through Angels, and through his servants Moses and Aaron.

23. Ver. 32. *He made their rains hail.* It is a similar expression to the former, *He made their land frogs;* except that the whole land was not actually turned into frogs, though the whole of the rain may have been turned into hail. *A burning fire in their land:* understand, *He sent.*

24. Ver. 33. *He smote their vines also and fig-trees; and brake every tree of their coasts.* This was done by the violence of the hail, and by lightnings; whence he spoke of the fire as *burning.*

25. Ver. 34. *He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar, of which there was no number.* The locusts and the caterpillars are one plague: of which the one is the parent, the other the offspring.

26. Ver. 35. *And did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of the ground.* Even grass is fruit, as Scripture is wont to speak, which calleth even the ripe corn grass; but it wished these two things to harmonise in number with the two which it had spoken of before, that is, the locust and the caterpillar. But the whole of this doth belong to the variety of speech, which is a remedy for weariness, not to any difference of senses.

27. Ver. 36. *He smote every first-born in their land: even*

**PSALM** *the first-fruits of all their strength.* This is the last plague, **CV.** *excepting the death in the Red Sea. The first-fruits of all their strength,* I imagine to be an expression derived from the first-born of cattle. These plagues are ten in number, but they are not all mentioned, nor in the same order in which they are there read to have happened. For praising is free from the law which bindeth one who is relating or composing a history. And since the Holy Spirit is the Author and Dictator, through the Prophet, of this praise; by the very same authority with which He guided him who wrote that history, he doth both mention something to have taken place which is not there read, and passeth over what is there read.

28. Ver. 37. Now he addeth this also to the praises of God, that He led the Israelites out of Egypt enriched with silver and gold; because even they were then in such a condition, that they could not as yet despise the just and due, though temporal, reward of their toils; nor in the deceit which they practised upon the Egyptians, of whom they sought a loan of gold and silver, is God to be imagined either to command such tricks, or to approve of them, if committed, by those whose hearts are on high. They were rather permitted than commanded to do these things, through those words of God, Who saw so well their heart, and weighed their lusts; not however without some improvement of their carnal mind, because they did this unto those who suffered such things justly, and took what ought to have been paid to them as their due from wicked men, although deceitfully. But God divinely used their weakness, as He used the iniquity of the Egyptians, to figure and announce beforehand all that was needful through these acts. *He brought them forth also in silver and gold:* this too is a Scripture idiom; for *in silver and gold* is said for the same as if it had been said *with silver and gold: there was not one feeble person among their tribes:* in body, not in mind. This also was a great blessing of God, that in this necessity of removal there was no infirm person.

29. Ver. 38. *Egypt was glad at their departing: for their fear fell upon them;* that is, the fear of the Hebrews upon the Egyptians. For *their fear* is not that with which

*Terror of the Egyptians. Quails and Manna given.* 163

the Hebrews feared, but that with which they were feared. <sup>VER.</sup>  
Some one will say, how then were the Egyptians unwilling 39—44.  
to dismiss them? why did they let them go as if they  
expected them to return? why did they lend them gold  
and silver, as to men who were to return, and to repay them,  
if *Egypt was glad at their departing?* But we must under-  
stand, after that final destruction of the Egyptians, and the  
terrible overthrow of the mighty pursuing army in the Red  
Sea, that the rest of the Egyptians feared lest the Hebrews  
should return, and with great ease crush the relics of them.  
Then was fulfilled the former passage, where after these  
words, *He increased them exceedingly*, he added, *He  
made them stronger than their enemies.* To explain the  
sentiment expressed in this verse, he added the rest of the  
narration in this praise of their overthrow, as far as where  
he said, *Egypt was glad at their departing, for they were  
afraid of them*; as if illustrating what he had stated, that  
He made His people stronger than their enemies.

30. Ver. 39. He now proceedeth to the divine blessings  
which were conferred upon them as they wandered in the  
desert. *He spread out a cloud to be their covering: and  
fire to give them light in the night season.* This is as  
clear as it is well known.

31. Ver. 40. *They asked, and the quail came.* They did  
not desire quails, but flesh. But since the quail is flesh,  
and in this Psalm he speaketh not of the provocation of  
those who did not please God, but of the faith of the elect,  
the true seed of Abraham; they are to be understood to  
have desired that that might come which might crush the  
murmurs of those who provoked. Then in the next line,  
*And He filled them with the bread of heaven*, he has not  
indeed named manna, but it is obscure to none who hath  
read those records.

32. Ver. 41. *He opened the rock of stone, and the waters  
flowed out: so that rivers ran in the dry places.* This fact  
too is understood as soon as read.

33. Ver. 42—44. But in all these blessings of His, God doth  
commend in Abraham the merit of faith. For the Psalmist  
goeth on to say, *For why? He remembered His holy promise,  
which He made to Abraham His servant. And He brought*

164 *Earthly good given to Abraham's seed for higher ends.*

PSALM *forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness.*

CV. What he said, *His people*, he has repeated in, *His chosen*. So also what he said, *with joy*, he has repeated in, *with gladness*. And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they took the labours of the people in possession. The lands of the heathen, and the labours of the people, are the same; and the words, *He gave*, are repeated in these, *they took in possession*.

34. Ver. 45. And as if we asked for what good these blessings were vouchsafed? that the happiness given in their temporal affairs to the people of God might not be thought the highest good, he hath at once referred it to another end, where the highest good ought to be sought. *That*, he saith, *they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law*. Where it is to be understood, that the servants of God and the chosen sons of promise, the true and genuine seed of Abraham, imitating the faith of Abraham, receive these earthly blessings from God, not that they may be dissolved in luxury through them, or become torpid in a perverse security; but that they may by Divine mercy have all these things prepared, in the search of which they might have been occupied in the most busy toils, in order that they may have leisure whence everlasting good may be acquired; i. e. *That they may keep His statutes, and seek out His law*. Lastly, since by the seed of Abraham he wished those to be understood here, who were truly the seed of Abraham, such as were not wanting even in that people; as the Apostle Paul clearly sheweth, when he saith, *But not in all of them was God well pleased*; for if He was not pleased with all, surely there were some in whom He was well pleased: since then this Psalm praiseth such men as this, he hath said nothing here of the iniquities and provocations and bitterness of those with whom God was not well pleased. But since not only the justice but also the mercy of Almighty God, the merciful, was shewn even unto the wicked; concerning these attributes the rest of the Psalm pursueth the praises of God. And yet both sorts were in one people: nor did the latter pollute the good with the contagion of their iniquities. For, *the Lord knoweth who are His*; and if he cannot separate in this world from wicked men, yet,

1 Cor.  
10, 5.

2 Tim.  
2, 19.

*let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

RECAP.  
VER.  
1—11.

35. To endeavour, then, so to speak, to discover the hidden soul in the body of this Psalm, that is, the inner meaning in what may be called the outward words: it seemeth to me that the seed of Abraham, who are all the sons of promise, who belong to the eternal inheritance of an everlasting covenant, are admonished to choose unto themselves God, as it were, as that very inheritance, and to worship Him with no further object, that is, on His own account, not on account of any reward beyond Himself; and to do this, praising, calling upon Him, preaching, doing good works by faith, not for their own, but for His glory, rejoicing in hope, fervent in love. All this soundeth in these verses: *Rom. 12, (ver. 1—4.) Confess ye unto the Lord, and call upon His Name: tell the people what things He hath done. O let your songs be of Him, and play unto Him: and let your talking be of all His wondrous works. Receive ye praise in His holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.*

36. Next, in order to feed the hearts of the young, that they may be strengthened in the faith, examples of the Patriarchs are brought forward, both of their faith, and of the promise of God, that by imitating and hoping we may be their seed, not of the race of the Hebrews only, but those as many as receive that grace in all the earth. All of which is contained in these verses: *(ver. 5—11.) Remember His marvellous works that He hath done: His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. O ye seed of Abraham His servant: ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the earth. He hath been always mindful of His covenant, the word that He commanded to a thousand generations; even the covenant that He made with Abraham, and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and unto Israel for an everlasting testament: saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the line of your inheritance.* All which things, in proportion to my small measure of ability, I have expounded, in what sense they were to be taken.

PSALM  
CV.

37. Here it would occur to the mind of slight faith: if then God is to be worshipped for nought, and He Himself to be sought from Himself as the inheritance of the everlasting covenant; doth not that inheritance even in the fulness of His mercy leave unprovided for the mortal life of those who seek Him<sup>b</sup>, and their temporal necessities? Hear attentively what He gave unto our fathers, either those whom He made examples of faith, or those who, while they sprang from their flesh, imitated also their faith. (Ver. 12—15.) *When they were yet but in small number, and they strangers in the land; that is, in the land of Canaan; what time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reprov'd even kings for their sake. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.*

38. But if ye ask, how *they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people*; hear, (ver. 16—23.) *He called for a famine upon the land, and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond-servant; whose feet they humbled in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul; until his word came: the utterance of the Lord inflamed him. The king sent, and loosed him, the prince of the people let him go free. He made him lord also of his house, and ruler of all his substance; that he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his elders wisdom. Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham. Behold, how they went from one nation to the other; from one kingdom to another people.*

39. Ver. 24—38. *And He increased His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies.* But if ye wish to know how He made them stronger than their enemies, listen: *He turned their heart, so that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. Then sent He Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen. He shewed forth in them the words of His tokens, and wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark; and*

<sup>b</sup> A1. Why doth He give this mortal multitude of His mercy, not leave even life to them that seek Him, and these these unprovided? present necessities? Doth He, in the

*Their enemies judged. God's gifts lead on to Himself.* 167

*they provoked His words. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in their king's chambers. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters. He gave them hailstones for rain, and a burning fire in their land. He smote their vines also, and fig-trees, and destroyed every tree of their coasts. He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar that was without number: and did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured all the fruit of their ground. And He smote all the first-born in the land, even the first-fruits of all their strength. He brought them forth also with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad at their departing, for their fear was fallen upon them.* Behold in what manner He made His people stronger than their enemies.

40. Since then His justice inflicted these evils upon their enemies; hear now even the temporal blessings which His lovingkindness lavished upon themselves. (Ver. 39—45.) *He spread out a cloud to be their protection, and fire to give light in the night season. They asked, and the quail came, and He filled them with the bread of Heaven. He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out, so that rivers ran in the dry places. For why? He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness; and gave them the lands of the heathen, and they took the labours of the people in possession.* Not that they should worship Him on account of these blessings, but that they should refer and apply these also to everlasting good; that is, *that they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law.* Whatever other blessings therefore God giveth, are to be used with a view to His worship for nought: but that worship in itself is to have no reference to those other goods, which God giveth; for then only will it be for nought. The enemy, challenging unto this contest, dared to say unto God, *Doth Job fear God for nought?* Moreover, if <sup>Job 1,9.</sup> Joseph, sold as a bond-servant, and humbled, and exalted, made way for the temporal good of the people of God, that it might be made stronger than its enemies; how much more

**PSALM CV.** doth Jesus, Who was sold and humbled by His brethren in the flesh, and exalted in the heavens, make way for the everlasting good of God's people, triumphing over the Devil and his angels? Hear therefore, ye seed of Abraham, boasting not in his flesh, but imitating his faith; hear, ye servants of God, and ye elect of God, *having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* If there are hard temptations in this world, think upon Joseph in the prison, Jesus on the Cross. If prosperity in temporal concerns attend you, use not God on account of it, but use it on account of God: nor think that He is worshipped by His worshippers for the sake of the necessaries of this life, which He giveth even unto His blasphemers; *but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*

**1 Tim. 4, 8.**

**Matt. 6, 33.**

**LAT.  
CV.**

**PSALM CVI.**

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EXPOSITION.  
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1. THE 105th Psalm also hath the title Allelujah prefixed to it: and this twice. But some say, that one Allelujah belongeth to the end of the former Psalm, the other to the beginning of this. And they assert, that all the Psalms bearing this title have Allelujah at the end, but not all at the beginning; so that they will not allow any Psalm which hath not Allelujah at the end, to have it at the beginning; supposing that what seemeth to belong to the commencement, really belongeth to the end of the former Psalm. But until they persuade us by some sure proofs that this is true, we will follow the general custom, which, whenever it findeth Allelujah, attributes it to the same Psalm, at the head of which it is found. For there are very few copies (and I have found this in none of the Greek copies, which I have been able to inspect) which have Allelujah at the end of the 150th Psalm; after which there is no other which belongeth to the same canon. But not even this could

outweigh custom, although all the copies had it so. For it might be that, with some reference to the praise of God, the whole book of Psalms, which is said to consist of five books, (for they say that the books severally end where it is written Amen, Amen,) might be closed with this last Allelujah, after all that hath been sung; nor, on account of the end of the 150th Psalm, do I see that it is necessary that all the Psalms entitled Allelujah, should have Allelujah at the end. But when there is a double Allelujah at the head of a Psalm, why as our Lord sometimes once, sometimes twice over, saith Amen, in the same way Allelujah may not sometimes be used once, sometimes twice, I know not: especially, since as in this 105th, both the Allelujahs are placed after the mark by which the number of the Psalm is described, whereas the one, if it belonged to the end of the former Psalm, ought to have been placed before the number; and the Allelujah which belonged to the Psalm of this number, should have been written after the number. But perhaps even in this an ignorant habit hath prevailed, and some reason may be assigned of which we are as yet uninformed, so that the judgment of truth ought rather to be our guide than the prejudice of custom. In the mean time, before we are fully instructed in this matter, whenever we find Allelujah written, whether once or twice, after the number of the Psalm, according to the most usual custom of the Church, we will ascribe it to that Psalm to which the same number is prefixed; confessing that we both believe the mysteries of all the titles in the Psalms, and of the order of the same Psalms, to be important, and that we have not yet been able, as we wish, to penetrate them.

2. Ver. 1. But I find these two Psalms, the 104th and 105th, so connected, that in one of them, the first, the people of God is praised in the person of the elect, of whom there is no complaint, whom I imagine to have been there in those with whom God was well pleased; but in the following Psalm those are mentioned among the same people who have provoked God; though the mercy of God was not wanting even to these. But these things are said in the person of those who turn and pray for pardon; and examples are given of those towards whom, even though sinners, the

VER.  
1.

<sup>1</sup> Cor.  
10, 5.

**PSALM** mercy of God hath been richly shewn. This Psalm there-  
**CVI.** fore beginneth like the former; *Confess ye unto the Lord.* But in that Psalm these words follow: *And call upon His Name:* whereas here, it is as follows, *For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever.* Wherefore in this passage a confession of sins may be understood; for after a few verses we read, *We have sinned with our fathers, we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly;* but in the words, *For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever,* there is chiefly the praise of God, and in His praise confession. Although when any one confesses his sins, he ought to do so with praise of God; nor is a confession of sins a pious one, unless it be without despair, and with calling upon the mercy of God. It therefore doth contain His praise, whether in words, when it calleth Him gracious and merciful, or in the feeling only, when he believeth this. For that publican, **Luke**18, of whom these words alone are mentioned, *God be merciful*  
**13.** *to me a sinner,* although he said not, for Thou art gracious and merciful, or any thing of this sort: nevertheless would not say that, unless he believed this; since he prayed with hope, which could not exist without that faith. The praise of God therefore may be sincere and pious, where there is no confession of sins; and this praise is much more frequently styled confession in the Scriptures: but there is no pious and profitable confession of sins where God is not praised, either in the heart, or in the mouth and language. Some copies read, *for He is gracious,* others, *for He is sweet:* one Greek word, *χρηστός,* having been differently translated. Also in the words, *for His mercy endureth to the end of the world;* the Greek hath *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,* which may be interpreted *for ever.* If that mercy be here understood, in respect of which no man can be happy without God; we may render it better, *for ever:* but if it be that mercy which is shewn to the wretched, that they may either be consoled in misery, or even freed from it; it is better construed, *to the end of the world,* in which there will never be wanting wretched persons to whom that mercy may be shewn. Unless indeed any man ventured to say, that some mercy of God will not be wanting even to those who shall be condemned with the devil and his angels; not a mercy by

which they may be freed from that condemnation, but that it may be in some degree softened for them: and that thus the mercy of God may be styled eternal, as exercised over their eternal misery. Now we read, that some will receive a more tolerable condemnation than others; yet who would dare to say, that that punishment to which any one hath been delivered will be mitigated, or have any pause for certain intervals, since the rich man was not counted worthy of one drop of water? But on so important a point we must discourse when at leisure; we shall already have said enough respecting it, as concerneth this Psalm.

3. Ver. 2. *Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord?* Full of the consideration of the Divine works, while he entreateth His mercy, *Who*, he saith, *can express the mighty acts of the Lord, or make all His praises heard?* We must supply what was said above, to make the sense complete here, thus, *Who shall make all His praises heard?* that is, who is sufficient to make all His praises heard? *Shall make them heard*, he saith; that is, cause that they be heard; shewing, that the mighty acts of the Lord and His praises are so to be spoken of, that they may be preached to those who hear them. But who can make *all* heard? Is it that as the next words are, *Blessed are they that alway keep judgment, and do righteousness in every time;* he perhaps meant those praises of His, which are understood as His works in His commandments? *For it is God*, saith the Apostle, *Who worketh in you.* And it is said to the seed of Abraham, *Sing unto Him, and play unto Him:* which we understand to be so spoken, as if it had been said, Both speak and do good things in His praise: and the two following verses we have seen agree with the two words, *singing* and *playing*: so that, *Let your talking be of all His wondrous works*, agreeth with, *Sing unto Him*, and, *Receive ye praise in His holy Name*, with, *Play unto Him.* Thus unto this seed our Lord Himself saith, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* Here therefore, considering the commandments of God themselves, the works of which commandments are the praises of Him Who doth work in His chosen, he saith, *Who shall express the mighty*

VER.  
2.Lukel6,  
24—26.Phil. 2,  
13.Matt. 5,  
16.

**PSALM** *acts of the Lord?* Since He worketh in these things in a  
**CVI.** manner that cannot be spoken. *Who will do all His praises heard?* that is, who, when he hath heard them, doth all His praises? which are the works of His commandments. As far as they are done, although all which are heard are not performed, He is to be praised, Who *worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.* For this reason, while he might have said, all His commandments, or, all the works of His commandments; he preferred saying, *His praises*, because, as hath been said, in so far as they are performed, He is to be praised. Who, nevertheless, is able to do these praises when heard? that is, when they have been heard, who is capable of performing them all?

**Phil. 2,**  
**15.**

**Mat. 10,**  
**22.**

**Ps. 94,**  
**15.**

**Ps. 97,**  
**2.**

**Ps. 37,**  
**6.**

4. Ver. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do righteousness alway:* that is, from when they begin their life of time. For *he that endureth to the end, shall be saved.* But it may appear a repetition: it may be thought, that to keep judgment and to do righteousness are the same: that in the former verse *alway* should be understood, as in the latter, *Blessed*; so that, expressing fully what is understood, we should say, *Blessed are they that alway keep judgment: and blessed are they that alway do righteousness.* But unless there were some difference between judgment and righteousness, we should not read in another Psalm, *Until righteousness turn again unto judgment.* The Scripture, indeed, loveth to place these two words together; as, *Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat*; and this, *He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day*; where there is apparently a repetition of the same sentiment. And perhaps on account of the resemblance of signification one may be put for the other, either judgment for righteousness, or righteousness for judgment: yet, if they be spoken of in their proper sense, I doubt not that there is some difference; viz. that he is said to keep judgment who judgeth rightly, but he to do righteousness who acts righteously. And I think that the verse, *Until righteousness turn again unto judgment*, may not absurdly be understood in this sense: that here also those are called blessed, who keep judgment in faith, and do righteousness in deed. For a time will come when

judgment, which is now kept in faith, may be exercised in deed, when righteousness shall turn again unto judgment, that is, when the righteous shall have received the power of judging those righteously, by whom they are at present unrighteously judged. Whence elsewhere the very Body of Christ is understood to say, *When I receive the time, I shall judge righteousnesses.* This, if literally translated, would rather stand thus, *I will judge equities.* He said not, When I receive the time, I will do righteousness; because it must be done at all times, even as he here saith, *who do righteousness always.*

5. Ver. 4, 5. Next, since God justifieth, that is, maketh men righteous, by healing them from their iniquities, a prayer followeth: *Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people:* that is, that we may be among those with whom Thou art well pleased; since God is not well pleased with them all. *O visit me with Thy salvation.* This is the Saviour Himself, in Whom sins are forgiven, and souls healed, that they may be able to keep judgment, and do righteousness; and since they who here speak know such men to be blessed, they pray for this themselves. Of that salvation it is elsewhere said, *That we may know Thy way upon earth:* and as if we asked, 'where upon earth?' he added, *among all nations.* Again, as if we asked, what way? he added, *Thy saving health.* Of Him spoke the aged Simeon, *For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,* Who said of Himself, *I am the way.* Visit us, then, with Thy salvation, that is, with Thy Christ. To see the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: that is, visit us for this reason with Thy salvation, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people. For *felicity*<sup>1</sup> some copies<sup>1</sup> bonitate read *sweetness*; as in the former passage, *For He is gracious*; where others read, *for He is sweet.* And it is the same word in the Greek, as is elsewhere read, *The Lord shall shew sweetness:* which some have translated *felicity*, others bounty. But what meaneth, *Visit us to see the felicity of Thy chosen:* that is, that happiness which Thou givest to Thine elect: except that we may not remain blind, as those unto whom it is said, *But now ye say we see: there-*

VER.  
4, 5.

Ps. 75,  
2.

Ps. 67, 2.

Luke 2,  
30.

John 14,  
6.

Ps. 85,  
13.

John 9,  
41.

**Psalm** *fore your sin remaineth.* For the Lord giveth sight to the  
**CVI.** blind, not by their own merits, but in the felicity He giveth  
**Ps. 146,** to His chosen, which is the meaning of *the felicity of Thy*  
**7.** *chosen*: as, the help of my countenance, is not of myself,  
**Ps. 135,** but is my God. And we speak of our daily bread, as ours,  
**Matt. 6,** but we add, Give unto us. *Visit us, then, with Thy salu-*  
**11.** *tion, to see* (that is, that we may see) *the felicity of Thy*  
*chosen, and to rejoice* (that is, that we may rejoice) *in the*  
*gladness of Thy people.* By the one people of God we  
ought to understand the whole seed of Abraham; but the  
sons of the promise, not of the flesh. They therefore, who  
here speak, desire to have the gladness of the same people.  
And what is the gladness of this people, save their God?  
**Ps. 32,** To Whom is said, *Thou art my hope, deliver me:* and,  
**7.** *O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is signed upon us.*  
**Ps. 4, 7.** *Thou hast put gladness in my heart:* viz. the highest, the  
unchangeable good, which worketh good, which is God  
Himself. *That Thou mayest be praised with Thine in-*  
*heritance.* I wonder this verse hath been so interpreted in  
many copies, since the Greek phrase is one and the same in  
these three verses, so that if this verse be rightly read, *That*  
*Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance*; it may  
rightly be said, *That Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy*  
*chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people:* the  
whole sense being thus arranged: *Visit us with Thy salva-*  
*tion, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen, and*  
*rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, and be praised with*  
*Thine inheritance.* Whereas according to our own reading,  
*Visit us, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and*  
*rejoice in the gladness of Thy people:* we ought next to  
read, *and that we may be praised with Thine inheritance:*  
to which inheritance it was said, *Receive ye praise in His*  
*holy Name.* But since this seemeth a doubtful expression,  
if that sense be true according to which interpreters have pre-  
ferred, *That Thou mayest be praised,* the two preceding  
verses also must be so understood, because, as I have said,  
there is one Greek expression in these three verses; so that  
the whole should be thus understood, *Visit us with Thy*  
*salvation, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen;*  
that is, visit us for this purpose, that Thou mayest cause us

to be there, and mayest see us there; that *Thou mayest rejoice in the gladness of Thy people*, that is, that Thou mayest be said to rejoice, since they rejoice in Thee; that *Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance*, that is, mayest be praised with it, since it may not be praised save for Thy sake. Whether then the words, 'to see,' 'to rejoice,' 'to praise,' are to be understood in this way or in the other, the meaning is, they wish to be visited in God's salvation, that is, in Christ, that they may not be separated from His people, and from those in whom God is well pleased.

6. Ver. 6, 7. But let us hear what they next confess: *we have sinned with our fathers: we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly.* What meaneth, *with our fathers*? Is it in the sense in which the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, that Levi gave tithes with Abraham, since he was in his loins, when he gave tithes to Melchisedec the priest; so these <sup>Heb. 7,</sup> also sinned with their fathers, in whose loins they were <sup>1-10.</sup> when they were in Egypt? For those who lived in the time when this Psalm was written, and much more their descendants, (since it might either be said of those then alive, or prophesied of those to come,) were far distant from the age of those who sinned in Egypt, not understanding the wondrous works of God. For this followeth, in explaining how they sinned: *Our fathers*, he saith, *regarded not Thy wonders in Egypt*; and the many other things which he doth relate of their sins. Or is, *we have sinned with our fathers*, to be understood as meaning, we have sinned like our fathers, that is, by imitating their sins? If it be so, it should be supported by some example of this mode of expression: which did not occur to me when I sought on this occasion an instance of any one saying that he had sinned, or done any thing, with another, whom he had imitated by a similar act after a long interval of time.

7. What meaneth then, *Our fathers understood not Thy wonders*; save this, they did not know what Thou didst wish to convince them of by these miracles? What indeed, save life eternal, and a good, not temporal, but immutable, which is waited for only through endurance? For this reason they impatiently murmured, and provoked, and they asked to be

**PSALM** blessed with present and fugitive blessings, *Neither were*  
**CVL** *they mindful of the greatness of Thy mercy.* He reproveth both their understanding and memory. Understanding there was need of, that they might meditate unto what eternal blessings God was calling them through these temporal ones; and of memory, that at least they might not forget the temporal wonders which had been wrought, and might faithfully believe, that by the same power which they had already experienced, God would free them from the persecution of their enemies; whereas they forgot the aid which He had given them in Egypt, by means of such wonders, to crush their enemies. *And they provoked, as they went up to the sea, even to the Red Sea.* The copy which I was reading from, had the passage thus; and a star had been prefixed to these two last words, *even the Red Sea*: which doth mark those readings which occur in the Hebrew, and not in the Septuagint translation. But most of the copies, whether Greek or Latin, which I have been able to inspect, read thus: *and they provoked*, or, and this is more literally from the Greek, *and they wrought bitterness, as they went up in the Red Sea.* He who readeth that history, when they went out from Egypt, and passed through the Red Sea, grieveth for their unbelief, that they were in so great alarm and despair, presently after so many and so great miracles in Egypt; which great goodness of God, he saith, that they remembered not. The word, *went up*, is used, from the position of the land being such, that we speak of going down from the land of Canaan into Egypt, and of going up from Egypt into it. We ought especially to notice how the Scripture doth censure the not understanding that which ought to have been understood, and the not remembering that which ought to have been remembered; which men are unwilling to have ascribed to their own fault, for no other reason than that they may pray less, and be less humble unto God, in Whose sight they should confess what they are, and might by praying for His aid, become what they are not. For it is better to accuse even the sins of ignorance and negligence, that they may be done away with, than to excuse them, so that they remain; and it is better to clear them off by calling upon God, than to clench them by provoking Him.

8. Ver. 8. He addeth, that God acted not according to their unbelief. *Nevertheless*, he saith, *He saved them for His Name's sake: that He might make His power to be known:* not on account of any deservings of their own. VER.  
8-12.

9. Ver. 9. *He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up.* We do not read that any voice was sent forth from Heaven to rebuke the sea; but he hath called the Divine Power by which this was effected, a rebuke: unless indeed any one may choose to say, that the sea was secretly rebuked, so that the waters might hear, and yet men could not. The power by which God acteth is very abstruse and mysterious, a power which He causeth that even things devoid of sense instantly obey at His will. *So He led them through the deeps, as through a wilderness.* He calleth a multitude of waters the deeps. For some wishing to give the sense of this whole verse, have translated, *So He led them forth amid many waters.* What then doth *through the deeps, as through a wilderness*, mean, except that that had become as a wilderness from its dryness, where before had been the watery deeps?

10. Ver. 10. *And He saved them from the hating ones*<sup>1. odientium.</sup> Some translators, in order to avoid an expression unusual in Latin, have rendered the word, by a circumlocution, *And He saved them from the hand of those that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.* What price was given in this redemption? Is it a prophecy, since this deed was a figure of Baptism, wherein we are redeemed from the hand of the devil at a great price, which price is the Blood of Christ? whence this is more consistently figured forth, not by any sea indiscriminately, but by the Red sea; since blood hath a red colour.

11. Ver. 11. *As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them: there was not one of them left;* not of all the Egyptians, but of those who pursued the departing Israelites, desirous either of taking or of killing them.

12. Ver. 12. *Then believed they in His words.* The expression seemeth barely Latin, for he saith not *believed His word*<sup>2</sup>, or *on His words*<sup>3</sup>, but *in His words*<sup>4</sup>; yet it is very frequent in Scripture. *And praised praise unto Him;* such an expression as when we say, 'This servitude he served,'<sup>4 in verbis</sup>

PSALM 'such a life he lived.' He is here alluding to that well-known hymn, commencing, *I will sing unto the Lord, for*  
 CVI.  
 Exod. 15, 1. *He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea.*

13. Ver. 13. *They acted hastily: they forgot His works:* other copies read more intelligibly, *They hastened, they forgot His works, and would not abide His counsel.* For they ought to have thought, that so great works of God towards themselves were not without a purpose, but that they invited them to some endless happiness, which was to be waited for with patience; but they hastened to make themselves happy with temporal things, which give no man true happiness, because they do not quench insatiable longing: for *whosoever, saith our Lord, shall drink of this water, shall thirst again.*  
 John 4, 4. 13.

14. Ver. 14. Lastly, *And they lusted a lust in the wilderness, and they tempted God in the dry land.* The *dry land*, or land without water, and *desert*, are the same: so also are, *they lusted a lust, and, they tempted God.* The form of speech is the same as above, *They praised a*  
 1 ver. 12. *praise*<sup>1</sup>.

15. Ver. 15. *And He gave them their desire, and sent fulness withal into their souls.* But He did not thus render them happy: for it was not that fulness of which it is said, Matt. 5, 6. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.* In this passage he doth not speak of the rational soul, but of the soul as giving animal life to the body; to the substance of which belong meat and drink, according to what is said in the Gospel, Matt. 6, 26. *Is not the soul more than meat, and the body than raiment?* as if it belonged to the soul to eat, to the body to be clothed. In Is. 58, 3. the same sense saith Isaiah; *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou savest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?*

16. Ver. 16. *And they angered Moses in the tents, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.* What angering, or, as some have more literally rendered it, what provocation<sup>2</sup>, he speaketh of, the following words sufficiently shew.  
 s amari-  
 castio-  
 nom

17. Ver. 17. *The earth opened, he saith, and swallowed up Dathan, and covered over the congregation of Abiram:*

*swallowed up* answereth to *covered over*. Both Dathan and Abiram were equally concerned in a most sacrilegious <sup>VER. 18—23.</sup> schism.

18. Ver. 18. *And the fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the sinners.* This word is not in Scripture usually applied to those, who, although they live righteously, and in a praiseworthy manner, are not without sin. Rather, as there is a difference between those who scorn and scorners, between men who murmur and murmurers, between men who are writing and writers, and so forth; so Scripture is wont to signify by sinners such as are very wicked, and laden with heavy loads of sins.

19. Ver. 19, 20. *And they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the graven image. Thus they changed their glory, in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay.* He saith not 'into' the likeness, but *in* the likeness. It is such a form of speech as where he said, *and they believed in His* <sup>ver. 12.</sup> *words.* With great effect in truth he saith not, they changed the glory of God when they did this; as the Apostle also saith, *They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into* <sup>Rom. 1,</sup> *an image made like to corruptible man: but their glory.* <sup>23.</sup> For God was their glory, if they would abide His counsel, and hasten not; unto Whom is said, *Thou art my glory,* <sup>Ps. 3, 3,</sup> *and the lifter up of my head.* That *their glory*, that is, God, *they changed in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay*, that they might be devoured by him, by whom those who are wise according to the flesh are devoured: for *all* <sup>Is. 40, 6,</sup> *flesh is grass.*

20. Ver. 21, 22. *They forgot God Who saved them.* How did He save them? *Who did so great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and fearful things in the Red sea.* The things that are wondrous, are also fearful; for there is no wonder without a certain fear: although these might be called fearful, because they beat down their adversaries, and shewed them what they ought to fear.

21. Ver. 23. *So He said, He would have destroyed them.* Since they forgot Him who saved them, the Worker of wondrous works, and made and worshipped a graven image, by this atrocious and incredible impiety they deserved death. *So He said, He would have destroyed them, had*

180 *Moses' Intercession. Sin of scorning God's gifts.*

PSALM  
CVI. *not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breaking.*  
1 con-  
fractioni He doth not say, that he stood in the breaking<sup>1</sup>, as if to break the wrath of God, but in the way of the breaking, meaning the stroke which was to strike them: that is, had he not put himself in the way for them, saying, *Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book.* Where it is proved how greatly the intercession of the saints in behalf of others prevaileth with God. For Moses, fearless in the justice of God, which could not blot him out, implored mercy, that He would not blot out those whom He justly might. Thus he *stood before Him in the breaking, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them.*

22. *Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land.* But had they seen it? How then could they scorn that which they had not seen, except as the following words explain, *and believed not in His words.* Indeed, unless that land which was styled the land that flowed with milk and honey, signified something great, through which, as by a visible token, He was leading those who understood His wondrous works to invisible grace and the kingdom of heaven, they could not be blamed for scorning that land, whose temporal kingdom we also ought to esteem as nothing, that we may love that Jerusalem which is free, the mother of us all, which is in heaven, and truly to be desired. But rather unbelief is here reproved, since they gave no credence to the words of God, Who was leading them to great things through small things, and hastening to bless themselves with temporal things, which they carnally savoured of, they *abided not His counsel*, as is said above.

23. Ver. 25. *But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord;* Who strongly forbade them to murmur.

24. Ver. 26, 27. *Then lift He up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness; to cast out their seed among the nations: and to scatter them in the lands.*

25. Ver. 28, 29. Here before he said that any one interceded with the great indignation of God, and appeased Him by any means, he added, *They were initiated also unto*

*Baalpeor*; that is, were consecrated to the Gentile idol; <sup>VER.</sup> *and ate the offerings of the dead. Thus they provoked Him* <sup>30, 31.</sup> *to anger with their own inventions; and destruction was multiplied among them.* As if He had deferred the lifting up of His hand which was to cast them down in the desert, and to cast out their seed among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands, in order that, being given up to a reprobate mind, they might commit such a thing as by the higher crime to draw down punishment with evident justice, as the Apostle saith: *And even as they did not like to retain God* <sup>Rom. 1,</sup> *in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate* <sup>28.</sup> *mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*

26. Ver. 30. Lastly, so great was their wickedness, in being consecrated to the idol, and eating the sacrifices of the dead, (that is, because the Gentiles' sacrificed to dead men as to God,) that God would not be otherwise appeased than as Phineas the Priest appeased Him, when he slew a man <sup>Numb.</sup> and a woman together whom he found in adultery. <sup>25, 8.</sup> If he had done this from hatred towards them, and not from love, while zeal for the house of God devoured him, it would not have been counted unto him for righteousness. For by this deed he struck as it were with a rod, as one man, that people whose destruction would otherwise have been greater, in order that he might save their soul from death. Christ our Lord indeed, when the New Testament was revealed, chose a milder discipline; but the threat of hell is more severe, and this we do not read of in those threatenings held out by God in His temporal government. *Destruction, therefore, was multiplied among them,* when they were heavily punished for their heavy sins. *Then stood up Phineas, and appeased Him, and the shaking ceased.* He hath related the whole briefly, because he is not here teaching the ignorant, but reminding those who know the history. The word *shaking* here is the same as *breaking* before. For it is one word in the Greek.

27. Ver. 31. *And that was counted unto him for righteousness among all posterities for evermore.* God counted this unto His Priest for righteousness, not only as long as posterity shall exist, but *for evermore*; for He Who knoweth

<sup>1</sup> Oxf. Mas. 'They like the Gentiles.'

PSALM the heart, knoweth how to weigh with how much love for  
CVI. the people that deed was done.

28. Ver. 32, 33. *And they angered Him at the waters of strife: so that Moses was vexed for their sakes; because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake doubtfully<sup>1</sup> with his lips.* What is spake doubtfully? As if God, Who had done so great wonders before, could not cause water to flow from a rock. For he touched the rock with his rod with doubt, and thus distinguished this miracle from the rest, in which he had not doubted. He thus offended, thus deserved

<sup>1</sup> *dis-*  
*tinuit.*  
Deut. 32,  
49—52. to hear that he should die, without entering into the land of promise. For being disturbed by the murmurs of an unbelieving people, he held not fast that confidence which he ought to have held. Nevertheless, God giveth unto him, as unto His chosen, a good testimony even after his death, so that we may see that this wavering of faith was punished with this penalty only, that he was not allowed to enter that land, whither he was leading the people. But God forbid that we should believe him alienated from the kingdom of God, which that land of promise typified, whence milk and honey were said to flow. Rather this is an everlasting testament which he delivered unto Abraham, our father not according to the flesh, but according to faith.

29. Ver. 34—36. But they of whose iniquities this Psalm speaketh, when they had entered into that temporal land of promise, *destroyed not the heathen, which the Lord commanded them; but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which became to them an offence.* Their not destroying them, but mingling with them, became to them an offence.

30. Ver. 37—40. *Yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils; and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan.* That history doth not relate that they offered their sons and daughters to devils and idols; but neither can that Psalm lie, nor the Prophets, who assert this in many passages of their rebukes. But the literature of the Gentiles is not silent respecting this custom of theirs.

31. But what is it that followeth? *And the land was slain with bloods.* We might suppose that this was a mistake of <sup>VER.</sup> ~~40—43.~~ the writer, and that he had written *interfecta* for *infecta*, were it not for the goodness of God, Who hath willed His Scriptures to be written in many languages; were it not that we see it written as in the text in many Greek<sup>1</sup> copies which we have inspected; *the land was slain with bloods.* What meaneth then, *the land was slain*, unless this be referred to the men who dwelt in the land, by a metaphorical expression, which doth substitute that which containeth for that which is contained, even as we speak of an evil house, meaning one in which evil men dwell; and a good house, as one in which good men dwell? For they themselves were slaying their own souls when they offered up their sons, and when they shed the blood of infants who were far from consent to this crime: whence it is said, *They shed innocent blood.* *The land therefore was slain with bloods, and defiled by their works*, since they themselves were slain in soul, and defiled by their works; *and they went a whoring after their own inventions.* By inventions are meant what the Greeks call ἐπιτηδεύματα: for this word doth occur in the Greek copies both in this and a former passage, where it is said, *They provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; inventions* in both instances signifying what they had initiated others in. Let no man therefore suppose inventions to mean what they had of themselves instituted, without any example before them to imitate. Whence other translators in the Latin tongue have preferred pursuits, affections, imitations, pleasures, to inventions: and the very same who here write inventions, have elsewhere written pursuits. I chose to mention this, lest the word inventions, applied to what they had not invented, but imitated from others, might raise a difficulty.

32. Ver. 40—43. *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His own people.* Our translators have been unwilling to use the word anger, for the Greek θυμὸς; though some have used it; while others translate by ‘indignation’ or ‘mind.’ Whichever of these terms be adopted, passion doth not affect God; but the power of punishing hath assumed this name metaphorically from custom.

PSALM  
CVI.

33. *Inasmuch that He abhorred His own inheritance; and He gave them over into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them were lords over them: and their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought low under their hands.* Since he hath called them the inheritance of God, it is clear that He abhorred them, and gave them over into their enemies' hands, not in order to their perdition, but for their discipline. Lastly, he saith, *Many a time did He deliver them.*

Phil. 2,  
31.

34. *But they provoked Him with their own counsels.* This is what he said above, *They did not abide His counsel.* Now a man's counsel is pernicious to himself, when he seeketh those things which are his own only, not those which are God's. In Whose inheritance, which inheritance He Himself is to us, when He deigneth His presence for our enjoyment, being with the Saints, we shall suffer no straitening from the society, by our love of any thing as our own possession. For that most glorious city, when it hath gained the promised inheritance, in which none shall die, none shall be born, will not contain citizens who shall individually rejoice in their own, for *God shall be all in all.* And whoever in this pilgrimage faithfully and earnestly doth long for this society, doth accustom himself to prefer common to private interests, by seeking not his own things, but Jesus Christ's: lest, by being wise and vigilant in his own affairs, he provoke God with his own counsel; but, hoping for what he seeth not, let him not hasten to be blessed with things visible; and, patiently waiting for that everlasting happiness which he seeth not, follow His counsel in His promises, Whose aid he prayeth for in his prayers. Thus he will also become humble in his confessions; so as not to be like those, of whom it is said, *They were brought down in their wickedness.*

1 Cor.  
15, 28.

35. Ver. 44, 45. Nevertheless, God, full of mercy, forsook them not. *And He saw when they were in adversity, when He heard their complaint. And He thought upon His covenant, and repented, according to the multitude of His mercies.* He saith, *He repented,* because He changed that wherewith He seemed about to destroy them. With God indeed all things are arranged and fixed; and when He

seemeth to act upon sudden motive, He doth nothing but what He foreknew that He should do from eternity; but in the temporal changes of creation, which He ruleth wonderfully, He, without any temporal change in Himself, is said to do by a sudden act of will what in the ordained causes of events He hath arranged in the unchangeableness of His most secret counsel, according to which He doth every thing according to defined seasons, doing the present, and having already done the future. And who is capable of comprehending these things? Let us therefore hear the Scripture, speaking high things humbly, giving food for the nourishment of children, and proposing subjects for the research of the older. *And He saw when they were in adversity: when He heard their complaint, He thought upon His covenant: that everlasting covenant which He made with Abraham, not the old which is abolished, but the new which is hidden even in the old. And pitied them according to the multitude of His mercies.* He did that which He had covenanted, but He had foreknown that He would yield this to them when they prayed in their adversity; since even their very prayer, when it was not uttered, but was still to be uttered, undoubtedly was known unto God.

36. Ver. 46. *Yea, He gave them unto compassions.* That they might not be vessels of wrath, but vessels of mercy. The compassions unto which He gave them are named in the plural for this reason, I imagine, because each one hath a gift of his own from God, one in one way, another in another. So *He gave them unto compassions, in the sight of all that had taken them captive.* Come then, whosoever readest this, and dost recognise the grace of God, by which we are redeemed unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by reading in the apostolical writings, and by searching in the Prophets, and seest the Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old; remember him whom the Apostle Paul called, *the prince of the powers of the air, who worketh in the children of disobedience:* and what he saith of some, *that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will:* and the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where, when He driveth him out of the hearts of the faithful, He saith,

V ER. 46.

2 Cor. 2, 16.

Rom. 9, 22, 23.

1 Cor. 7, 7.

Eph. 2, 2.

2 Tim. 2, 26.

**PSALM CVI.** *Now is the prince of this world cast out: and again of the same Apostle, when he saith, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Meditate on these and such like things, examine also the Old Testament, and see what is*

*sung in that Psalm, the title of which is, When the temple was being built after the captivity: for there it is said, Sing unto the Lord a new song. And, that thou mayest not think it doth refer to the Jewish people only, he saith, Sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth: sing unto the Lord, and praise His Name: declare, or rather, give the good news of, or, to transfer the very word used in the Greek, evangelize day from day, His salvation. Here the Gospel (Evangelium) is mentioned, in which is announced the Day that came from Day, our Lord Christ, the Light from Light, the Son from the Father. This also is the meaning of His salvation: for*

<sup>1</sup> above, *Christ is the Salvation of God, as we have shewn above<sup>1</sup>.*

§. 5. *Declare His honour unto the heathen, and His wonders unto all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: He is more to be feared than all gods; as for all the gods of the heathen, they are but devils. These enemies, then, with the devil their king, held captive the people of God. Since we are redeemed from this captivity, and the prince of this world is cast out, the temple is being built up after the captivity; whose corner-stone is Christ;*

*Who hath made in Himself of twain one new man, making peace, the good tidings of which He, Day from Day, preached unto those who were nigh, and those who were far off, having made both one; and bringing other sheep who are not of this fold, that there may be one flock and one shepherd. And thus God gave His predestined unto*

*compassions: (for 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy:') in the sight of all who had taken them captive. These enemies, then, the devil and his angels, had taken captive those predestined to the kingdom and glory of God: now, they who used within to rule over the unbelieving, when cast out by our Redeemer, assail the faithful from without. But they assail,*

*they do not conquer those who cling unto the strong tower against the enemy. Their inducement to assail us is, that*

they see in us the relics of weakness, on account of which <sup>VER.</sup> we say, *Forgive us our trespasses: and, Lead us not into* <sup>47, 48.</sup> *temptation, but deliver us from evil.* By casting out there- <sup>Matt. 6,</sup> <sup>12, 13.</sup> fore these enemies, our Lord Christ made the health of the body perfect, the head of which He is Himself, *the Saviour* <sup>Ephes.</sup> *of the body,* that in that same body he might on the third <sup>5, 23.</sup> day be perfected. For thus He spoke: *Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected:* that is, I am perfected, when *we* <sup>Ephes.</sup> *all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature* <sup>4, 13.</sup> *of the fulness of Christ.*

37. Ver. 47, 48. Therefore, by casting out devils, by whom we were held captive, he perfecteth health. Thus here also when He had said, *He gave them unto compassions in the sight of all those that had taken them captive;* as if the devils who had taken them captive had been cast out, there followeth a prayer that He may perfect their health. *Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations;* (other copies read, *from the heathen;*) *that we may give thanks unto Thy holy Name, and make our boast of Thy praise.* Then he hath briefly added this very praise, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end<sup>k</sup>:* by which we understand from everlasting to everlasting; because He shall be praised without end by those of whom it is said, *Blessed are they that dwell in Thy* <sup>Ps. 84, 4.</sup> *house: they will be alway praising Thee.* This is the perfection of the Body of Christ on the third day, when the devils had been cast out, and cures perfected, even unto the immortality of the body itself, the everlasting reign of those who perfectly praise Him, because they perfectly love Him; and perfectly love Him, because they behold Him face to face. For then shall be completed the prayer at the commencement of this Psalm: *Remember us, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit us with Thy salvation; that we may see in the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, that Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance.* For from the Gentiles He doth not gather only the lost sheep of the house <sup>Matt. 15,</sup> <sup>26.</sup> of Israel, but also those which do not belong to that fold;

<sup>k</sup> Oxf. Mss. add, 'so be it! so be it.'

**PSALM CVI.** so that there is one flock, as is said, and one Shepherd. But when the Jews suppose that that prophecy belongeth to their visible kingdom, because they know not how to rejoice in the hope of good things unseen, they are about to rush into the snares of him, of whom the Lord saith, *I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.* Of whom the Apostle Paul saith: *that Man of Sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God.* And a little after he saith, *Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them a working of delusion, that they should believe a lie: and that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* Through that Apostate, through him who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, it seemeth to me, that the carnal people of Israel will suppose that prophecy to be fulfilled, where it is said, *Deliver us, O Lord, and gather us from among the heathen;* that under His guidance, before the eyes of their visible enemies, who had visibly taken them captive, they are to have visible glory. Thus they will believe a lie, because they have not received the love of truth, that they might love not carnal, but spiritual blessings. For they were thus deceived by the devil, so that they slew Christ, when they said, *If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation. When Caiaphas, one of them, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this, as the Evangelist judged, spake he not of himself; but, being high priest that year,*

*The Church the true 'gathering from among all nations.'* 189

*he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, that is,* VER. 47, 48.  
*for the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.* For He had other sheep that were not of John 10, this fold: but the devil and his angels had taken captive all 16. those sheep, both among the Israelites and the Gentiles. The power, therefore, of the devil having been cast out of them, in the sight of the evil spirits who had taken them captive, their cry in this prophecy is, that they may be saved and perfected for evermore: *Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen.* Not, as the Jews imagine it, fulfilled through Antichrist, but through our Lord Christ coming in the name of His Father, *Day from day, His salvation;* of Whom it is here said, *O visit us in Thy salvation! And let all the people say, the predestined people of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, a holy race, an adopted people, So be it! So be it!*

PSALM CVII.

LAT.  
CVI.

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EXPOSITION.  
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1. THIS Psalm commendeth unto us the mercies of God, proved in ourselves, and is therefore the sweeter to the experienced. And it is a wonder if it can be pleasing to any one, except to him who has learned in his own case, what he hears in this Psalm. Yet was it written not for any one or two, but for the people of God, and set forth that it might know itself therein as in a mirror. Its title needeth not now to be treated, for it is Halleluia, and again Halleluia. Which we have a custom of singing at a certain time in our solemnities, after an old tradition of the Church: nor is it without a sacred meaning that we sing it on particular days. Halleluia we sing indeed on certain days<sup>1</sup>, but every day we think it. For if in this word is signified the <sup>1</sup> See on Ps. cxi.

<sup>1</sup> Oxf. Mss. add, ' Amen.'

PRAT.M  
CVII.  
Ps.34,1. praise of God, though not in the mouth of the flesh, yet  
Rom. 8,  
10. surely in the mouth of the heart. *His praise shall ever be  
in my mouth.* But that the title hath Halleluia not once  
only but twice, is not peculiar to this Psalm, but the former  
also hath it so. And as far as appears from its text, that  
was sung of the people of Israel, but this is sung of the  
universal Church of God, spread through the whole world.  
Perchance, it not unfitly hath Halleluia twice, because we  
cry, Abba, Father. Since Abba, is nothing else but Father,  
yet not without meaning the Apostle said, *in whom we cry,  
Abba, Father*; but because one wall indeed coming to the  
Corner-stone crieth Abba, but the other, from the other side  
crieth Father; viz. in that Corner-stone, *Who is our Peace,  
Who hath made both one.* Let us see therefore here what  
we are admonished of, and for what called to rejoice, and  
for what we ask help, for what we are forsaken, for what we  
are relieved, what we are by ourselves, what by the mercy  
of God, how our pride is crushed that His grace may be  
glorified. To every man may what I am about to say, if  
possible, occur in his own case, but I speak to men who  
walk the way of God, and stand in some sort of spiritual  
advancement; whence, if any perchance for this reason scarce  
understand me, let them find out where they are, and by  
advancement hasten to understanding. But I do not think  
that God will be wanting to our endeavour, that what we  
speak may reach unto all, whether experienced or inex-  
perienced, that the experienced may approve, the inex-  
perienced may feel a longing; and that my discourse may  
be pleasing to all, which will first be pleasing to the Lord,  
if it shall be truthful. But it will be truthful if it shall come  
to me, not from myself, but from Him. Thus the Psalm  
begins.

2. Ver. 1. *Confess unto the Lord that He is sweet, because  
for aye is His mercy.* This confess ye that He is sweet: if  
ye have tasted, confess. But he cannot confess, who hath  
not chosen to taste, for whence shall he say that that is  
sweet, which he knoweth not. But ye if ye have tasted  
1 Pet. 2,  
3.  
1 cruc-  
tate how sweet the Lord is, *Confess ye to the Lord that He is  
sweet.* If ye have tasted with eagerness, break forth<sup>1</sup> with  
confession. *For aye is His mercy,* that is, for ever. For

here *for aye*, is so put, since also in some other places of Scripture, for aye, that is, what in Greek is called *εις αιωνα*, <sup>VER. 2, 3.</sup> is understood for ever. For His mercy is not for a time, so as not to be for ever, since for this purpose His present mercy is over men, that they may live with the Angels for ever.

3. Ver. 2. *Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord.* Redeemed indeed it seems was also the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, from the hand of slavery, from fruitless labours, from miry works; yet let us see whether those who say these things, are they who were freed by the Lord from Egypt. It is not so. But who are they? *Those whom He redeemed from the hand of their enemies.* Still one might take it also of them, as redeemed from the hand of their enemies, that is, of the Egyptians. Let them be expressed exactly who they are, for whom this Psalm would be sung. *He gathered them from the lands;* these might still be the lands of Egypt, for there are many lands even in one province. Let him speak openly. (Ver. 3.) *From the east and the west, from the north and the sea.* Now then we understand these redeemed, in the whole circle of the earth. This people of God, freed from a great and broad Egypt, is led, as through the Red Sea, that in Baptism it may make an end of its enemies. For by the sacrament as it were of the Red sea, that is, by Baptism consecrated with the Blood of Christ, the pursuing Egyptians, the sins, are washed away. And as thou comest out, not one of the enemy that pressed on thee is left. Let these, therefore, say these words, and let us now hear, brethren, (since this is the people of God that is leading on,) what is here doing in the congregation of all nations, that is redeemed through Christ. Not as though all these things which are sung take place in all at once, but severally in each that believe, but otherwise in that people. For the whole people, that whole nation of the seed of Abraham after the flesh, the whole multitude of the house of Israel, was led once out of Egypt, brought once through the Red sea, brought home once to the promised land, for they were all together, with whom these things took place. *But all these things happened to* <sup>Exod. 14, 22.</sup> <sup>1 Cor. 10, 11.</sup>

**PSALM** *them in a figure, and were written for our admonition, on*  
**CVII.** *whom the ends of the ages have come.* But we not altogether, but by degrees, and one by one, coming to believe, are gathered into one certain city, and into one people of God. But in each one of us, even as an individual, these things befall. Those which are written befall a people, for a people is composed of individuals, and individuals of a people. For is one man of peoples? nay, but a people consisteth of individual men. Whatsoever, therefore, when I speak of it, thou mayest recognise in thyself, whoever thou art who hast experience, do not in thy thought, as it were, stay at thyself, and think that it taketh place in thee alone, but believe that these things take place, either in all, or almost in all, who come to this people, and are redeemed from the hand of their enemies with the precious Blood.

4. For he is about to repeat constantly what we have now sung. (Ver. 8, 15, 21, 31.) *Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the sons of men.* These verses as far as I could observe, which you may also do, he repeats four times. In which number, as far as we have been able by God's help to make out, he signifies to us certain four temptations, from which He frees us, unto Whom we confess His mercies. For suppose a man first seeking nothing, living after the old life, in a seductive security; not thinking there is any thing else after this life, when it shall sometime end; one negligent and listless, with his heart buried in the allurements of the world, and lulled to sleep with deadly delights: that such an one may be roused to seek the grace of God, that he may become anxious, and as it were awake out of sleep; doth not the Hand of God arouse him? But yet, by whom he was aroused he knoweth not; however he begins now to belong to God, when he has come to know the belief of the Truth. But before he knoweth, he grieveth for his error. For he findeth himself in error, wisheth to know the Truth; knocketh where he can, trieth what he can, wandereth which way he can, feeleth even a hunger after the Truth itself. So then the first temptation is of wandering and hunger. When he hath grown weary in this temptation and cried unto God, he is led to the way of

faith, whereby he may begin to proceed toward *the city of rest*. He is led therefore to Christ, Who said, *I am the Way*.

V ER.  
1.  
ver. 7.  
John 14,  
6.

5. When therefore he is come there, now knowing what he ought to observe, sometimes through taking too much upon himself, and as it were presuming on his own strength, he beginneth to think of striving against sins, and through his pride to get the worst. So then he findeth himself bound with difficulties from his desires, and for his fetters unable to walk on his way. He feeleth himself shut up with difficulty from his vices, and with a wall, as it were, of impossibility built up, and gates shut upon him, how to get forth and live aright he findeth not. Now he knoweth how he ought to live, for before he was in wandering and suffered hunger for the truth, but he hath now received the food of truth, and is placed in the way. He heareth, Live well, according to that thou knowest, for before thou knewest not how thou shouldst live. Now thou hast received and knowest. He tries; he cannot. He feels himself bound; he cries unto the Lord. The second temptation then is that of difficulty in working well, as that first was of wandering and hunger. In this also he crieth unto the Lord, and the Lord delivereth him from his necessities, breaketh the chains of difficulty, establisheth him in the working of righteousness. That now begins to be easy to him, which had been difficult. To keep from evil things, not to commit adultery, not to steal, to do no murder, no sacrilege, not to covet what is another's. That has become easy which before was hard. The Lord could grant this without the difficulty, but if we had it without the difficulty, we should not acknowledge the Giver of this good gift. For if man at first, when he wished, were able, and felt not his desires striving against him, and if his soul did not bruise itself through the weight of its chains, he would attribute to his own strength what he felt himself able to do, and would not confess to the Lord His mercies.

6. After these two temptations, the first of wandering and wanting the truth, the second of difficulty in doing well, a third temptation meets a man. One, I mean, who has already gone through these two; for these two, I confess,

**PSALM CVII.** are known to many. For who knows not that he came out of ignorance unto truth, out of wandering unto the way, out of a lack of wisdom to the word of faith. Then there are many that struggle with difficulties from their own bad dispositions, and still bound by habit, groan as in prison and fetters. They acknowledge also that temptation, although **Rom. 7,** they may now be saying, if perchance they say it, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* **Gal. 5,** For behold the straitest chains: *the flesh,* he saith, *lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, that ye may not do the things that ye would.* Now then, let him, who has already been helped by the Spirit, that, as he would not be an adulterer, so he is not; as he would not be a thief, so he is not; and all these other things which men desire to conquer, and often are bowed down and overcome, so as to cry out unto God, that He may deliver them from their necessities, and thence, being freed, confess unto the Lord His mercies: whoever, I say, is such an one, and hath conquered those difficulties, and now liveth respectably amongst men, without any complaint of evil living, is met by a third temptation, of a kind of weariness in the length of this life, so that sometimes it is no pleasure to him either to read or to pray. The third temptation is contrary to the former, for first he was in danger through hunger, afterward through fulness. Whence this too, but from a certain sickness of soul? Now adultery allures thee no more, yet doth not the Word of God delight thee. Now after the danger of ignorance and of lust, from which too thou art glad to have escaped, see that weariness and satiety slay thee not. This too is no slight temptation; know thyself in that, and cry out unto the Lord, that here also He may free thee from thy necessities; and, when thou art free from this temptation, let His mercies confess unto Him.

7. But when freed from wandering, freed from the difficulty of doing well, freed from weariness and satiety of the Word of God, perchance thou mayest be worthy to have a people committed to thee. Thou mayest be placed at the helm of the ship to rule the Church. Then is a fourth temptation, tempests of the sea, tossing the Church, alarm her steersman. Finally, these three temptations any pious believer of the

people of God may experience, that fourth is ours. For the more we are honoured, the more we are in peril. It is to be feared, lest the danger of error turn any one of you from the truth. It is to be feared, lest each one's desire overcome him, and he choose to follow it, rather than from the difficulties of it to cry out unto God. It is to be feared, lest to each one of you the Word of God lose its relish, and he die of satiety, but the temptation of governing, the temptation of danger in ruling the Church, touches us especially. But how shall ye, too, have no share in it, if the whole ship shall be in danger? which I said for this reason, that ye might not be less anxious in this fourth temptation, as a special one of ours, when there is need that ye cease not from prayers, for ye are the first who suffer shipwreck. For what, brethren, because ye sit not at the same helm, do ye not sail in the same ship?

8. After these four temptations, four cryings out, four deliverances, four confessions of the mercies of the Lord, the Church herself is next generally set forth in this Psalm, that ye may most evidently know concerning whom the Psalm spake from the beginning. But she is so set forth, that in all things is proclaimed to us the grace of God, *Who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble;* James because, *to this end He came, that they who see not may see,* John 9, *and they who see may be made blind;* because *every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.* Which thing being set forth, a thing is said which may also be understood of heretics, by whom, as by civil war, the Church is shaken. And the Psalm is concluded, which I have now expounded, more briefly perhaps than ye thought, for I suppose that I have so far explained the whole of this somewhat long Psalm, that now ye expect of me not the work of a disputant, but scarce more than that of a reader, if ye retain what I have said. For I think things are placed before your eyes, but that it may be the better set forth, let them be briefly repeated. The first temptation is that of wandering and hunger for the Word; the second, that of difficulty in conquering desires; the third, that of weariness and satiety; the fourth, that of storms and perils in governing Churches. And in all these there are cryings

PSALM  
CVII.

out, and deliverances, and confessions of the mercies of God. At the end there is a setting forth of the Church herself, which is both saved through the grace of our God, not through her own merit, and the overthrow of her enemies is commemorated, on whose destruction the Church was built up; for their pride, and because of certain plots to her detriment, on the part of heretics, and because of evils, in a manner, domestic, and from these the acts of divine goodness toward the Church; then the conclusion of the Psalm. Let us now rather read than discuss.

9. Ver. 2. *Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemies; (ver. 3.) and gathered them from the lands, from the east, and the west, and the north, and the sea; let these Christians say, called together from the whole world. (Ver. 4.) They wandered in the wilderness, in a dry place, they found not the way of a city to dwell in. We have heard a wretched wandering; what of want? (Ver. 5.) Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. But wherefore did it faint? for what good? For God is not cruel, but He maketh Himself known, in that it is expedient for us, that He be entreated by us fainting, and that aiding us He be loved. And therefore after this wandering, and hunger, and thirst, (ver. 6.) And they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distress. And what did He for them, as they were wandering? (Ver. 7.) And He led them in the right way. They found not the way of a city to dwell in, with hunger and thirst they were vexed and faint, and He led them into the right way, that they might go into a city to dwell in. How He helped their hunger and thirst, He saith not, but even this expect ye; (ver. 8.) Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the children of men. Tell them, ye that are experienced, to the inexperienced; ye that are already in the way, already directed towards finding the city, already at last free from hunger and thirst. (Ver. 9.) Because He hath satisfied the empty soul, and filled the hungry soul with good things.*

10. Live therefore well. Thou art now put in the way. Thou hast now heard what thou oughtest to do, what to hope. What further meeteth thee, since thou strivest and

art overcome? (Ver. 10.) *Them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, fast bound in beggary and iron.* V ER. 10—17.

Whence this, but that thou wast attributing things to thyself? that thou wast not owning the grace of God? that thou wast rejecting the counsel of God concerning thee? For see Luke 7, 30.

what He addeth; (ver. 11.) *Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord through pride,* not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own, Rom. 10, 3. *and they were bitter against the counsel of the Most High.*

(Ver. 12.) *And their heart was brought low in labour.* And now fight against lust; if God cease to aid thou mayest strive, thou canst not conquer. And when thou shalt be pressed by thine evil, thy heart will be brought low in labour, so that now with humbled heart thou mayest learn to cry out, Rom. 7, 24.

*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—Their heart therefore was brought low in labour, they were made weak, and there was none to help them.* What then remaineth, save wherefore it was done?

*For if a law had been given that could have given life, doubtless righteousness had been of the Law; but the Scrip- Gal. 3, 21.*

*ture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But the Law came in by the way, that the offence might abound. Rom. 5, 20.*

Thou hast received the word, hast received the commandment, and yet ceasest not to do the ill thou didst, and having received the commandment, dost aggravate thy sins by transgression. Proud one, if thou didst not know thyself, learn thyself at least as brought low. Thou wilt cry, thou wilt be freed from distress. Freed, thou wilt confess the mercies of the Lord. (Ver 13.) *And they cried unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them out of their distresses.* They were freed from the second temptation. There remains that of weariness and loathing. But first see what He did for them when freed. (Ver. 14.) *And He led them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bonds asunder.* (Ver. 15.) *Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders to the children of men.* Wherefore? what difficulties hath He overcome? (Ver. 16.) *Because He brake the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron.* (Ver. 17.) *He took them up from the way*

**PSALM** *of their iniquity, for because of their unrighteousnesses they*  
**CVII.** *were brought low.* Because they gave honour to themselves,  
**Rom.** not to God, because they were establishing their own righ-  
**10, 3.** teousness, not knowing the righteousness of God, they were  
 brought low. They found that they were helpless without  
 His aid, who were presuming on their own strength alone.

11. But what other sort remaineth? (Ver. 18.) *Their soul abhorred all manner of meat.* Now they suffer satiety. They are sick of satiety. They are in danger from satiety. Unless perchance thou thinkest they could be killed with famine, but cannot with satiety. See what followeth. When he had said, *Their soul abhorred all manner of meat*, lest thou shouldst think them, as it were, safe of their fulness, and not rather see that they would die of satiety: *And they came near*, he saith, *even unto the gates of death.* What then remaineth? That even when the word of God delighteth thee, thou account it not to thyself; nor for this be puffed up with any sort of arrogance, and having an appetite for food, proudly spurn at those who are in danger from satiety. Understand that to thyself also this is a gift, and is not in  
**1 Cor. 4,** thee of thyself; for, *what hast thou which thou hast not*  
**7.** *received?* This then understanding, and being in danger from this fault and sickness, do what followeth. (Ver. 19.) *And they cried out unto the Lord when they were in trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses.* And because it was a sickness not to be pleased, (ver. 20.) *He sent His Word, and healed them.* See what evil there is in satiety; see whence He delivers, to whom he crieth that loathes his food. *He sent His Word, and healed them, and snatched them,* from whence? not from wandering, not from hunger, not from the difficulty of overcoming sins, but *from their corruption.* It is a sort of corruption of the mind to loathe what is sweet. Therefore also of this benefit, as of the others before, (ver. 21.) *Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders unto the sons of men.* (Ver. 22.) *And sacrifice the sacrifice of praise.* For now that He may be praised, the Lord is sweet, *and let them tell out His works with gladness.* Not with weariness, not with sadness, not with anxiety, not with loathing, but *with gladness.*

12. That fourth remains, in which we are all in danger.

For we are all in the ship, some work, others are conveyed, <sup>VER.</sup> yet all together are both in peril in the storm, and find safety 23—29. in the haven. For after all this, it follows; (ver. 23.) *They who go down on the sea in ships, doing their business on the mighty waters; that is, amongst many peoples.* For that waters are often put for peoples, the Apocalypse of John is witness, when on John's asking, what those waters were, it was answered him, they are peoples. They then who do their business on mighty waters, (ver. 24.) *they have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.* For what is deeper than human hearts? hence often break forth winds; storms of sedition, and dissensions, disturb the ship. And what is done in them? God, willing that both they who steer, and they who are conveyed, should cry unto Him, (ver. 25.) *He spake, and the breath of the storm stood.* What is, stood? Abode, continued, still disturbeth, long toseth; rageth, and passeth not away. *For He spake, and the breath of the storm stood.* And what did that breath of the storm? (Ver. 26.) *They go up even to the heavens, in daring; they go down even into the deeps, in fearing. They go up even to the heavens, they go down even to the deeps.* "Without are fightings, within are fears." *Their soul wasted* <sup>2 Cor. 7,</sup> *in miseries.* (Ver. 27.) *They were disturbed, and moved like* <sup>5.</sup> *a drunken man.* They who sit at the helm, and they who faithfully love the ship, feel what I say. *They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man.* Certainly, when they speak, when they read, when they interpret, they appear wise. Woe for the storm! *and all their wisdom, he saith, was swallowed up.* Sometimes all human counsels fail; whichever way one turns himself, the waves roar, the storm rageth, the arms are powerless: where the prow may strike, to what wave the side may be exposed, whither the stricken ship may be allowed to drift, from what rocks she must be kept back lest she be lost, is impossible for her pilots to see. And what is left but that which follows? (Ver. 28.) *And they cried out unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them from their distresses.* (Ver. 29.) *And He commanded the storm, and it stood unto clear air. It stood, not unto tempest, but unto clear air, and the waves of it were still.* Hear on this point the voice of a steersman,

PSALM one that was in peril, was brought low, was freed. *I would CVII. not, he saith, have you ignorant, brethren, of our distress, 2 Cor. 1, 8. which befel us in Asia, that we were pressed above strength, and above measure, (I see all his 'wisdom swallowed up,') so that we were weary, he saith, even of life. And why should He so leave men to faint? Or did they not faint for this very cause, that He might find glory with them? 2 Cor. 1, 9. Finally, what followeth? But we ourselves had the answer of death in ourselves, that we may not be trusting in ourselves, but in God, Who raiseth the dead.*

*And He commanded the storm, and it stood into clear air. Already those men, all whose wisdom had been swallowed up, had had the answer of death in themselves. And its waves were still. (Ver. 30.) And they were glad, because they were still, and He brought them into the haven of their desire. (Ver. 31.) Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders towards the sons of men. Every where, without exception, let not our merits, not our strength, not our wisdom, confess unto the Lord, but, His mercies. Let Him be loved in every deliverance of ours, Who has been invoked in every distress. Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders toward the children of men.*

13. And observe whereof he speaketh, whereof he said all those things before, whereof he hath enumerated all these, where these things are done. (Ver. 32.) *And let them exalt Him in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the seat of the elders. And let them exalt Him, that is, praise Him: and praise Him, that is, exalt Him. Let them exalt, let them praise, peoples and elders, merchants and pilots. For what hath He done in this assembly? What hath He established? Whence hath He rescued it? What hath He granted it? Even as He resisted the proud, and gave grace to the humble: the proud, that is, the first people of the Jews, arrogant, and extolling itself on its descent from James 4, 6. Abraham, and because to that nation were entrusted the Rom. 3, 2. oracles of God. These things did not avail them unto soundness, but unto pride of heart, rather to swelling than to greatness. What then did God, resisting the proud, but giving grace to the humble; cutting off the natural branches for their pride; grafting in the wild olive for its humility?*

*Rivers of the Jews dried up, waters given to the thirsty.* 201

What did God? Hear these two things: first, how God resisteth the proud; then, how He giveth grace to the humble. VER. 33—36.

Ver. 33. *He made the rivers a wilderness.* Waters did run there, prophecies were in course. Seek now a prophet among the Jews; thou findest none. For, *He made the rivers a wilderness, and the outgoings of waters to be thirst. He made the rivers to be a wilderness.* Let them say, *Now there is no prophet more, and He will not know us any more.*—*He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst.* (Ver. 34.) *A fruitful land to be salt-pools.* Thou seekest there the faith of Christ, thou findest not: thou seekest a prophet, thou findest not: thou seekest a sacrifice, thou findest not: thou seekest a temple, thou findest none. Wherefore this? Because *He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst.* Whence? of what merit? *From the wickedness of them that dwell therein.* Behold how He resisteth the proud: hear how He giveth grace to the humble. (Ver. 35.) *He made the wilderness to be a standing water, and the dry ground to be outgoings of waters.* (Ver. 36.) *And He caused the hungry to dwell there.* Because to Him it was said, *Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec.* For thou seekest a sacrifice among the Jews; thou hast none after the order of Aaron, because *He hath made the rivers to be a wilderness.* Thou seekest it after the order of Melchizedec; thou findest it not among them, but through the whole world it is celebrated in the Church. *From the rising of the sun to the setting thereof, the name of the Lord is praised.* And God saith to those whose rivers He hath made to be a wilderness, *I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord, nor will I receive a sacrifice from your hands: because from the rising of the sun even to the setting, a pure sacrifice is offered to My Name.* Where were all the unclean sacrifices, when it was a wilderness, when they were filthy, when all nations were salt-pits; there now are there fountains, there now rivers, there now pools of waters, and outgoings of waters. Therefore, *He hath resisted the proud, and given grace to the humble.* And, *He caused the hungry to dwell there;* because, *The poor* Ps. 110, 4.  
Ps. 113, 3.  
Mal. 1, 10. 11.  
Ps. 22, 26.

**PSALM CVII.** *shall eat and be satisfied. And they set up a city of habitation.* For the present of habitation in hope: since **Prov. 1, 33.** *He that heareth Me, He saith, dwelleth in hope. And they set up a city of habitation. (Ver. 37.) And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and gat fruit of corn: at which that* **Phil. 4, 17.** *workman rejoiceth, who saith, Not because I desire a gift, but I seek fruit. (Ver. 38.) And He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished. This standeth. For, The foundation of God standeth sure; because the Lord knoweth them that are His. They are called beasts of burden, and cattle, that walk simply in the Church, yet are useful; not much learned, but full of faith. Therefore, whether spiritual or carnal, He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished.*

14. Ver. 39. *And they became few, and were vexed.* Whence this? From athwart? Nay, from within. For **1 John 2, 19.** *that they should 'become few,' They went out from us, but they were not of us. But therefore he speaketh as of these, of whom he spake before, that they may be discerned with understanding; because he speaketh as if of the same, because of the sacraments they have in common. For they belong to the people of God, though not by the virtue, yet surely by the appearance of piety: for concerning them we have heard the Apostle, In the last times there shall come grievous times, for there shall be men lovers of themselves. The first evil is, lovers of themselves; that is, as being pleased with themselves. Would that they were not pleasing to themselves, and were pleasing to God: would that they would cry out in their difficulties, and be freed from their distresses. But while they presumed greatly on themselves, they were made few. It is manifest, brethren: all who separate themselves from unity become few. For they are many; but in unity, while they are not parted from unity. For when the multitude of unity hath begun no more to belong to them, in heresy and schism, they are few. And they became few, and were vexed, from distress of miseries and grief. (Ver. 40.) Contempt was poured on princes. For they were rejected by the Church of God, and the more because they wished to be princes, therefore they were*

despised, and became salt that had lost its savour, cast out abroad, so that it is trodden under foot of men. *Contempt was poured on princes, and He led them astray in the pathless place, and not in a way.* Those above in the way, those directed to a city, and finally led thither, not led astray; but these, where there was no way, led astray. What is, *Led them astray?* God gave them up to their own hearts' lusts. For *led astray* means this, gave them up to themselves. For if thou enquire closely, it is they that lead themselves astray. *For he that thinketh he is something, when he is nothing, leadeth himself astray.* What then is, *Led them astray?* Let them alone. In a pathless place, and not in a way. For how are those men in the way, who hold a part, and let go the whole? How in the way? What then is the way? or where is the way known? *The Lord, he saith, have mercy on us, and bless us, shew the light of His countenance upon us, that we may know Thy way in the earth.* In what earth? *Thy salvation among all nations.* Certainly such men, that they may become few, that they may be diminished, go out from us. They have all gone out from the multitude of unity, as I mentioned a little before, that it was said of them; *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would surely have abode with us.* But if perchance they are ours in the hidden foreknowledge of God, they must needs return. How many that are not ours, are yet, as it were, within; and how many that are ours are still, as it were, without. *The Lord knoweth them that are His.* And they that are not ours, who are within, when they have found their opportunities, go out; and they that are ours, who are without, when they have found opportunities, return. That then understand, which God knoweth; in that respect *He led them astray in a pathless place, and not in a way.* And what did He with them? What I had begun to say, what ye should hear with attention. He might have borne with them always within, but we should not profit by them: but when they have been separated from us, and by malicious questions disquiet us, we have set before us in them both an incitement of enquiry, and an example for warning. Each one is alarmed, when he seeth that another hath gone out, as

VER.

40.

Matt. 5,

13.

Rom. 1,

24.

Gal. 6,

3.

Ps. 67,

2.

1 John

2,

19.

2 Tim.

2,

19.

- PSALM CVII.** if from his going out it had been said to him, *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*
- 1 Cor. 10, 12.** They are of use then, because they go out; for if they continued within, and were so wicked, there would be no profit from them. What is said of them in a certain Psalm?
- Ps. 68, 30.** *The multitude of bulls*, that is, of stiffnecked and proud people: *The multitude of bulls among the cows of the peoples.* By cows he meaneth souls easy to seduce, that easily yield to the seducing bulls. But wherefore thus? *That those may be separated apart that have been tried by silver.* What meaneth, *That they may be separated.* That those who have been tried in the words of the Lord may appear, may be clearly seen. For when heretics are answered of necessity, Catholics are built up by that which is profitable. This sentiment Paul hath clearly expressed: *There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.* There must also be bulls who seduce, that those who have been tried by silver may be made manifest among you, that is, be set apart.
- 1 Cor. 11, 19.**
- Ps. 12, 6.** What meaneth, tried by silver? *The words of the Lord are pure words, silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire.* Whoever are tried in this silver, that is, in the words of the Lord, cannot fully purge this silver from the dross, unless they are harassed by the questionings of heretics. And observe here, that this is not omitted: behold *contempt is poured out upon their princes*, upon those bulls. Wherefore are they despised? Because they preach some other things. How are they despised?
- Gal. 1, 8, 9.** By being anathematized. For *whosoever shall preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be anathema.* What is so despised as salt without flavour, which is cast out of doors, and trampled under foot? And consider if they be not princes; hear Paul himself; *though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be anathema.* They are princes, they are learned, they are great, they are precious stones. What more wilt thou say: are they angels? And yet, *though an angel from heaven preach unto you any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema:* for the devil himself was an angel

fallen from heaven. *Contempt then was poured out upon their princes. And He helped the poor out of beggary.* VER. 42, 43.

What meaneth this, brethren? Princes are despised, and the poor helped. The proud are cast aside, and the humble provided for. He hath done this, and by doing so hath helped the poor out of beggary. He is a beggar, who ascribeth nothing to himself, who hopeth all from God's mercy; he crieth every day before the Lord's gate, knocking, that it may be opened unto him, naked and trembling, that he may be clothed, casting down his eyes towards the earth, beating his breast. God hath greatly helped this beggar, this poor man, this humble man, even by this very setting apart of heretics; because *they have been reduced to fear, and have been vexed, and led astray in the wilderness and not in the path.* Lastly, what happeneth to the poor man who hath been helped, from the minishing, the misleading, the making few, the vexing of those heretics? *And made him households like sheep.* Thou understandest one poor man and one beggar of him concerning whom he said, *He hath helped the poor out of misery:* this poor man is now many households, this poor man is many nations; many Churches are one Church, one nation, one household, one sheep. *And maketh him households like sheep.* These are great mysteries, great types, how profound, how full of hidden meanings; how sweetly discovered, since long hidden. Therefore, (ver. 42.) *the righteous will consider this, and rejoice: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.* That wickedness that doth prate against unity, and compelleth truth to be made manifest, shall be convicted, and have its mouth stopped.

15. Ver. 43. *Who is wise? and he will consider these things; and will understand the mercies of the Lord.* See how he hath concluded; *Who is wise? and he will consider these things.* And what will the wise man consider? that is, if he be poor, he considereth them; if he be not rich, that is, be not proud, be not puffed up, he considereth these things. For why doth he consider them? Because *he will understand the mercies of the Lord;* not his own deservings, not his own strength, not his own power; but *the mercies of the Lord;* Who, when he was wandering and in want, led

**PSALM CVII.** him back to the path, and led him; Who, when he was struggling against the difficulties of his sins, and bound down with the fetters of habit, released and freed him; Who, when he loathed the Word of God, and was almost dying with a kind of weariness, restored him by sending him the medicine of His Word; Who, when he was endangered among the risks of shipwreck and storm, stilled the sea, and brought him into port; Who, finally, placed him in that people, where He giveth grace to the humble; not in that where he resisteth the proud; and hath made him His own, that remaining within he may be multiplied, not that going out he may be diminished. The righteous see this, and rejoice. *The mouth, therefore, of all wickedness shall be stopped; and he who is wise shall consider these things. How shall he consider them? By humility, by understanding the mercies of the Lord; because it is every where said, O that men would praise the Lord for His mercies, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men!*

**I. A. T.**  
**CVII.**

**PSALM CVIII.**

*Why no Exposition is here given.*

1. I have not thought that the 108th Psalm required an exposition; since I have already expounded it in the 56th Psalm, and in the 59th, of the last divisions of which this Psalm consisteth. For the last part of the 56th is the first of this, as far as the verse, *Thy glory is above all the earth.* Henceforth to the end, is the last part of the 59th: as the last part of the 134th, is the same as that of the 113th, from the verse, *The images of the heathen are but gold and silver:* as the 13th and 54th, with a few alterations in the middle, have every thing the same from the beginning to the end. Whatever slight differences therefore occur in this 107th Psalm, compared with those two, of parts of which it is composed, are easy to understand; just as we find in the 56th, *I will sing and give praise; awake, O my glory:* here, *I will sing and give praise, with my glory.* Awake, is said there, that he may sing and give praise therewith. Also,

there, *Thy mercy is great* (or, as some translate, *is lifted* VER. 1-13. *up*) *unto the heavens*; but here, *Thy mercy is great above* Ps. 57, *the heavens*. For it is great unto the heavens, that it may 10. be great in the heavens; and this is what he wished to Ps. 108, express by *above the heavens*. Also in the 59th, *I will* Ps. 60, 6. *rejoice, I will divide Shechem*: here, *I will be exalted, and* Ps. 108, *will divide Shechem*. Where is shewn what is signified in 7. the division of Shechem, which it was prophesied should happen after the Lord's exaltation, and that this joy doth refer to that exaltation; so that He rejoiceth, because He is exalted. Whence he elsewhere saith, *Thou hast turned my* Ps. 30, *heaviness into joy; Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and* 11. *girded me with gladness*. Also there, *Ephraim, the strength* Ps. 60, 7. *of my head*: but here, *Ephraim the taking up of my head*. 8. But strength cometh from taking up, that is, He maketh men strong by taking up, causing fruit in us; for the interpretation of Ephraim is, bearing fruit. But *taking up*, may be understood of us, when we take up Christ; or of Ps. 60, Christ, when He, Who is the Head of the Church, taketh 12. us up. And the words, *them that trouble us*, in the former Ps. 108, Psalm, are the same with *our enemies*, in this. 13.

2. We are taught by this Psalm, that those titles which seem to refer to history are most rightly understood prophetically, according to the object of the composition of the Psalms. For what is so different, historically, as the title of the 56th, *At the end, do not corrupt; David's own, the title,* Ps. 57. *when he fled from the face of Saul in the cave*; and that of Tit. the 59th, *At the end, to those who shall be changed, David's* Ps. 60. *own, for a lesson, when he burned Mesopotamia, Syria, and* Tit. *Syria Sobal, when Joab returned, and smote in the valley of salt twelve thousand*. For besides the words, title, David's own, and, at the end; the rest are so different, that David in the former passage hath humility; in the latter, strength: in the former, flight; in the latter, victories. And yet this Psalm is composed of the latter portions of these two, whose titles are so different. Where it is signified that each concur in a common object, not in the surface of the history, but in the depth of prophecy, the objects of both being united in this one, the title of which is, *A Song or Psalm of David*: Ps. 108. resembling neither of the former titles, otherwise than in the Tit.

PSALM word David. Since, *in many places, and in diverse man-*  
 CIX. *ners*, as the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, *God spoke in*  
 Heb. 1, *former times to the fathers through the Prophets; yet He*  
 1. *spoke of Him Whom He sent afterwards, that the words of*  
 2 Cor. 1, *the Prophets might be fulfilled: for all the promises of God*  
 20. *in Him are yea.*

LAT.  
CVIII.

PSALM CIX.

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 EXPOSITION.  
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1. Every one who faithfully readeth the Acts of the Apostles, acknowledgeth that this Psalm containeth a prophecy of Christ; for it evidently appeareth that what is here written, *let his days be few, and let another take his office*, is prophesied of Judas, the betrayer of Christ, alluding to the time when Matthias, being ordained into the place of Judas, was added a twelfth to the number of the Apostles. Acts 1, 15—26. But if we attempt to understand of this one man all that is here said of a wicked man, our exposition will hardly be consistent; whereas if we take it in reference to all wicked men of this kind, by which I mean enemies of Christ and ungrateful Jews, every thing seemeth to me to be capable of a clearer explanation. For as some things are said which seem peculiarly to apply to the Apostle Peter, and yet are not clear in their meaning, unless when referred to the Church, whom he is acknowledged to have figuratively represented, on account of the primacy which he bore among the Disciples; as it is written, *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, and other passages of the like purport: so Judas doth represent those Jews who were enemies of Christ, who both then hated Christ, and now, in their line of succession, this species of wickedness continuing, hate Him. Of these men, and of this people, not only may what we read more openly discovered in this Psalm be conveniently understood, but also those things which are more expressly stated concerning Judas himself;

as the passage I have just mentioned, *Let his days be few,* <sup>VER. 1-4.</sup> *and let another take his office:* and this will appear, with the Lord's help, when, in the course of exposition, we reach those verses.

2. Ver. 1, 2. The Psalm, then, beginneth thus: *O God, be not silent as to my praise; for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me.* Whence it appeareth, both that the blame, which the ungodly and the deceitful is not silent of, is false, and that the praise, which God is not silent of, is true. *For God is true, but* <sup>Rom. 3, 4.</sup> *every man a liar;* for no man is true, except him in whom God speaketh. But the highest praise is that of the only-begotten Son of God, in which He is proclaimed even That which He is, the only-begotten Son of God. But this did not appear, but, when His weakness appeared, lay hid, when the mouth of the ungodly and deceitful was opened upon Him; and for this reason his mouth was opened, because His virtue was concealed: and he saith, *the mouth of the deceitful was opened,* because the hatred which was covered by deceit burst out into language. This also is more plainly stated in the following verses.

3. Ver. 3. *They have spoken against me with false tongues:* then chiefly when they praised him as a *good Master* with insidious adulation. Whence it is elsewhere said; *and they* <sup>Ps. 102, 8.</sup> *that praised me, are sworn together against me.* Next, because they burst into cries, *Crucify Him, crucify Him;* he hath <sup>John 19, 6.</sup> added, *They compassed me about also with words of hatred.* They who with a treacherous tongue spoke words seemingly of love, and not of hatred, *against me,* since they did this insidiously; afterwards *compassed me about with words* not of false and deceitful love, but of open *hatred, and fought against me without a cause.* For as the pious love Christ for nought, so do the wicked hate Him for nought; for as truth is earnestly sought by the best men on its own account, without any advantage, external to itself, in view, so is wickedness sought by the worst men. Whence among secular authors it is said of a very bad man, 'he was wicked and cruel for no object!'

4. Ver. 4. *In place,* saith he, *of loving me, they detracted* <sup>Sall. Bell. Cat. I.</sup> *from me.* There are six different acts of this class, which

PSALM  
CIX. may, when mentioned, very easily be borne in mind; to return good for evil, not to return evil for evil; to return good for good, to return evil for evil; not to return good for good, to return evil for good. The two first of these belong to the good, and the first of these two is the better; the two last belong to the wicked, and the latter of the two is the worse; the two middle to a sort of middle class of persons, but the first of these borders upon the good, the latter on the bad. We should remark these things in the holy Scriptures. Our Lord Himself returneth

Rom. 4, good for evil, Who *justifieth the ungodly*; and Who, when

5.

Luke 23, hanging upon the Cross, said, *Father, forgive them; for*

34. *they know not what they do.* Whose steps the holy Stephen followed, when with bended knees he prayed for

Acts 7, those who were stoning him, saying, *Lord, lay not this sin*

60. *to their charge.* And unto this the commandment doth

Mat. 5, pertain, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do*

44. *good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you.* The Apostle Paul saith, that evil is not to

Rom. be returned for evil: *Recompensing to no man evil for evil:*

12, 17.

1 Pet. 3, and the Apostle Peter; *not rendering evil for evil, or railing*

9. *for railing;* whence also it is read in the Psalms; *If I have*

Ps. 7, 4. *rewarded evil unto them that dealt evil unto me.* The less wicked of the two last pertaineth to the nine lepers, who,

Luke 17, when they had been cleansed by the Lord, gave no thanks;

12—18. but that last act, than which nothing is worse, belongeth to those of whom it is read in the Psalm, *In place of loving me, they detracted from me.*

4. For they owed love in return for such blessings of the Lord, but they not only did not pay it, but even returned evil for those blessings. But those two middle qualities, which we stated to belong to a sort of middle class of men, are such, that the first of them, I mean the returning good for good, is possessed by the good, and the moderately good and the moderately bad. For this reason the Lord doth not blame this, but yet doth not wish His disciples to abide in this alone, for He doth wish to elevate them to a higher

Matt. 5, state when He saith to them, *For if ye love them which love*

46. *you, that is, if you return good for good, what reward have ye? that is, what great deed will ye have done? Do not*

*even the Publicans the same?* But He wisheth them to do both this and much more, that is, to love not only their friends, but even their enemies. But the last quality, I mean the returning evil for evil, both the wicked, and the moderately wicked, and the moderately good, may possess. So much so, that the law hath given them a measure of retaliation, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*; which, if I may so speak, is the justice of the unjust. Not that it is iniquitous that each man should receive what he hath done, (otherwise the law would never enact thus,) but because the lust of revenge is vicious, and it rather belongeth to the judge to fix this between others, than to the good man to demand it for himself. Into how great a depth of malignity, therefore, have the wicked plunged, falling from that high state of goodness in which good deeds are returned for evil, when they have returned evil for good! With how terrible a fall have they passed over so many steps between! Nor ought it to be thought a slight thing that he doth not say, in place of loving me, they slew me; but, *they detracted from me*: since they slew Him in that they detracted from Him by denying Him to be the Son of God, and saying that He *cast out devils by the chief of the devils*; and that, *He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him?* and other sayings of the same sort. For by this detraction they turned away from Him those whose conversion He was seeking; and indeed, he preferred this expression in order to shew that those do more harm who detract from Christ, and by this means slay souls, than they who in their fury destroyed His mortal flesh, especially as it was so soon to rise.

5. But after he had said, *in place of loving me, they detracted from me*; what doth he add? *But I gave myself unto prayer*. He said not indeed what he prayed, but what can we better understand than for them themselves. For they were detracting greatly from Him Whom they crucified, when they ridiculed Him as if He were a man, whom in their opinion they had conquered; from which Cross He said, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*; so that while they in the depth of their malignity were rendering evil for good, He in the height of His goodness was rendering good for evil. Although He may also be well

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CIX.

understood to have prayed for His disciples, as He said even before His Passion, lest their faith should fail, while He, hanging on the tree, that He might recommend endurance unto them, did not display His power amid the calumnies of those who were detracting from Him, whom He might have destroyed by His divine power. But for us it was more profitable that He shewed an example of endurance, than if by destroying His enemies without delay, He had trained us up to hasten impatiently to be revenged of those wicked men from whom we suffer; since it is written, *He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty.* The divine words then teach us by our Lord's example, when we hear, *In place of loving me, they detracted from me; but I gave myself unto prayer;* that when we feel others ungrateful to us, not only in that they do not repay us with good, but even return evil for good, we should pray; He indeed for others who were raging against Him, or in sorrow, or endangered in faith; but we for ourselves in the first place, that we may by the mercy and aid of God conquer our own mind, by which we are borne on to the desire of revenge, when any detraction is made from us, either in our presence or our absence. Next, when we call to mind the patience of Christ, as if He Himself were aroused from sleep, (as actually happened, when He was sleeping in the ship,) Who doth tranquillize the perturbation and tempest of our heart, with a spirit serene and pacified, let us pray for our very calumniators, that we may without fear pray, *Forgive us, as we also forgive.* But He forgave them, Who indeed had no trespass that should be forgiven Him.

Prov.  
16, 32.

Matt. 6,  
12.

6. Ver. 5. He addeth, *Thus have they rewarded me evil for good.* And as if we asked, what evil? for what good? *And hatred,* he saith, *for my good will.* This is the sum total of their great guilt. For how could the persecutors injure Him, Who died of His own free-will, and not by compulsion? But this very hatred is the greatest crime of the persecutor, although it be the willing atonement of the sufferer. And he hath sufficiently explained the sense of the above words, *In place of loving me,* since they owed love not as a general duty only, but in return for His love: in that he hath here added, *for my good will.* This love He

mentioneth in the Gospel, when He saith, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not!* VER.  
6.  

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Mat. 23,  
27.

7. He then beginneth to prophesy what they should receive for this very impiety; detailing their lot in such a manner, as if he wished its realization from a desire of revenge; while He declareth what was to happen with the most absolute certainty, and what of God's justice would come upon such worthily. Some not understanding this mode of predicting the future, under the appearance of wishing evil, suppose hatred to be returned for hatred, and an evil will for an evil will: since in truth it belongeth to few to distinguish, in what way the punishment of the wicked pleaseth the accuser, who longeth to satiate his enmity; and in how widely different a way it pleaseth the judge, who with a righteous mind punisheth sins. For the former returneth evil for evil: but the judge when he punisheth doth not return evil for evil, since he returneth justice to the unjust; and what is just, is surely good. He therefore punisheth not from delight in another's misery, which is evil for evil; but from love of justice, which is good for evil. Let not then the blind pervert the light of the Scriptures, imagining that God doth not punish sins: nor let the wicked flatter themselves, as if He rendered evil for evil. Let us therefore hear the sequel of this divine composition; and in the words of one who seemeth to wish ill, let us recognise the predictions of a prophet; and let us see God making a just retribution, raising our mind up to His eternal laws.

8. Ver. 6. *Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand.* Though the complaint had been before concerning many, the Psalm is now speaking of one. For he had said before; *they have spoken against me with false tongues; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause; in place of loving me they detracted from me, but I gave myself unto prayer: thus have they rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will.* All this is concerning many persons. But now, declaring what they

**PSALM** deserved for their iniquities, and what was in store for them  
**CIX.** by the Divine judgment, he saith, *Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him*, as if threatening singly that man who gave himself over to such enemies of his as he was before describing. Since therefore he is here speaking of the

**Acts 1,** traitor Judas, who, according to the Scripture in the Acts  
**20.** of the Apostles, was to be punished with the penalty due to him, what meaneth, *set thou an ungodly man over him*, save him whom in the next verse he mentioneth by name, when he saith, *and let Satan stand at his right hand?* He therefore who refused to be subject unto Christ, deserved this, that he should have the devil set over him, that is, that he should be subject unto the devil. The expression, *stand at his right hand*, is used because he preferred the works of the devil to the works of God: for that which he doth prefer is justly said to be at the right of any man, even as the right hand is preferred to the left. For this reason also it is said of those, who preferring the pleasures of this world to God, styled the people blessed who have such and such things,

**Ps. 144,** *their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.* For because  
**11. 15.** they called the people who had such and such things blessed,

**ib. 8.** *their mouth hath spoken vanity;* as is said of them above. But he whose mouth speaketh truth, contrary to what they said of the people who have such things, ought himself to say, what followeth in the same Psalm: *Blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God;* for this man hath not the devil at his right hand, but the Lord; even as he

**Ps. 16, 8.** elsewhere saith, *I have set God always before me, for He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not be moved.* The devil therefore stood at his right hand, when he preferred avarice to wisdom, and money to his salvation, so that he betrayed Him, by Whom he ought to have been possessed, that he might not be possessed by him, whose works Christ Himself, by Whom he refused to be possessed, destroyed.

9. Ver. 7. *When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned.* For he refused to be one of those to whom it  
**Mat. 25,** should be said, *enter into the joy of thy Lord;* and pre-  
**21. 30.**ferred to be such an one of whom it is said, *cast him into outer darkness. And let his prayer be turned into sin.* For prayer is not righteous except through Christ, Whom he

sold in his atrocious sin: but the prayer which is not made through Christ, not only cannot blot out sin, but is itself turned into sin. But it may be inquired, on what occasion Judas could have so prayed, that his prayer was turned into sin. I suppose that before he betrayed the Lord, while he was thinking of betraying Him; for he could no longer pray through Christ. For after he betrayed Him, and repented of it, if he prayed through Christ, he would ask for pardon; if he asked for pardon, he would have hope; if he had hope, he would hope for mercy; if he hoped for mercy, he would not have hung himself in despair: therefore after he had said, *when sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned*; that he might not be supposed to have been able to liberate himself by prayer from the condemnation which hung over him; that prayer which he had learnt together with his fellow-disciples, where it is said, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; let his prayer, he saith, be turned into sin*, because it is not made through Christ, Whom he chose not to follow, but to persecute.

10. Ver. 8. *Let his days be few.* By *his days*, he meant the days of his apostleship, which were few; since before the Passion of our Lord, they were ended by his crime and death. And as if it were asked, What then shall become of that most sacred number twelve, within which our Lord willed, not without a meaning, to limit His twelve first Apostles? he at once addeth, *and let another take his office.* As much as to say, let both himself be punished according to his desert, and let his number be filled up. And if any one desire to know how this was done, let him read the Acts of the Apostles.

11. Ver. 9. *Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.* After his death, both his children were fatherless, and his wife a widow.

12. Ver. 10. *Let his children be vagabonds, and be carried away, and beg their bread.* By *vagabonds* he meaneth, uncertain whither to go, destitute of all help. *Let them be driven from their habitations.* He here explaineth what he had said above, *Let them be carried away.* How all this happened to his wife and children, the following verses explain.

**PSALM** 13. Ver. 11, 12. *Let the extortioner search out all his substance, and let the strangers spoil his labour. Let there be no man to help him: that is, to guard his posterity; wherefore followeth, nor to have compassion on his fatherless children.*

14. Ver. 13. But as even orphans may, without one to help them, and without a guardian, nevertheless, increase amid trouble and want, and preserve their race by descent; he next saith, *Let his posterity be destroyed; and in the next generation let his name be clean put out: that is, let what hath been generated by him, generate no more, and quickly pass away.*

15. Ver. 14. But what is it that he next addeth? *Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away.* Is it to be understood, that even the sins of his fathers shall be visited upon him? For upon him they are not visited, who hath been changed in Christ, and hath ceased to be the child of the wicked, by not having imitated their conduct: for this is most truly written, *I will visit the sins of their fathers upon the children; and this, which is declared through the Prophet, both the soul of the father is Mine, and the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Now this is said of those who turn unto God, and do not imitate the evil deeds of their parents; and this the Prophet evidently declareth, when he saith, that the iniquities of their fathers injure not the children, who, by working righteousness, are unlike them. And to these words, *I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children,* is added, *who hate Me;* that is, hate Me as their fathers hated Me: so that as the effect of imitating the good is that even their own sins are blotted out, so the imitation of the wicked causeth men to suffer not their own deservings only, but those also of those whom they have imitated. If therefore Judas had held unto that to which he had been called, by no means would either his past wickedness, or that of his parents, have affected him; but since he held not his adoption in the household of God, but preferred the iniquity of his ancient race; the iniquity of his fathers was had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, that it also might

**Ezek.**  
18, 4; 20.

**Exod.**  
20, 5.

in him be punished; and the sin of his mother was not done away in him. VER.  
15.

16. Ver. 15. *Let them alway be against (contra) the Lord;* that is, let his father and his mother *be alway against the Lord;* not that they may be opposed to the Lord, but that the Lord may not forget in this man their very ill deserts, when He shall avenge them upon him. *Against the Lord,* meaneth in the Lord's sight: for other translators have rendered this line, *let them be always in the sight of the Lord;* while others have rendered it, *let them be before the Lord alway;* as it is elsewhere said, *Thou hast set our mis-* Pa.90,8.  
*deeds in Thy sight.* By *alway,* he meaneth that this great crime should be without pardon, both here, and in a future life. *Let the memorial of them perish from off the earth:* that is, of his father and of his mother. By memorial of them, he meaneth, that which is preserved by successive generations: this he prophesied should perish from the earth, because both Judas himself, and his sons, who were the memorial of his father and mother, without any succeeding offspring, as it is said above, were consumed in the short space of one generation.

17. Suppose some one saith; Is it to be believed, that even this belongeth to the punishment of Judas, that after his death his wife and children came to beggary, and were made vagabonds and outcasts from their homes, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling his labour, no man aiding or pitying his orphans, and that they died speedily without posterity? Doth any pain reach the dead, resulting from what happeneth among a man's relations after his death? or are they, whose powers of perception are in different places, according to their deservings, whether good or evil, to be supposed to be conscious of these things? To this I answer, that it is indeed a great question, and not one to be discussed at present, because it belongeth to a labour of greater extent, whether, or to what degree, or in what manner, the spirits of the dead are aware of what is passing around us. Nevertheless, as may briefly be alleged, if they had no concern for us, our Lord would not represent that rich man who was suffering torment in hell to have said, *I have five brethren, \* \* \* \* \* lest*

214 *How punishment of survivors may affect the dead.*

*1781, 1782.* they also come into this place of torment. But let those who attempt to understand this otherwise, understand it in whatever sense they please; and since it must be confessed, that it doth not follow, that if the dead know that their relations are living, because they see them neither in the regions of punishment, where that rich man was, nor in *1781, 1782.* the regions of the blessed, where he recognised Lazarus and Abraham, at however great a distance, that they must needs for that reason know all the joyful and sorrowful events that affect those dear unto them: this I assert, that there are few men of such a disposition as to neglect, or altogether scorn during their own life, what of good or evil may happen to their kindred after their death; but that many, as is shewn by their great care in expressing their last will and testament, such as it may be, exert themselves sufficiently to secure prosperity to their friends, when they die themselves. But the continuance of their posterity through successive generations is displayed in a praiseworthy spirit by those alone, who cut off themselves on account of the kingdom of heaven, and desire their sons to do this, or long to be crowned with martyrdom, so that none of them remain on earth: but all, or nearly all, the rest, wish their kindred to be happy in this life after their own death, and are unwilling that their race should perish. Wherefore in that, after Judas had so miserably perished, his widowed wife and fatherless children survived in such a state, that, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling all his labours, they became outcasts from their houses, and his orphans found none to ply them, and that they perished in one generation without posterity; if the dead feel these things, it is an aggravation of their evils: if they do not feel them, they are a fear for the living. But if the question occur, how he could have substance which the extortioner might search out, and strangers spoil, since he had before this been following the Lord with the other eleven: we may believe that he had given up all that he had to his wife and children in such a manner as not sincerely and perseveringly to have torn from him the chain of avarice: since although he seemed to be selling his property for distribution among the poor, he was in reality doing what Ananias did after the

ascension of our Lord. For he would not fear lest the Lord by His Divinity should be aware of this, since he imagined that he had escaped His notice, when he was stealing from out of the bags what was dropped in. V ER. 6—15. John 12, 6.

18. Ver. 6—15. But let us now consider, if we can, as far as the Lord aideth us, how these words suit the Jewish people, whose enmities against the Lord continued with a persevering hatred: which people, we have said, Judas figuratively represented, as Peter did the Church. *Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand.* As in the case of Judas, so it must be understood of this people; who, when Christ was rejected by them, became subject to the devil, whose persuasions in all depraved and earthly lusts it preferred to everlasting salvation. *When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned;* because by persisting in wickedness and unbelief, they treasure up for themselves wrath on the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. 2, 5, 6. Who will render unto every man according to his works. *And let his prayer be turned into sin.* Because it is not offered through the Mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus Christ, and Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec. *Let his days be few.* This must be understood of the kingdom: since the Jewish kingdom did not long continue afterwards. *And let another take his office.* I think that our Lord Christ Himself may without inconsistency be understood by the Episcopate of the Jewish people, since He was born of the tribe of Judah, according to the flesh: and the Apostle saith, *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.* And He Himself saith, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;* because He shewed unto them His presence in the flesh. And the Magi who came from the East said this, *Where is He that is born King of the Jews?* And this was written on the title above Him when crucified: whence Pilate replied, not without a meaning, to those who desired to alter it, *What I have written, I have written.* Another then, that is, the Gentiles, received this Episcopate of the Jewish people, that is, Matt. 2, 1, 2. John 19, 19—22.

220 *Their children outcasts. Their life searched for judgment.*

PSALM CIX.  
Matt. 8,  
12.

Christ. *Let his sons be fatherless*: they of whom it is said, *The children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness*. They became fatherless by the loss of this very kingdom, as if they had thereby lost their father, although they may be well understood to have lost God their Father; for, saith Truth, "*Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.*" *And his wife a widow*. The people may be understood as the wife of a kingdom, over which kings rule; but she became widowed by the loss of this very kingdom. *Let his sons be bowed down, and carried away, and beg their bread*. They bowed down before their dangers; the conquered sons of the kingdom of the Jews were carried away by overwhelming enemies. But what is the meaning of begging their bread, save living on the mercy of men, as they live beneath the kings of those nations into which they have been carried away? *Let them be outcasts from their homes*. Thus it hath happened. *Let the extortioner search out all their substance*, that is, all the substance of that people. This cannot be better understood, than that their trespasses are not pardoned, because they are pardoned in Christ alone, Whom they rejected, Who also taught them to say, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*. By *all substance*, is meant all its life, so that no debts, that is no sins, be remitted to it. *And let the stranger spoil his labours*; the devil and his angels, because they who have not Christ do not lay up store in Heaven. *Let there be no man to help him*; Who can help him whom Christ helpeth not? *Nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children*. Who, having lost their father, that is, their kingdom, remained in this state, as having lost their God, Whose Son they persecuted and hated, cannot find any one to pity them, not to support their life in this world, but their true, that is their eternal, life. *Let his posterity be destroyed*, be destroyed indeed for evermore. *And in the next generation let his name be clean put out*. Because they were generated and not regenerated, therefore are they blotted out in one generation; for in the other, that is, in regeneration, if they understood and held it, they would not be blotted out. *Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord*, that the

1 John  
2, 23.

Lord may visit upon the same people, when persisting in their wickedness, even their fathers' iniquity. For this He saith unto them, *Ye are witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets:* and a little after he saith, *That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias.—And let not the sin of his mother be done away.* The sin of Jerusalem, who is a slave together with her children, who slayeth the Prophets, and stoneth those that are sent unto her. *Let them always be before the Lord;* their sin and iniquity; that is, that they may not be blotted out from the sight of the Lord, God punishing them for evermore. *And let the memorial of them perish from off the earth.* The earth of the Lord is the Lord's field: the Lord's field is the Church: from which earth the memorial of them hath been rooted out, for though they were the natural branches, through their unbelief were they broken off.

19. Ver. 16, 17. *And that, because he remembered not to act mercifully;* either Judas, or the people itself. But *remembered not* is better understood of the people: for if they slew Christ, they might well remember the deed in penitence, and act mercifully towards His members, whom they most perseveringly persecuted. For this reason he saith, *but persecuted the poor man and the beggar.* It may indeed be understood of Judas; for the Lord did not disdain to become poor, when He was rich, that we might be enriched by His poverty. But how shall I understand the word *beggar*, save perhaps because He said to the Samaritan woman, *Give me to drink,* and on the Cross He said, *I thirst.* But as to what followeth, I do not see how it can be understood of our Head Himself, that is, the Saviour of His own body, Whom Judas persecuted. For after saying, *He persecuted the poor man and the beggar:* he addeth, *and to slay,* that is, *that he might slay Him,* for some have so rendered it, *Him that was pricked at the heart.* This expression is not commonly used except of the stings of past sins in the sorrows of penitence; as it is said of those, who, when they had heard the Apostles after our Lord's ascension, were *pricked in heart*, even they who had slain the Lord. The

VER.  
16. 17.

Mat. 23,  
31. 35.  
37.

Rom.  
11, 20,  
21.

2 Cor. 8,  
9.

John 4,  
7.  
Id. 19,  
28.

**PSALM CIX.** most blessed Peter addressed them, using these words  
**Acts 2, 37. 38.** among others, *Repent, and be baptized each man of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.*

But since those very same men became His members, Whose limbs they had nailed upon the Cross, the Jewish people remembered not to act mercifully; they persecuted the poor man and the beggar, but in His members; of whom He will speak what pertaineth to these very works of mercy,

**Mat. 25, 45.** *Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these, ye have not done it unto Me.* And, *that he might slay him that was pricked at the heart: certainly pricked at the heart,* but in His members. Now among those who persecuted that they might slay him that was pricked at the

**Acts 8, 1.** heart, there was Saul also, consenting unto the death of Stephen, that was pricked at the heart; for Stephen himself also was one of those who were pricked at the heart. But Saul remembered to act mercifully; and he who in the

**Gen. 49, 27.** morning devoured the prey, at night divided the spoil; he himself also pricked at the heart, so that this very people in him persecuted a poor man, wishing to slay him that was pricked at the heart. For they hated the Apostle Paul for this reason, that when pricked at the heart, he began to preach Him Whom he had persecuted before. For when persecuting, that he might himself slay the poor and helpless

**Acts 9, 4.** man in his members, he heard from heaven the words, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* and when pricked at the  
**ib. 24.** heart, he began to suffer such things as he had inflicted before upon those who were pricked at heart.

20. Ver. 18. The Psalm then continueth: *His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen to him.* Although Judas loved cursing, both in stealing from the money bag, and selling and betraying the Lord: nevertheless, that people

**Mat. 27, 25.** more openly loved cursing, when they said, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* He loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from him. Such was Judas indeed, since he loved not Christ, in Whom is everlasting blessing; but the Jewish people still more decidedly refused blessing, unto

**John 9, 27. 28.** whom he who had been enlightened by the Lord said, *Will ye also be His disciples?* They refused this blessing, and held it as a curse; and replied, *Thou art His disciple:* and

blessing was made far from them, for it passed over to the Gentiles. *He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment*: either Judas, or that people. *And it came into his bowels like water.* Both without, then, and within; without, like a garment; within, like water: since he hath come before the judgment-seat of Him *Who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell*; the body without, the soul within. *And like oil into his bones.* He sheweth that he worketh evil with delight, and storeth up cursing for himself, that is, everlasting punishment; for blessing is eternal life. For at present evil deeds are his delight, flowing like water into his bowels, like oil into his bones; but it is styled cursing, because God hath appointed torments for such men. But cursing is like oil in their bones, when men think themselves strong, because they are allowed to commit evil deeds with impunity.

21. Ver. 19. *Let it be unto him as the cloak which covereth him.* Since he hath before spoken of the cloak, why doth he repeat it? When he said, *He clothed himself with cursing as with a raiment*; doth the raiment with which he is covered differ from that with which he is clothed? For every man is clothed with his tunic, covered with his cloak; and what is this, save boasting in iniquity, even in the sight of men? *and as the girdle*, he saith, *that he is always girded withal.* Men are girded chiefly that they may be better fit for toil, that they may not be hindered by the folds of their dress. He therefore girdeth himself with curses, who designeth an evil which he hath carefully contrived, not on a sudden impulse, and who learneth in such a manner to do evil, that he is always ready to commit it: whence he here saith, *and as the girdle that he is always girded withal.*

22. Ver. 20. *This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord.* He said not, *their reward*, but, *their work*: for it is clear that by the clothing, covering, water, oil, and girdle, he was describing the very works by which eternal curses are procured. It is not then one Judas, but many, of whom it is said, *This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord.* Although indeed the plural number might have been put for the singular; even as, when

**PSALM CIX.** Herod died, it was said by the Angel, *They are dead which sought the young Child's life.* But who slander Christ more **Matt. 2,** before the Lord, than they who slander the very words of **20.** the Lord, by declaring that it is not He whom the Law of the Lord and His Prophets announced beforehand? *And of those that speak evil against my soul:* by denying that He, when He had willed, could have arisen: though He **John 10,** saith, *I have power to lay down My life, and I have power **18.** *to take it again.**

23. Ver. 21. *But work Thou with me, O Lord God.* Some have thought *mercifully* should be understood, some have actually added it; but the best copies have the words thus: *But work Thou with me, O Lord God, for Thy Name's sake.* Whence a higher sense should not be passed over, supposing the Son to have thus addressed the Father, *Deal Thou with Me,* since the works of the Father and of the Son are the same. Where although we understand mercy, (for these words follow, *for sweet is Thy mercy,*) because he said not, *In me,* or, *over me;* or any thing of this sort: but, *work Thou with Me;* we rightly understand that the Father **Rom. 9,** and Son together work mercifully towards the vessels of **23.** mercy. *Work with me*<sup>1</sup>, may also be understood to mean, <sup>1</sup> *Fac Mecum* help me. We use this expression in our daily language, when we are speaking of any thing which is in our favour; *It works with us.* For the Father aideth the Son, as far as the Deity aideth Man, on account of His having assumed the *form of a servant,* to which Man, God, and to which *Form of a servant,* the Lord too is Father. For in the *Form of God,* the Son needeth not aid, for He is equally all-powerful with the Father, on which account He also **John 5,** is the helper of men; for, *as the Father raiseth up the dead* **21.** *and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will;* nor doth the Father quicken any other persons than the Son, nor the Father in one manner, the Son in another; because He doeth both the same things and in the same way. Whence, in so far as the Son of God is Man, God raised Him from the dead, that is, the Father to Whom He **Ps. 41,** saith in the Psalms, *Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall* **11.** *reward them:* but in so far as He is God, He raised Himself, **John 2,** on which account He said, *Destroy this temple, and I will* **19.**

*raise it up in three days.* And this He signified even here, VER. 22—24. John 5, 39. if any one carefully reflect, for He ordered us to *search the Scriptures*, which bear witness of Him, and not to pass them over superficially. For He doth not only say, *Work Thou with me, Lord, Lord;* but he saith, *Thou also.* What meaneth, *Thou also*, save I also? And that He saith not only once, *O Lord*, but repeateth it; *O Lord, O Lord*, implieth the feeling of one praying: as it is said, *God, my God.* Ps. 22, 1. And because when he had said, *Work Thou with me*, he added, *for Thy Name's sake*, he hath commended grace. For without previous deserving works, human nature was raised to such a height, that the whole in one, the Word and Flesh, that is, God and Man, was stiled the Only-begotten Son of God. And this was done that that which had been lost might be sought by Him Who had created it, through that which had not been lost; whence the following words, *For Thy mercy is sweet.*

24. Ver. 22. *O deliver me, for I am needy and poor.* Need and poverty is that weakness, through which He was crucified. 2 Cor. 13, 4. *And my heart is disturbed within me.* This alludeth to those words which He spoke when His Passion was drawing near, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* Mat. 26, 38.

25. Ver. 23. *I go hence like a shadow that declineth.* By this he signified death itself. For as night comes of the shadow's declining, so death comes of mortal flesh. *And am driven away as the locusts.* This I think would be more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His faithful disciples. That he might make it much plainer, he preferred writing *locusts* in the plural number: although many may be understood where the singular number is used, as in that passage, *He spake, and the locust came;* but it would have been more obscure. His disciples, then, were driven away, that is, were put to flight by persecutors, either the multitude of whom He wished to be signified by the word *locusts*, or their passing from one place to another. Ps. 105, 34.

26. Ver. 24. *My knees are weak through fasting.* We read, that our Lord Christ underwent a fast of forty days: Mat. 4, but had fasting so great power over Him, that His knees were weakened? Or is this more suitably understood of

PSALM His members, that is, of His saints? *And my flesh is*  
 CIX. *changed because of the oil:* because of spiritual grace.

Whence Christ was so called from the Greek word, *chrisma*, which signifies unction. But the flesh was changed through the oil, not for the worse, but for the better, that is, rising from the dishonour of death to the glory of immortality. After he had said, therefore, *My knees are weak through fasting*, whereby I suppose those to be meant among His members who seemed strong, yet as if the presence of that bread which supported them had been taken away, fell away even unto denial, at His Passion, as appeared in Peter; he added, as if to strengthen them, that when they drooped they might not utterly fall, *And my flesh is changed for the oil*, so that I should strengthen these by My resurrection, who were fainting because of My death, and anoint them with the Holy Ghost, Who could not have come unto them, had  
 JOHN 16, I not left them. For He had said this; *If I go not away,*  
 7. *He cannot come unto you:* and the Evangelist saith, *The*  
 1d.7,39. *Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* His flesh was not yet changed. But whether the Holy Spirit be represented by water through the notion of ablution or irrigation, or by oil through that of exultation and the inflaming of charity; It doth not differ from Itself, because Its types are different. For there is a great difference between the lion and the lamb, and yet Christ is represented by both. He is termed a lion on account of one attribute, a lamb on account of another; yet He is not different Himself: for a lamb is not courageous, nor a lion innocent; yet Christ is both innocent like a lamb, and courageous as a lion. In Isaiah Jesus Christ Himself saith,  
 Is. 61, 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me.*

27. Ver. 25. *I became also a reproach unto them:* through  
 Gal. 3, the death of the Cross. *For Christ hath redeemed us from*  
 13. *the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. They looked upon Me, and shaked their heads.* Because they beheld His crucifixion, without beholding His resurrection: they saw when His knees were weakened, they saw not when His flesh was changed.

28. Ver. 26. *Help me, O Lord my God: O save me*

*according to Thy mercy.* This may be referred to the whole, <sup>V ER.</sup> both to the Head and to the body: to the Head, owing to His <sup>27—29.</sup> having taken the form of a servant; to the body, on account of the servants themselves. For He might even in them have said unto God, *Help Me*: and, *O save Me*: as in them He said unto Paul, *Why persecutest thou Me?* The following <sup>Acts 9,</sup> words, *according to Thy mercy*, describe grace given gra- <sup>4.</sup> tuitously, not according to the merit of works.

29. Ver. 27. *And let them know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it.* He said, *Let them know*, of those for whom He even prayed while they were raging; for even those who afterwards believed in Him were among the crowd who shook their heads in mockery of Him. But let those who ascribe unto God the shape of the human body, learn in what sense God hath a hand. For if He doth what He doth with His Hand, doth He create this very Hand with itself? In what sense then is it said, *They shall know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it?* Let us therefore understand, that the Hand of God meaneth Christ: whence it is elsewhere said, *Unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* This Hand <sup>Is. 53, 1.</sup> both *was*, and He *made it*; for, *In the beginning was the* <sup>John 1,</sup> *Word*; and *the Word was made flesh*; and was without <sup>1. 14.</sup> time, according to the Godhead; and *was made* for Him of <sup>Rom. 1,</sup> *the seed of David according to the flesh.* <sup>3.</sup>

30. Ver. 28. *Though they curse, yet bless Thou.* Vain therefore and false is the cursing of the sons of men, that have pleasure in vanity, and seek a lie; but when God <sup>Ps. 4, 2.</sup> blesseth, He doth what He saith. *Let them be confounded that rise up against me.* For their imagining that they have some power against Me, is the reason that they rise up against Me; but when I shall have been exalted above the heavens, and My glory shall have commenced spreading over the whole earth, they shall be confounded. *But Thy servant shall rejoice*: either on the right hand of the Father, or in His members when they rejoice, both in hope among temptations, and after temptations for evermore.

31. Ver. 29. *Let my slanderers be clothed with shame*: that is, let it shame them to have slandered me. But this may also be understood as a blessing, in that they are

**PSALM**  
**CIX.** amended. *And let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a double cloak; for diplois is a double cloak; that is, let them be confounded both within and without: both before God and before men.*

32. Ver. 30. *As for me, I will confess greatly unto the Lord with my mouth.* The word *nimis* is used in Latin to express excess, the contrary to *parum*, which meaneth deficiency. The Greek word for *nimis* is *ἄγαν*: but this verse hath *σφόδρα*, not *ἄγαν*; which our translators have some times rendered by *nimis*, sometimes by *valdè*<sup>1</sup>. Now if *nimis* be taken as equivalent to *valdè*, it may be understood of praise: for this confession signifieth praise. For the next words are, *And I will praise Him among the multitude.*

**Ps. 99,**  
**99.** He saith in another Psalm, *In the midst of the congregation will I sing of Thee.* But since the Church, which is the body of Christ, herself doth praise Him, how doth the Church praise Him in the midst of the Church? So here also, while many who are members of Christ praise Him, He praiseth also, for they are His members; how doth He praise among the multitude, when He is said to praise in the praises of the multitude? Is He said to praise among the multitude because He is with His Church here even unto the end of the world; so that we may understand by *among the multitude*, that He is honoured by this very multitude? For he is said to be in the midst, unto whom the chief honour is paid. But if the heart is, as it were, that which is midmost of a man, no better construction can be put on this passage than this, *I will praise Him in the hearts of many.* For Christ dwelleth through faith in our hearts; and therefore he saith, *with my mouth*, that is, with the mouth of my body, which is the Church. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

33. Ver. 31. *For he stood at the right hand of the poor.* It was said of Judas, *Let Satan stand at his right hand*; since he chose to increase his riches by selling Christ; but here the Lord stood at the right hand of the poor, that the Lord Himself might be the poor man's riches. *He stood at the right hand of the poor*, not to multiply the years of a life that one day must end, nor to increase his stores, nor to

render him strong in the strength of the body, or secure for a time; *but*, he saith, *to save my soul from the persecutors.* VER.  
31.  
Now the soul is rendered safe from the persecutors, if we do not consent to them unto evil; but there is no such consent to them when the Lord standeth at the right hand of the poor, that he may not give way through his very poverty, that is, weakness. This aid was given to the Body of Christ in the case of all the holy Martyrs.

PSALM CX.

LAT.  
CIX.

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EXPOSITION.

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*A Sermon to the People.*

WE have undertaken, as far as the Lord granteth, Who caused us, as ministers of His Word and Sacrament, to serve you in the richness of His lovingkindness, to consider as we are enabled, and expound this Psalm, which we have just chanted; brief in the number of its words, great in the depth of its meaning, with the aid of Him Who made you eager listeners, to render us also equal to the task. May your soul live, and watch for the Lord. For God fixed a time for His promises, and a time for fulfilling what things He promised. The period of His promises was from the time of the Prophets unto John the Baptist: but from him and thenceforth unto the end is the period for fulfilling what He promised. God is faithful, Who made Himself our Debtor: not by accepting any thing from us, but by promising us so great blessings. Promise was not enough, He even chose that He should be bound by writing, creating for us a kind of bond for His promises; so that when He began to fulfil His promises, we might contemplate in Scripture the order of their accomplishment. The period of prophecy, then, as we have before now frequently said, was the announcement of the promises. He promised everlasting salvation, and a life of bliss with the Angels without end, an heritage that should never wither, everlasting glory, the

**PSALM CX.** sweetness of His countenance, the home of His sanctification in the heavens, from the resurrection from the dead no further fear of death. This is, as it were, His final promise, whither all our endeavours tend, which after we have reached, we shall seek nothing more, expect nothing more. Nor hath He passed over in silence in what order that which shall happen at the end shall be reached, in His promises and prophecies. For He promised unto men the Divine Nature; to mortals, immortality; to sinners, justification; to cast-aways, a state of glory. Whatever He promised, He promised to the unworthy, so that not a reward was promised to works, but that grace was given by His Name for nought. For even this very thing, that man liveth righteously, so far as he can live righteously, is not the fruit of human merit, but of divine blessing. For no man liveth righteously, save he who is justified, that is, made righteous; and it is by Him that a man is made righteous, Who can never be unrighteous. For as a lamp is not lit by itself, so also the human soul doth not give itself light; but crieth unto God, *Thou shalt light my candle.*

**Ps. 18,  
23.**

2. Since, therefore, the kingdom of Heaven has been promised unto sinners not remaining in their sin, but liberated from their sin, and serving righteousness; and that they may do this, they are aided, as we have said, by grace, and justified by Him Who is always righteous; it appeared incredible, that God could have so great care for man. And at this day, those who despair of divine grace, and refuse to turn from the most depraved conduct unto God, that they may be justified by Him, and through His mercy, after all their sins are blotted out, begin to live righteously in Him Who never lived unrighteously, have entertained thoughts so destructive to themselves as to say, that God careth not for human affairs, and that the Creator and Ruler of this world cannot understand in what manner each mortal liveth on the earth. Thus man, who was made by God, doth not even think that he is held in account by God. If we could address such a man, if he would admit us first to his ears, and afterwards to his heart; if he would not repel by resistance Him who sought him, if he would in his lost state suffer himself to be found; we might say to him, 'O man, how shall

God, Who took care that thou shouldest be created, fail to INTROD. take account of thee when created? Why dost thou imagine thou art not numbered in the rank of things created? Believe not the seducer; thy hairs are counted by thy Creator.' Mat.10, 30. This our Lord said to His disciples in the Gospel, that they might not fear death, that they might not think that any thing of them should be destroyed by death. They were fearful for their souls in death; He guaranteed to them security even for their hairs. Doth then the soul of him perish, whose hair doth not perish? Nevertheless, brethren, because what God promised seemed incredible to men, that men from this mortality, corruption, weak and abject state, this dust and ashes, shall become equal to the Angels of God; He not only made a written covenant with men that they might believe, but also gave them a Mediator as a pledge of His promise; not any prince, or any Angel, or Archangel, but His only Son; so that the way through which He was to lead us to that end which He promised, He might both shew, and give unto us by the Same, His own Son. For it was not enough for God to give us in His Son one who should shew us the path, He made Him Himself the way, that thou mightest go through Him ruling thee, as thou walkest through Himself.

3. He therefore promised that we should come to Him, that is, to that ineffable immortality, and equality with His Angels. How far off were we? how much was He above us, how much we beneath Him? On what a height was He, in what a depth were we lying in despair? We were sick without any hope of cure; a physician was sent whom the sick man recognised not: *For if they had known Him, they* 1 Cor.2, *would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* But even 8. this proved a source of cure to the sick man, that the sick killed his physician; He came to visit him, He was killed to cure Him. He introduced Himself as God and Man among those who believed in Him; as God through Whom we were made, as Man through Whom we were new made. The one attribute appeared in Him, the other was concealed; and that which was concealed, was by far more excellent than that which appeared; but that which was more excellent could not be seen. The sick man was under treat-

**PSALM**  
**CX.** ment through means which he could not see, that he might become able to see that which was deferred by its concealment, not taken away by a denial of it. The only Son of God then, Who was to come unto man, was to assume the Manhood, to become Man through this assumption, to die, to rise again, to ascend into Heaven, to sit at the right hand of the Father, and to fulfil among the nations what He promised; and after the fulfilment of His promise among the nations, to fulfil His coming also; to demand what He gave, to separate the vessels of wrath from the vessels of mercy, to award to the ungodly what He threatened, to the righteous what He promised; the whole of this was to be prophesied, was to be announced beforehand, was to have its future coming declared, that it might not be dreaded by coming suddenly, but might be believed and expected. This Psalm is one of these promises, surely and openly prophesying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that we are utterly unable to doubt that Christ is announced in this Psalm, since we are now Christians, and believe the Gospel. For when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ asked of the Jews, whose Son they alleged Christ to be, and they had replied, *the Son of David*; He at once replied to their answer, *How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If then, He asked, David in the spirit call Him Lord, how is He his son?* With this verse this Psalm beginneth.

**Matt. 22,**  
**42—46.**

**Matt. 1,**  
**1.**

4. Ver. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.* We ought, therefore, thoroughly to consider this question proposed to the Jews by the Lord, in the very commencement of the Psalm. For if what the Jews answered be asked of us, whether we confess or deny it; God forbid that we should deny it. If it be said to us, Is Christ the Son of David, or not? if we reply, No, we contradict the Gospel; for the Gospel of St. Matthew thus beginneth, *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David.* The Evangelist declareth, that he is writing the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Jews, then, when questioned by Christ, whose Son they believed

Christ to be, rightly answered, the Son of David. The Gospel <sup>VRR.</sup>agreeth with their answer. Not only the suspicion of the 1. Jews, but the faith of Christians, doth declare this. I see, besides, other proofs. The Apostle saith, *Which was made Rom. 1, of the seed of David according to the flesh;* he saith also <sup>3.</sup> unto Timothy: *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of 2Tim. 2, David, was raised from the dead according to my Gospel.* <sup>8. 9.</sup> And, what saith he of the Gospel itself? *Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.* The Apostle suffered trouble even unto bonds, then, for his Gospel. That is, for the Gospel <sup>Gen. 49,</sup> dispensation which he preached to the nations, which he <sup>27.</sup> bestowed on the nations. He who had ravined in the morning, in the evening divided the spoil. He laboured then even unto bonds for the Gospel. What Gospel? That which declared that Christ Jesus arose from the dead, of the seed of David. It was for this Gospel that the Apostle suffered trouble: and yet it was concerning this that Christ questioned the Jews: and when the Jews had replied what the Apostle preached, answered them seemingly in words of contradiction, saying, *How then doth David in the spirit call Him Lord?* and interposed the testimony from this Psalm, *The Lord said unto my Lord. If then David in the spirit called Him Lord, how is He his son?* The Jews were silent at this question: they found no further reply: yet they did not seek Him as the Lord, for they did not acknowledge Him to be Himself that Son of David. But let us, brethren, both believe and declare: for, *with the Rom. heart we believe unto righteousness: but with the mouth* <sup>10, 10.</sup> *confession is made unto salvation;* let us believe, I say, and let us declare both the Son of David, and the Lord of David. Let us not be ashamed of the Son of David, lest we find the Lord of David angry with us.

5. For when the blind men very rightly hailed Him as He passed as the Son of David, they gained their enlightening. For Jesus was passing by, and they, hearing the sound of the crowd passing, already recognising with the ear what they could not as yet with the eye, cried out with a loud voice, and said, *Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David.* <sup>Mat. 20,</sup> But the crowd rebuked them, bidding them be silent: yet <sup>30.</sup>

234 *The Eternal Son passed on the way as Son of David.*

**PSALM** they nevertheless, from their desire for light, overcoming the  
**CX.** opposition of the crowd, persevered in their cries: they detained Him as He was passing, and deserved to gain their sight from His touch. For they said to Him as He passed, *Mat. 20, 29. 34.* *Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David! He stood still, and, when the clamour of those who interrupted them was overcome, said unto them, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They answered, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.* He touched, and opened their eyes: they saw Him before them, Whom they had felt to be passing them. The Lord, therefore, did somewhat that was transitory; but there is somewhat also that abideth. There is, I say, one thing that is transitory in the Lord: another that is abiding. What is transitory is, the Virgin's delivery, the Incarnation of the Word, the gradation of ages, the exhibition of miracles, the endurance of Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, Ascent into heaven, all this was transitory. For Christ is no longer in birth, or dying, or rising again, or ascending into heaven. Do ye not see that these acts held their course through seasons, through certain periods exhibited to those on the way something transitory, so that they should not abide on the path, but reach their country? Lastly, these blind men also were sitting by the path; there they saw Him passing, and arrested Him by their cries. In the path, therefore, of this world, the Lord did this transitory work of His, and this transitory work belongeth to the Son of David. Thus they said unto Him, The Lord, as He was passing, *Have mercy upon us, Thou Son of David.* As if they said, We recognise the Son of David in Him Who is passing: we learn that He became the Son of David in His passage. Let us also acknowledge Him, and confess that He is the Son of David, that we may deserve to be enlightened. For we perceive the Son of David passing, and are enlightened by the Lord of David.

6. Lo, then, since our Lord questioned the Jews, and they refused to answer, because they were resolved not to be His disciples; lo, what should we answer, if He asked us? The Jews failed in this question: let Christians profit: let them not be disturbed, but taught. For our Lord doth not ask them because He wishes to learn: He questioneth them as

their teacher. The wretched Jews should say, Tell Thou <sup>VER.</sup>  
us. But they preferred to swell to bursting in proud <sup>1.</sup>  
silence, rather than to come to learning by an humble  
confession. Suppose then our Master speaketh unto us;  
and let us consider what we should answer Him when He  
questioneth us: *What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is  
He?* Let us answer exactly as the Jews did: but let us  
not remain where the Jews did. Let us remember the  
Gospel which we believe: *The Book of the generation  
of Jesus Christ, the Son of David.* Because we are being  
questioned, let it not on that account slip from our mind,  
that Christ is the Son of David, which the Apostle im-  
presseth on our memory. *Remember, Christian, that Jesus* <sup>2 Tim.</sup>  
*Christ, of the seed of David, was raised again from the* <sup>2, 8.</sup>  
*dead.* Suppose then we are asked, *What think ye of  
Christ? Whose Son is He?* Let the unanimous voice of  
Christians reply, *The Son of David.* Suppose our Teacher  
were to answer us, *How then doth David in spirit call Him  
Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My  
right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?* How  
should we reply, unless we learnt from Thee? Now, there-  
fore, since we have learnt, we reply: *In the beginning* <sup>John 1,</sup>  
*Thou wast the Word, and Thou the Word wast with God, and* <sup>1. 3. 14.</sup>  
*Thou the Word wast God; all things were made by Thee:*  
behold the Lord of David. But on account of our weakness,  
because we lay prostrate despairing flesh, *Thou the Word  
wast made flesh, that Thou mightest dwell in us:* behold  
the Son of David. Certainly when *Thou wast in the form* <sup>Phil. 2,</sup>  
*of God, Thou didst think it no robbery to be equal with* <sup>7.</sup>  
*God:* behold David's Lord: but *Thou didst make Thyself  
of no reputation, taking upon Thyself the form of a servant:*  
hence Thou art the Son of David. Lastly, in the very words  
of Thy question, *How is He his Son?* Thou didst not deny  
Thyself to be his Son, but didst ask in what sense it was  
thus? For Thou sayest, *David calleth Him Lord: how is  
He his Son?* I deny it not, but tell Me in what sense He is  
so. Ought not they, then, to have replied from the Scrip-  
tures which they read, but understood not, if they were  
endeavouring to call to mind the sense of the expression; <sup>Is. 7,</sup>  
<sup>14.</sup>  
Dost thou ask in what sense? *Behold, a Virgin shall be* <sup>Matt. 1,</sup>  
<sup>23.</sup>

226     *The Psalm foretells Christ's Manhood exalted.*

**PSALM** *with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call*  
**C. X.** *His Name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with*  
*us. A Virgin shall be with child, a Virgin from the seed of*  
*David shall bring forth a Son, so that He is the Son of*  
**Luke 1,** *David; for Joseph and Mary were of the family and*  
**27, 32,** *country of David. But they shall call His Name, Whom*  
**and 2,** *she brought forth, Emmanuel, God with us. Lo, thou hast*  
**4. 6.** *also the Lord of David.*

7. Perhaps this Psalm will give us some intimation of this matter, how Christ is said to be David's Son and David's Lord. Let us therefore listen: let us thoroughly treat it: let us knock in piety: let us extort by charity. David, then, himself saith; for it is not lawful to contradict the Lord; *David*, He saith, *in spirit calleth Him Lord*. What then doth David himself say of Christ? For, this Psalm is *David's own*: and this is the whole of the title, simple, without figure of question, without any knot of difficulty. What then saith David? *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Thy footstool is equivalent to beneath Thy feet*: for a footstool is beneath the feet. *The Lord said*, he saith, *unto my Lord*. David heard this, he heard it in the spirit: when and where he heard it, we have not heard; but we believe him when he saith, and writeth that he heard it. He then doubtless heard it, he heard it in some secret place of truth, he heard it in some sanctuary of mysteries: where the Prophets heard in secret, what they preached openly: there David heard, what he speaketh with much confidence: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*. We know that Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, since His resurrection from the dead, and ascent into heaven. It is already done: we saw not it, but we have believed it: we have read it in the Scripture, have heard it preached, and hold it by faith. So that by the very circumstance that Christ was David's Son, He became His Lord also. For That Which was born of the seed of David was so honoured, that It was also the Lord of David. Thou wonderest at this, as if the same did not happen in human affairs. For if it should happen, that the son of any private

person be made a king, will he not be his father's lord? <sup>VER.</sup>  
What is yet more wonderful may happen, not only that the <sup>1.</sup>  
son of a private person, by being made a king, may become  
his father's lord; but that the son of a layman, by being  
made a Bishop, may become his father's father. So that  
in this very circumstance, that Christ took upon Him the  
flesh, that He died in the flesh, that He rose again in the  
same flesh, that in the same He ascended into Heaven, and  
sitteth on the right hand of His Father, in this same flesh so  
honoured, so brightened, so changed into a heavenly garb,  
He is both David's Son, and David's Lord. For according  
to this dispensation of Christ's passage, this also is said by  
the Apostle, *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him,* <sup>Phil. 2,</sup>  
*and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at* <sup>9. 10.</sup>  
*the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in  
heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.*  
He gave Him, he saith, a Name which is above every  
name; to Christ in His human nature, to Christ Who died  
in the flesh, arose, ascended, He hath given a Name which  
is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee  
should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and  
things under the earth. Where can David be, that He  
should not be his Lord? Whether he be in Heaven, on the  
earth, or under the earth: He will be his Lord, Who is the  
Lord of things in heaven, of things on the earth, and of  
things under the earth. Let therefore David rejoice with  
us, honoured as he is by the birth of his Son, freed by His  
dominion; and let him say with joy, let him be heard by  
rejoicing listeners: *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou  
on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.*  
8. *Sit*, not only on high, but in a hidden place: on high,  
that Thou mayest be Lord; in secret, that Thou mayest be  
believed in. For what reward would there be for faith, if  
what we believed were not hid? But the reward of faith is,  
to see what we believed before we saw it; as the Scripture  
telleth us, *the righteous man liveth by faith.* There would <sup>Rom. 1,</sup>  
then be no righteousness in faith, unless that which we <sup>17.</sup>  
should believe when preached, were hidden; and unless we  
reached the sight of it by believing in it. For, *O how  
plentiful is Thy goodness, O Lord, that Thou hast hidden*

**PSALM CX.** *for them that fear Thee.* Hast Thou then hidden it, and  
**Ps. 31,** have they fallen back? God forbid! *and that Thou hast*  
**19.** *fulfilled to them that put their trust in Thee.* Wonderful  
induced is the mystery of Christ sitting on the right hand of  
God: it hath been hidden that it might be believed, it hath  
been withdrawn that it might be hoped for. *For we are*  
*saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for*  
*what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?* These are the  
Apostle's words. Ye indeed recognise them, but for the sake  
of the ignorant I speak of them unto you. What then saith  
**Rom. 8,** the Apostle? *We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is*  
**24. 25.** *not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*  
*But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience*  
*wait for it.* Since then that which is seen is not hope,  
Thou hast hidden Thy goodness for them that fear Thee.  
Because we hope for what we see not, and wait for it with  
patience; *Thou hast fulfilled it to those who trust in Thee.*  
Lastly, most beloved, hear with attention what I am about  
to say. Since our righteousness is from faith, and our hearts  
are cleansed by faith, so that we may see what we have  
believed in; for both these things are stated in Scripture;  
**Matt. 5,** both, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;*  
**8.** and, *Purifying their hearts by faith.* Since then this is the  
**Act 16,** righteousness of faith, to believe what thou seest not, and  
**9.** by this very merit of faith to reach in its time unto sight;  
our Lord in the Gospel, when He was promising the Holy  
**John 16,** Spirit, saith this; *He will reprove the world of sin, and of*  
**8.** *righteousness, and of judgment.* Of what sin, of what  
righteousness, of what judgment? He proceedeth and ex-  
plaineth; He alloweth not the conjectures of men: *of sin,*  
He saith, *because they believe not on Me.* How great were  
other sins of the Jews! and yet, as if this were the only one,  
He thus spoke: *of sin, because they believe not on Me.*  
**John 16,** This is that sin, of which He elsewhere saith, *If I had not*  
**22.** *come, they would not have sin.* What meaneth this, *If I*  
*had not come, they would not have sin?* Hast Thou then  
come to the righteous, and rendered them sinners? But,  
leaving out other sins, which might be pardoned through  
faith, He mentioned this one only, which if they had not  
committed, all might be forgiven. *Of sin,* He saith, *because*

they believed not on Me: and elsewhere, *If I had not come, they would not have sin.* For by this very circumstance, that He came, and they believed not on Him, they fell into sin: but if they had not thus fallen, all their other sins might have been pardoned through the merciful dispensation of grace gained by faith. *Of sin, therefore, because they believed not on Me: of righteousness, because I go My Father, and ye see Me no more.* This is righteousness, because Thou goest to the Father, and they shall no longer see Thee: for this righteousness is of faith. For, *the righteous liveth by faith:* and he then liveth by faith, when he seeth not what he believeth. Since then it belongeth to righteousness to live by faith, and no man liveth by faith, save by not seeing what he believeth; that He might create righteousness itself among men, that is, that they might believe what they see not; *Of righteousness, He saith, because I go to My Father, and ye shall see Me no more.* This, He saith, shall be your righteousness, that ye believe in Him Whom ye see not, and cleansed by faith, may afterwards see Him on Whom ye have believed, on the day of resurrection.

9. Christ, therefore, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Son is on the right hand of the Father, hidden from us. Let us believe. Two things are here said: that God said, *Sit Thou on My right hand;* and added, *until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool;* that is, beneath Thy feet. Thou dost not see Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father: yet thou canst see this, how His enemies are made His footstool. While the latter is fulfilled openly, believe the former to be fulfilled secretly. What enemies are made His footstool? Those to whom imagining vain things it is said, *Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. And have said, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us: let them not rule over us, let them not subject us to them. He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn.* Thou wast His enemy; thou shalt be beneath His feet, either as adopted or overcome. Consider, then, what

VER.  
1.

John 16,  
8-10.

Ps. 2, 1.  
&c.

240 *Christ, sitting on the right hand of God, reigns for ever.*

**PSALM** place thou holdest beneath the feet of the Lord thy God:  
**CX.** for thou must needs hold one either of grace or of punishment. He therefore sitteth at the right hand of God, till His enemies be placed beneath His feet. This is going on, this is taking place: although it is accomplished by degrees, it is going on without end. For though the heathen rage, and though the people imagine a vain thing: though the kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed; will they by their raging, will they by their imagining a vain thing, will they taking counsel together against Christ, prevent the fulfilment of these words; *I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession?* It shall be surely fulfilled, though they rage, and meditate a vain thing; *I will give to thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession.* For they imagine a vain thing: but, that it may be fulfilled, it was not any vain babbling,  
**Pn. 2, n.** but the Lord, Who said unto Me, *I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.* So also we may say in this Psalm: He said; that is, not any man, not they who rage and imagine a vain thing; but, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.* Let them rage, let them imagine vain things, let them cry aloud; shall it not be fulfilled? *Their memorial is perished with a cry.* Their memorial is perished with a cry; but,  
**Pn. 9, 7.** *The Lord shall endure for ever:* as another Psalm, but not another spirit, saith. He therefore, Who, when their memorial hath perished, for ever endureth, Himself *said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand.* For He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, till He make His enemies His footstool.

10. Ver. 2. And what followeth? *The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion.* It appeareth, brethren, it most clearly appeareth, that the Prophet is not speaking of that kingdom of Christ, in which He reigneth for ever with His Father, Ruler of the things which are made through  
**John 1,** Him: for when doth not God the Word reign, Who is in  
**1.** the beginning with God? For it is said, *Now unto the King*  
**1 Tim.**

*eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.* To the King eternal be honour and glory for ever and ever; to what eternal King? To one invisible, incorruptible. For in this, that Christ is with the Father, invisible, and incorruptible, because He is His Word, and His Power, and His Wisdom, and God with God, through Whom all things were made; He is *King eternal*; but, nevertheless, that reign of temporal government, by which, through the mediation of His flesh, He called us into eternity, beginneth with Christians; but of His reign there shall be no end. His enemies therefore are made His footstool, while He is sitting on the right hand of His Father, as it is written; this is now going on, this will go on unto the end. Let no man say, that what hath been commenced, cannot be fulfilled. Why dost thou despair of a result of what hath been begun? The Almighty hath begun, the Almighty hath promised that He will fulfil what He hath commenced. But how hath He commenced? *The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion.* Jerusalem herself is the same with Sion. Hear the Lord Himself: *It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.* Hence He sitteth at the right hand of God, by rising again where He was before. Then when He sitteth at the right hand of God, what is doing? what is doing, that His enemies may be made His footstool? Hear Him teaching and expounding: *And repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* For, *the Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion.* The rod of Thy power, that is, the reign of Thy power; for, *Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron.* *The Lord shall send the rod out of Sion*; for it is said, *beginning with Jerusalem.*

11. When therefore He hath sent the rod of His power out of Sion: what shall happen? *Be Thou ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies.* First, *Be Thou ruler in the midst of Thine enemies*: in the midst of the raging heathen. For shall He rule *in the midst of His enemies* at a later season, when the Saints have received their reward, and the ungodly their condemnation? And what wonder if He shall then rule, when the righteous reign with

PSALM CX. Him for ever, and the ungodly burn with eternal punish-  
 ments? What wonder, if He shall then? Now *in the midst*  
*of Thine enemies*, now in this transition of ages, in this  
 propagation and succession of human mortality, now while  
 the torrent of time is gliding by, unto this is the rod of Thy  
 power sent out of Sion, *that Thou mayest be Ruler in the*  
*midst of Thine enemies*. Rule Thou, rule among Pagans,  
 Jews, heretics, false brethren. Rule Thou, rule, O Son of  
 David, Lord of David, rule in the midst of Pagans, Jews,  
 heretics, false brethren. *Be Thou Ruler in the midst of*  
*Thine enemies*. We understand not this verse aright, if we  
 do not see that it is already going on. Sit Thou therefore  
 on the right hand of God, be hidden that Thou mayest be  
 Luke 21, believed in, *until the times of the nations be fulfilled*. For  
 24. thus it is written, *Whom the heaven must needs receive until*  
 Acts 3, *the times of the restitution of all things*. Thou hast died,  
 21. that Thou mightest rise again; Thou hast risen again, that  
 Thou mightest ascend; Thou hast ascended, that Thou  
 mightest sit on the right hand of the Father; therefore,  
 Thou hast died, that Thou mightest sit on the right hand  
 of the Father. For of death came resurrection; of resur-  
 rection, ascension; of ascension, sitting on the right hand:  
 the whole of this, therefore, began with death. This ex-  
 ceeding splendour hath a beginning of humility. Whilst  
 Thou then sittest at the right hand of the Father, the times  
 of the Gentiles are being fulfilled, all enemies are made Thy  
 footstool; and that this may be realized, Thou shalt first  
 rule in the midst of Thine enemies: for for this *The Lord*  
*shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion*. But that  
 Coloss. Thou mightest die, and that by Thy death the handwriting  
 2, 14. of sins might be blotted out, and that repentance and remis-  
 sion of sins might be preached throughout all nations,  
 beginning with Jerusalem, hath come by the blindness of  
 Rom. the Jews. For *blindness in part hath happened to Israel,*  
 11, 25. *that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and so all*  
*Israel might be saved*. Israel, who had become in part  
 blind, slew Thee; when slain Thou didst arise again, with  
 Thy blood Thou didst wash away the sins of the heathen;  
 sitting at the right hand of the Father, Thou hast drawn  
 together from every quarter those who suffer, and who fly

unto Thee. *Blindness, then, in part hath happened to Israel, hath happened, that the fulness of the Gentiles might* VER. 3.  
*come in; and so all Israel might be saved, and all Thine enemies be made Thy footstool. But this is happening now, what afterwards?*

12. Ver. 8. *With Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power.* What is this day of His power, when is there beginning with Him, or what beginning, or in what sense is there beginning with Him, since He is the Beginning? May the Lord help, that I may neither be confused in explaining to you, nor you in hearing. For I see what has already happened, and I see together with you with the eyes of faith; with the eyes of the flesh also I see what is now going on, and again with the eyes of faith I hope for the future with you. What then hath taken place, what is taking place, and what is to take place? Christ hath suffered, hath died, hath risen on the third day, ascended into heaven, as we know, on the fortieth day, sitteth on the right hand of His Father; this has already taken place, this we have not seen, but we believe. What is going on now? He ruleth in the midst of His enemies, the rod of His power having been sent forth out of Sion: this is going on now. His servants saw Him when present in the form of a servant; His servants believe in Him now that He is absent. We believe this concerning the form of a servant, which we can understand whilst we are still servants. For this is that very milk of infants, which He tempered, making bread pass through flesh. For that bread of angels was in the beginning the Word, yet that man might eat angels' bread, Ps. 78, the Creator of angels was made man. Thus we became <sup>25.</sup> capable of receiving the Incarnate Word, which we should not be able to receive unless the Son coequal with God had made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him <sup>Philipp.</sup> *the form of a servant, and being found in the likeness of* <sup>2, 6. 7.</sup> *men.* That we might therefore in some way receive Him Who could not be received by mortals, He Who was immortal became mortal, that after His death He might make them immortal, and might give something to be beheld, something to be believed, and something to be afterwards seen. He gave the form of a servant to be seen to those

244 *None but the righteous shall see Christ in form of God.*

**PSALM CX.** who were present, not only to be seen with the eye, but even to be touched with the hands. With the same form He ascended into Heaven, He commanded us to believe what He allowed them to see. But we also have something to see; they saw the rod that was sent out of Sion, we see Him ruling in the midst of His enemies. All this, brethren, pertained unto the assumption of the form of a servant, which is understood tolerably by servants, and loved by His future sons. For that immutable Truth which is the Word of God, God with God, through Whom all things were made, abiding in Himself, *altereth all things*. In order that we may see this, a great and perfect purity of heart is necessary, and this only cometh through faith. For the form of a servant having been shewn, Truth was delayed as to shewing the form of God. For He when speaking to His servants in the form of a servant saith, *He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him*. He promised that He would manifest Himself to those who saw Him. What did they see? What did He promise? They saw the form of a servant, He promised the form of God; I will manifest Myself, He saith, to him. This is the very clear light into which the kingdom which is now gathering together in the transition of this world is being led; for it is being led to a certain ineffable sight, which the ungodly shall not deserve. Nevertheless, while the form of a servant was here, it was seen by the ungodly; they who believed saw it, they also who slew Him saw it. That thou shouldest not suppose it was any thing great that that form should be seen, His friends saw it, His enemies saw it; and some who saw it, slew Him, some who saw it not, believed. Both the godly and ungodly, then, shall see in the Judgment that form of a servant, which both the godly and ungodly saw in humiliation here. For when the Lord before the eyes of His disciples was being borne into heaven, the voice of an Angel was heard by those who beheld Him: *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven*. "In like manner," then, "in like manner,"

meaneth in the same form: for it is said of the ungodly, *They shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced.* They shall see Him when about to judge, Whom they mocked when judged. This form of the servant then will be conspicuous both to the righteous and unrighteous, the godly and the ungodly, the faithful and the unbelieving. What then shall the ungodly not see? For those of whom it is said, *They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced:* of whom it is also said, *Let the ungodly be rooted out, that he may not behold the brightness of the Lord.* What is this, brethren? Let us discern it, let us sift it. The ungodly is awakened, that he may see something: he is taken away, that he may not see something. We have already shewn what he will see: that form of which it is said, *In like manner He will come.* What then will he not see? *And I will shew Myself unto him.* What meaneth, *Myself?* Not the form of a servant. What meaneth *Myself?* The form of God, in which I have not thought it robbery to be equal with God. What meaneth, *Myself?* *Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.* This is the brightness of God, the ineffable light, a fountain of light that can never change, truth without defect, wisdom abiding in itself, altering all things: this is the Substance of God. The ungodly therefore shall be rooted out, that he may not see this honour of the Lord. For, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

13. It seemeth therefore to me, my brethren, as far as the Lord deigneth to give me understanding, to be said of time itself: if indeed I should say time; for at some time we shall reach what is not time: it seemeth to be said with this meaning; and I will say this without prejudice, if any man can understand it in a better, a more natural, or more probable sense: this seemeth to me to be the meaning of the words, *With Thee is the beginning in the day of Thy power.* Besides, he explaineth this adequately, in my opinion, in the following verse. For since His power is here spoken of, by which He subjected nations to His yoke, with which He overthrew peoples, not with the sword but

**PSALM** with the wood, although in the flesh, although in humility,  
**CX.** although as yet in so far as the form of a servant doth allow,  
**1 Cor.** yet His great power is understood; because, *the weakness of*  
**1, 25.** *God is stronger than men*; since His power is spoken of  
**Ps. 110,** here, which he set forth when he said, *The Lord shall send*  
**2.** *the rod of Thy power out of Sion; be Thou Ruler, even in*  
*the midst among Thine enemies*: for how great is His  
power when He ruleth *in the midst of His enemies*, who  
rage against Him, who can avail nothing against Him, who  
**Ps. 41, 5,** are every day saying to themselves, *When shall He die,*  
*and His name perish?* When His glory increaseth among  
the nations, when they are made subject unto His name,  
**Ps. 112,** *when the ungodly seeth and is wroth, gnasheth with his*  
**10.** *teeth, and pineth away.* Since then this also is His power,  
the prophet wishing to praise His power otherwise, as it is  
Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, in the  
perpetual light of an unchangeable truth; for which sight  
we are reserved, for which sight we are put off for a season,  
for which sight we are cleansed by faith, from which sight the  
ungodly is taken away, *that he may not see the brightness of*  
*the Lord*; wishing then to shew this, *With Thee*, he saith,  
*is the beginning, on the day of Thy power.* What meaneth,  
*With Thee is the beginning?* Suppose any thing you please  
as the beginning. Of Christ Himself, it would rather have  
been said, Thou art the Beginning, than, *With Thee is the*  
beginning. For He answered to those who asked Him,  
**John 8,** *Who art Thou?* and said, *Even the same that I said unto*  
**25.** *you, the Beginning*; since His Father also is the Beginning,  
of Whom is the only-begotten Son, in which Beginning was  
the Word, for the Word was with God. What then, if both  
the Father and the Son are the beginning, are there two  
beginnings? God forbid! For as the Father is God, and  
the Son is God, but the Father and the Son are not two  
Gods, but one God: so is the Father Beginning and the  
Son Beginning, but the Father and the Son are not two, but  
one Beginning. *With Thee is the beginning.* Then it  
shall appear in what sense the beginning is with Thee.  
Not that the beginning is not with Thee here also. For  
**John 16,** hast Thou not also said, *Behold, ye shall be scattered, every*  
**32.** *man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; but I am not*

alone, because the Father is with Me. Here therefore also, <sup>V ER.</sup> the beginning is with Thee. For Thou hast said elsewhere <sup>3.</sup> — also, *But the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth His* <sup>John 14,</sup> *works.*—*With Thee is the beginning:* nor was the Father <sup>10.</sup> ever separated from Thee. But when the Beginning shall appear to be with Thee, then shall it be manifest unto all who are made like Thee; since they shall see Thee as Thou <sup>1 John</sup> art; for Philip saw Thee here, and sought the Father. Then <sup>3, 2.</sup> <sup>John 14,</sup> therefore shall be seen what now is believed: then shall *the* <sup>8.</sup> *beginning be with Thee* in the sight of the righteous, in the sight of saints; the ungodly being removed, that they may not see the brightness of the Lord.

14. Let us therefore believe now, brethren, what we shall see then. For Philip himself was reproved because he sought to see the Father, and did not recognise the Father in the Son Himself; *Have I been so long with you, and yet* <sup>John 14,</sup> *hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me,* <sup>8—11.</sup> *hath seen the Father.* He saith, he that hath seen Me: not he that hath seen the form of a servant in Me. He therefore who hath seen Me, such as *I have hidden Myself for* <sup>Ps. 31,</sup> *those who fear Me,* such as I will give to them to see, who <sup>20.</sup> put their trust in Me, have seen the Father also. But since that sight will be afterwards, what shall we have instead of it now? Let us see what He said to Philip, to whom He hath said, He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father. As if Philip silently answered Him, And how shall I see Thee, if Thou appearest otherwise than in the form of a servant? or how shall I see the Father, I a weak mortal, dust and ashes? turning unto him, putting off the sight, commanding faith, after He said, *He who hath seen me, hath seen the Father,* because it was much unto Philip, and the sight was far distant from him; *Dost thou not believe,* He said, *that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?* Believe what thou canst not yet see, that thou mayest deserve to see it. When therefore the time shall be come that we shall see, then will appear *with Thee the beginning in the day of Thy power. Of Thy power,* not of the power of Thy weakness, since there is power there. *Of Thy power:* men have now their own virtues, in faith, in hope, in charity, in good works, but *they shall go from strength to strength.* *With Thee* therefore <sup>Ps. 84, 7.</sup>

**PSALM CX.** *is the beginning.* Thou shalt appear with the Father, in the Father, as the Father is *with Thee the Beginning on the day of Thy power*, of that power of Thine which the ungodly shall not see. For this *weakness of Thine is stronger than men.* For *with Thee is the beginning on the day of Thy power.*

15. Explain of what power thou speakest. Because here also, as is said, His power is mentioned, when the rod of His power is sent forth out of Sion, that He may be Ruler in the midst of His enemies. Of what power speakest thou, *In the splendour of the saints?* *In the splendour*, he saith, *of the saints.* He speaketh of that power when the saints shall be in splendour; not when still carrying about their earthly flesh, and groaning in a mortal and corruptible body, which *oppresseth the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things*; when those very musings do not appear to one another; but what meaneth, *in the splendour of the saints?* “*Until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.* This will be, *in the splendour of the saints,—Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*” Listen to the meaning of the words, *in the splendour of the saints*; the harvest, He saith, shall come, the end of the world shall come: *then the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* In what kingdom? Consider if some sight is reserved concerning which it is said unto us, *with Thee the Beginning.* In what kingdom? Surely in eternal life. For, *He shall say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* then when the ungodly are condemned, and the righteous set apart and praised, what followeth His words, ‘Receive ye the kingdom?’ *Then shall the ungodly go away into everlasting fire, but the righteous into life eternal:* what He had termed the kingdom, He now calleth life eternal, whither

Wisd. 9.  
15.

1 Cor. 4.  
5.

Mat. 13.  
39. 43.

Mat. 25.  
34. 46.

the ungodly shall not go. Consider whether the life eternal <sup>VER.</sup> be not a certain vision; *for this is life eternal, that they* 3. *might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent, for with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power; therefore, with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power in the splendour of the saints.*

16. But this is put off, this will be granted afterwards: what is there now? *From the womb I have begotten Thee, before the morning star.* What is here? If God hath a Son, hath He also a womb? Like fleshly bodies, He hath not; for He hath not a bosom either; yet it is said, *He Who is in* <sup>John 1,</sup> *the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him.* But that <sup>18.</sup> which is the womb, is the bosom also: both bosom and womb are put for a secret place. What meaneth, *from the womb?* From what is secret, from what is hidden; from Myself, from My substance; this is the meaning of, *from the womb;* for, *Who shall declare His generation?* Let us then <sup>Is. 53, 8.</sup> understand the Father saying unto the Son, *From My womb before the morning star have I brought Thee forth.* What then meaneth, *before the morning star?* The morning star is put for the stars, as if the Scripture signified the whole from a part, and from one conspicuous star all the stars. But how were those stars created? *That they may be for* <sup>Gen. 1,</sup> *signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.* If therefore <sup>14.</sup> the stars are put for signs and for seasons; and if the morning star be put for the other stars; what is before the morning star is also before the stars; and what is before the stars, that is before seasons; if before seasons, that is from eternity: seek not when: eternity hath no when. When and some-when are words applied to seasons. He by Whom seasons were made, was not created by the Father in time. It is therefore said, as it ought to have been said, figuratively, prophetically, so that both *the womb* is put for invisible substance, and the morning star for seasons. Do ye wish that we should carry our view back to David himself, who called his son his Lord? In order that he might speak thus, he heard this from his Lord; from Him he heard Who could not be deceived: and he then called Him his Lord, because, *The Lord,* he saith, *said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand.* He himself speaketh here; it is, as it were, a

**PSALM** discourse of his that hath been composed. If then he  
**CX.** himself speaketh, he might perhaps himself say, *from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee*: from the Virgin's womb, *from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee*. For if Christ was born of the womb of that Virgin who was descended from the flesh of David, He was as it were begotten from the womb by David. *From the womb*, whither no man approached: *from the womb* altogether, *from the womb* in a peculiar sense, because He alone was born of the womb alone. Therefore, he saith, *from the womb*, he who called Him his Lord, *from the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee*. This expression also, *before the morning star*, is used both figuratively and literally, and was thus fulfilled. For the Lord was born at night from the womb of the Virgin Mary; the testimony of **Luke 2,** the shepherds doth assert this, who were *keeping watch*  
**7, 8.** *over their flock*. *From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee*. O Thou, my Lord, Who sittest at the right hand of my Lord, whence art Thou my Son, except because, *From the womb before the morning star I have begotten Thee?*

17. Ver. 4. And unto what art Thou born? *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*. For unto this wast Thou born from the womb before the morning star, that Thou mightest be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For in that character in which He was born of the Father, God with God, coeternal with Him Who begot Him, He is not a Priest; but He is a Priest on account of the flesh which He assumed, on account of the victim which He was to offer for us received from us. *The Lord*, then, *hath sworn*. What then meaneth, the Lord hath **Matt. 5,** sworn? Doth the Lord, Who forbiddeth men to swear,  
**34.** Himself swear? Or doth He possibly forbid man to swear chiefly on this account, that he may not fall into perjury, and for this reason the Lord may swear, since He cannot be forsworn. For man, who, through a habit of swearing, may slip into perjury, is rightly forbidden to swear: for he will be farther from perjury in proportion as he is far from swearing. For the man who sweareth, may swear truly or

falsely; but he who sweareth not, cannot swear falsely; for he sweareth not at all. Why then should not the Lord swear, <sup>VER.</sup> <sup>4.</sup> since the Lord's oath is the seal of the promise? Let Him swear by all means. What then dost thou, when thou swearest? Thou callest God to witness: this is to swear, to call God to witness; and for this reason there must be anxiety, that thou mayest not call God to witness any thing false. If therefore thou by an oath dost call God to witness, why then should not God also call Himself to witness with an oath? *I live, saith the Lord*, this is the Lord's oath. Thus He swore concerning the seed of Abraham: *I live, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is by the sea shore; and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed.* <sup>Gen. 22,</sup> <sup>16-18.</sup> And the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, that seed of Abraham, assuming the flesh from the seed of Abraham, shall be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Concerning the Priesthood, therefore, after the order of Melchisedec, *The Lord sware, and will not repent.* What of the Priesthood after the order of Aaron? Doth God repent like a man, or is He compelled to do any thing against His will, or doth He stumble forward unawares unto doing a thing, so that it repenteth Him afterwards of His fall? He knoweth what He is doing: He knoweth how far every thing will advance; the means of its being changed into something else, is in the power of the Ruler. Now by repentance is meant an alteration of things. For just as thou, when any thing maketh thee repent, dost grieve at the deed thou hast done; so when God changeth any thing beyond men's expectation, that is, otherwise than men expect, He saith that He repenteth: even so far that He repenteth of our punishment, if we repent of our sinful life. *The Lord sware*, then, that is, confirmed: *He will not repent*, He will not change. What? *Thou art a Priest for ever.* For ever, for He will not repent. But Priest, in what sense? Will there be those victims, victims offered by the Patriarchs, altars of blood, and tabernacle, and those sacred emblems of the Old Covenant? God

**PSALM** forbid! These things are already abolished; the temple  
**CX.** being destroyed, that priesthood taken away, their victim  
 and their sacrifice having alike disappeared, not even the  
 Jews have these things. They see that the priesthood after  
 the order of Aaron hath already perished, and they do not  
 recognise the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.  
*Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*  
 I speak unto believers. If catechumens understand not  
 something, let them lay aside sloth, and hasten unto know-  
 ledge. It is not therefore needful for me to disclose  
 mysteries here: let the Scriptures intimate to you what is  
 the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.

18. Ver. 5. *The Lord on Thy right hand.* The Lord had  
 said, *Sit Thou on My right hand*; now the Lord is on His  
 right hand, as if they changed seats. Or are not the words,  
*the Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for  
 ever*, rather addressed to Christ? *The Lord sware, Thou art a  
 Priest for ever.* What Lord? That Lord Who said unto  
 my Lord, *Sit Thou on My right hand*, hath Himself sworn,  
*Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*;  
 and these words, *the Lord upon Thy right hand*, are addressed  
 to the same Lord Who swore thus. O Lord, Thou Who hast  
 sworn and said, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of  
 Melchisedec*, He is the Priest for ever, the Lord upon Thy  
 right hand; Himself, I say, the Priest for ever, of Whom  
 Thou hast sworn, is the Lord on Thy right hand; because  
 Thou hast said to the same My Lord, *Sit Thou on My right  
 hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.* This Lord,  
 then, Who is on Thy right hand, of Whom Thou hast sworn  
 in these words, *Thou art a Priest after the order of Melchi-  
 sedec, shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath.* That  
 very Christ, the *Lord on Thy right hand*, unto Whom Thou  
 hast sworn, and it will not repent Thee: what doth He, Priest  
 Rom. 8, for evermore? What doth He, Who is at the right hand of  
 34. God, and intercedeth for us, like a priest entering into the  
 Heb. 9, inner places, and into the holy of holies, into the mysteries  
 12; 14; of heaven, He alone being without sin, and therefore easily  
 24. purifying from sins. He therefore *on Thy right hand shall  
 wound even kings in the day of His wrath.* What kings,  
 dost thou ask? Hast thou forgotten? *The kings of the earth*

*Christ falls, in Majesty, on those who fall on Him as humbled.* 253

stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. These kings He wounded by His glory, and by the weight of His Name made kings weak, so that they had not power to effect what they wished. For they strove amain to blot out the Christian name from the earth, and could not; for *Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken*. Kings therefore fall on this stone of offence, and are therefore wounded, when they say, Who is Christ? I know not what Jew or what Galilean He may have been, who died, who was slain in such a manner! The stone is before thy feet, lying, so to speak, mean and humble: therefore by scorning thou dost stumble, by stumbling thou fallest, by falling thou art wounded. If then so great is the wrath when hidden, what will be His judgment when made manifest? Ye have heard the wrath of the Hidden One, respecting which a Psalm is entitled, *For the hidden things of the Son*<sup>1</sup>: the ninth Psalm, if I remember right, is entitled, *for the hidden things of the Son*: and there the secret judgment of hidden wrath is displayed. They who strike upon that stone live beneath the wrath of God; they are wounded. What is the meaning of their being wounded? Hear this of the judgment to come: *Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be wounded; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder*. When therefore any one falleth upon it, it lieth as it were low; it then woundeth: but when it shall grind him to powder, then it will come from above. See how in these two words, it shall wound him and grind him to powder: he striketh upon it, and it shall come down upon him: are distinguished the two seasons, of the humiliation and the majesty of Christ, of hidden punishment and future judgment. He will not crush, when He cometh, that man whom He doth not wound when He lieth. I mean by lying, a contemptible appearance; for He is on the right hand of God, and loudly He crieth from Heaven, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* but nevertheless, although from Heaven, He would not say, *why persecutest thou Me*, when no one touched Him, unless He were sitting in Heaven, on the right hand of the Father, in such a manner that He was still, as it were, lying among us

VER.

6.

Ps. 2, 2.

Mat. 21,

44.

Ps. 9,

Tit.

Upon

Muth-

labben.

Luke 20,

18.

Acta 9,

4.

**PSALM** on earth. *The Lord is on thy right hand, He shall wound*  
**CX.** *even kings in the day of His wrath.*

19. Ver. 6. *He shall judge among the heathen*, but at present *for the hidden things*, but there will be a judgment made manifest. *He shall judge among the heathen*, even now it is going on, *their memorial hath perished*. In Ps. 9, 7. this same Psalm it is written, *For the hidden things; their memorial is perished with a noise: but the Lord shall endure for ever; He hath also prepared His seat for judgment: and, He shall judge the world in righteousness.* It is there said, *Thou hast rebuked the heathen,* Ps. 9, 5. *and destroyed the ungodly: Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever: this is going on in secret. In the day therefore of His wrath He shall wound even kings. He shall judge among the heathen.* How? Hear what followeth; *He shall fill up what hath fallen.* At present He so judgeth among the nations, that He filleth up what hath fallen; for when He shall judge at the end, He will condemn what hath fallen. *He will fill up what hath fallen.* What that hath fallen? Whoever hath feared His Name shall fall: when he hath fallen, what he was before shall be overthrown, that what he was not may be built up. *He shall judge among the heathen: He shall fill up what hath fallen.* Whoever thou art who art obstinate against Christ, thou hast raised on high a tower that must fall. It is good that thou shouldst cast thyself down, become humble, throw thyself at the feet of Him Who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, that in thee a ruin may be made to be built up. For if thou abidest in thy evil height, thou shalt be cast down when thou canst not be built up. For of such the Ps. 28, 5. Scripture saith in another passage; *Therefore shall He break down, and not build them up.* Beyond doubt he would not say of some, "therefore He shall break them down, and not build them up:" unless there were some whom He broke down so as to build them up again. And this is going on at this time, while Christ is judging among the heathen in such a manner as to fill up what hath fallen. *He shall smite many heads over the earth.* Here upon the earth in this life He shall smite many heads. He maketh

them humble instead of proud; and I dare to say, my brethren, that it is more profitable to walk here humbly with the head wounded, than with the head erect to fall into the judgment of eternal death. He will smite many heads when he causeth them to fall, but He will fill them up and build them up again.

20. Ver. 7. *He shall drink of the brook<sup>1</sup> in the way,<sup>1</sup> de tor-  
therefore shall he lift up his head.* Let us consider Him drinking of the brook in the way: first of all, what is the brook? the onward flow of human mortality: for as a brook is gathered together by the rain, overflows, roars, runs, and by running runs down, that is, finishes its course; so is all this course of mortality. Men are born, they live, they die, and when some die others are born, and when they die others are born, they succeed, they flock together, they depart and will not remain. What is held fast here? what doth not run? what is not on its way to the abyss as if it was gathered together from rain? For as a river suddenly drawn together from rain from the drops of showers runneth into the sea, and is seen no more, nor was it seen before it was collected from the rain; so this hidden rain is collected together from hidden sources, and floweth on; at death again it travelleth where it is hidden: this intermediate state soundeth and passeth away. Of this brook He drinketh, He hath not disdained to drink of this brook; for to drink of this brook was to Him to be born and to die. What this brook hath, is birth and death; Christ assumed this, He was born, He died; thus *He drinketh of the brook in the way*, for *He* Ps. 19, 5. *rejoiced as a giant to run his course.* He therefore drinketh of the brook in the way, because He *stood not in the way* Ps. 1. 1. *of sinners*; since, therefore, *He drinketh of the brook in the way, therefore hath He lifted up His head*; that is, because he was humble, and *became obedient unto death*, Philip. *even the death of the Cross: therefore God also hath highly* 2. 8-11. *exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ the Lord is in the glory of God the Father.*

LAT.  
CX.

PSALM CXI.

—  
EXPOSITION.  
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*A Sermon to the people at the Paschal Festival.*

1. THE days have come for us to sing Allelujah. Attend carefully, brethren, in order to perceive what the Lord doth supply for our exhortation, and to nourish charity, by means of which it is good for us to cling unto God. Listen attentively, good singers, sons of the praise and eternal glory of the true and incorruptible God. Listen attentively, ye who know how to sing and to play in your hearts unto the Lord, *Always giving thanks for all things*: and praise God; for this is Allelujah. Now these days come only to pass away, and pass away to come again, and typify the day which does not come and pass away, because it is neither preceded by yesterday to cause it to come, nor pressed upon by the morrow to cause it to pass. And to which indeed when we have come, clinging unto Him, we shall not pass away; and as in a certain passage it is sung unto God, *Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be always praising Thee*; this will be their easy business, this their leisure toil, these their resting works, this their happy care. For as these days succeed in regular season, with a joyful cheerfulness, the past days of Lent, whereby the misery of this life before the Resurrection of the Lord's body is signified; so that day which after the Resurrection shall be given to the full body of the Lord, that is, to the holy Church, when all the troubles and sorrows of this life have been shut out, shall succeed with perpetual bliss. But this life demandeth from us self-restraint, that although groaning and weighed down with our toil and struggles, and desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we may refrain from secular pleasures: and this is signified by the number of forty, which was the period of the fasts of Moses, and Elias,

Eph. 5,  
19, 20.

Ps. 84, 5.

2 Cor.  
5, 2.

Exod.  
34, 28.

1 Kings  
19, 8.

and our Lord Himself. For it is enjoined unto us both by <sup>VER.</sup> the Law and the Prophets and the Gospel itself, (which <sup>1, 2,</sup> hath testimony from the Law and the Prophets; for which <sup>Mat. 4,</sup> 2. reason also our Lord shone in the midst between the <sup>Mat. 17,</sup> representatives of each,) that we should restrain our eager- <sup>3,</sup> ness, as it were, by the fasting of temperance from all the snares of the world, by which men are held captive, and forget God; as long as the fulfilment of the Law of the Ten Commandments, like the Psaltery of the ten strings, is preached through the four quarters of the same world, that is, over the whole globe, so that ten multiplied by four result in the number forty. But by the number fifty after our Lord's resurrection, during which season we sing Allelujah, not the term and passing away of a certain season is signified, but that blessed eternity; because the denary <sup>Mat. 20,</sup> added to forty signifieth the reward paid to the faithful who <sup>10,</sup> toil in this life, which our Father hath prepared an equal share of for the first and for the last. Let us therefore hear the heart of the people of God full of divine praises. He representeth in this Psalm some one exulting in happy joyfulness, he prefigureth the people whose hearts are overflowing with the love of God, that is, the body of Christ, freed from all evil.

2. Ver. 1, 2. *I will make confession unto Thee, O Lord,* he saith, *with my whole heart.* Confession is not always confession of sins, but the praise of God is poured forth in the devotion of confession. The former mourneth, the latter rejoiceth: the former sheweth the wound to the physician, the latter giveth thanks for health. The latter confession signifieth some one, not merely freed from every evil, but even separate from all the ill-disposed. And for this reason let us consider the place where he confesseth unto the Lord with all his heart. *In the counsel,* he saith, *of the upright, and in the congregation:* I suppose, of those who shall sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve <sup>Mat. 19,</sup> tribes of Israel. For there will be no longer an unjust <sup>28,</sup> man among them, the thefts of no Judas are allowed, no Simon Magus is baptized, wishing to buy the Spirit, whilst <sup>Acts 8,</sup> he designeth to sell it; no coppersmith like Alexander doth <sup>18,</sup> many evil deeds, no man covered with sheep's clothing <sup>2 Tim.</sup> 4, 14.

PSALM CXI. creepeth in with feigned fraternity; such as those among whom the Church must now groan, and such as she must then shut out, when all the righteous shall be gathered together.

Ver. 2. *These are the great works of the Lord, sought out unto all His wills*: through which mercy forsaketh none who confesseth, no man's wickedness is unpunished: Heb. 12, since *He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth*. But if 6, *the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and 1 Pet. 4, the sinner appear?* Let man choose for himself what he 18. listeth: the works of the Lord are not so constituted, that the creature, having free discretion allowed him, should transcend the will of the Creator, even though he act contrary to His will. God willeth not that thou shouldest sin; for He forbiddeth it: yet if thou hast sinned, imagine not that the man hath done what he willed, and that hath happened to God which He willed not. For as He would that man would not sin, so would He spare the sinner, that he may return and live; He so willeth finally to punish him who persisteth in his sin, that the rebellious cannot escape the power of justice. Thus whatever choice thou hast made, the Almighty will not be at a loss to fulfil His will concerning thee. For *great are the works of the Lord, and sought out unto all His wills*.

3. Ver. 3. *Confession and glorious deeds are His work*. What is a more glorious deed than to justify the ungodly? But perhaps the work of man preventeth that glorious work of God, so that when he hath confessed his sins, he deserveth Luke 18, to be justified. For the Publican *went down* from the temple 13. 14. *justified* rather than the Pharisee; because *he would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner*. This is the glorious work of the Lord, the justification of the sinner; for *every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and every one that exalteth himself shall be abased*. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for he loveth most, to whom most is forgiven. 1b. 6, 42—48. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for *where sin abounded, Rom. 5, there did grace much more abound*. But perhaps a man would 20. deserve justification from works. Not, saith he, *of works, Eph. 2, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created 9. 10.*

in Christ Jesus unto good works. For a man worketh not righteousness save he be justified: but by *believing on Him* <sup>VER. 4, 5.</sup> *That justifieth the ungodly*, he beginneth with faith; that good may not by preceding shew what he hath deserved, but by following what he hath received. Where then is this confession? It is not as yet indeed the work of righteousness, but the condemnation of sin; but whatever it be, do not, O man, even in this glory in thyself, since *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* <sup>1 Cor. 1, 31.</sup> *For what hast thou that thou hast not received?* <sup>id. 4, 7.</sup> It is not only then through this glorious work by which the ungodly is justified, but *confession and glorious works are His work.* What shall we say then? Because *He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.* <sup>Rom. 9, 14, 18.</sup> *Is there unrighteousness with God?* <sup>20.</sup> *God forbid.* For, *His righteousness endureth for ever.* Nay but O man of this world, *who art thou who repliest against God?*

4. Ver. 4, 5. *He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered:* by abasing this man, exalting that. *He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered:* reserving unusual miracles for a fit season, that thus human weakness, intent upon novelty, may remember them, although His daily miracles be greater. He createth so many trees throughout the whole earth, and no one wondereth: He dried up one with a word, and the hearts of mortals were thunder-struck; but *He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.* <sup>Mat. 21, 19, 20.</sup> For that miracle, which hath not through its frequency become common, will cling most firmly to the heart.

5. But of what use were the miracles, save that He might be feared? What too would fear profit, unless *the gracious and merciful Lord gave meat unto them that fear Him?* *meat that doth not spoil, bread that cometh down from heaven,* which He gave to no deservings of ours. <sup>John 6, 27, 51.</sup> For *Christ died for the ungodly.* No one then would give such food, save a gracious and merciful Lord. <sup>Rom. 5, 6.</sup> But if He gave so much to this life, if the sinner who was to be justified received the Word made flesh; what shall he receive when glorified in a future world? For, *He shall ever be mindful*

**PSALM**  
**CXI.** *of His covenant.* Nor hath He Who hath given a pledge, given the whole.

6. Ver. 6—9. *He shall shew His people the power of His works.* Let not the holy Israelites, who have left all their possessions and have followed Him, be saddened; let them not be sorrowful and say, *Who then can be saved?* For *it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* For *He shewed them the power of His works: for with men these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible.*

*That He may give them the heritage of the heathen.* For they went to the heathen, and enjoined the rich of this world *not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, to Whom that is easy which is difficult for men.* For thus many were called, thus the heritage of the heathen has been occupied, thus it hath happened, that even many who have not abandoned all their possessions in this life in order to follow Him, have despised even life itself for the sake of confessing His Name; and like camels humbling themselves to bear the burden of troubles, have entered as it were through a needle's eye, through the piercing straits of suffering. He hath wrought these effects, unto Whom all things are possible.

7. Ver. 7. *The works of His hands are verity and judgment.* Let verity be held by those who are judged here. Martyrs are here sentenced, and brought to the judgment-seat, that they may judge not only those by whom they have been judged, but even give judgment on angels, against whom was their struggle here, even when they seemed to be judged by men. Let not tribulation, distress, famine, nakedness, the sword, separate from Christ. For *all His commandments are true; He deceiveth not, He giveth us what He promised.* Yet we should not expect here what He promised; we should not hope for it: but (ver. 8.) *they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and equity.* It is equitable and just that we should labour here and repose there; since (ver. 9.) *He sent redemption unto His people.* But from what are they redeemed, save from the captivity

<sup>1</sup> Tim.  
6, 17.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 6,  
3.

Rom. 8,  
35.

of this pilgrimage? Let not therefore rest be sought, save in the heavenly country. V. 10.

8. God indeed gave the carnal Israelites an earthly Jerusalem, *which is in bondage with her children*: but this is the Old Covenant, pertaining unto the old man. But they who there understood the figure, even then were heirs of the New Covenant; for *Jerusalem which is above is free*, Gal. 4, 25. 26. *which is our everlasting mother in heaven*. But that transitory promises were given in that Old Testament is proved by the fact itself: however, *He hath commended His covenant for ever*. But what, but the New? Whosoever doth wish to be heir of this, deceive not thyself, and think not of a land flowing with milk and honey, nor of pleasant farms, nor of gardens abounding in fruits and shade: desire not how to gain any thing of this sort, such as the eye of covetousness is wont to lust for. For since *covetousness is the root of all evils*, it must be cut off, that it may be consumed here; not be put off, that it may be satisfied there. First escape punishments, avoid hell; before thou longest for a God Who promiseth, beware of one Who threateneth. For *holy and reverend is His Name*.

9. Ver. 10. But instead of all the delights of this world, which thou hast either experienced, or mayest contrive the means of enhancing and multiplying, long for wisdom, the mother of immortal delights; but, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. It will delight, and beyond all doubt will ineffably delight, with the chaste and eternal embraces of truth: but thy debts must first be forgiven thee, before rewards must be asked for. *The fear of the Lord, therefore, is the beginning of wisdom. Understanding is good*. Who gainsayeth? But to understand, and not to do, is dangerous. It is *good*, therefore, *to those that do thereafter*. Nor let it lift up the mind unto pride; for, *the praise of Him, the fear of Whom is the beginning of wisdom, endureth for ever*: and this will be the reward, this the end, this the everlasting station and abode. There are found the true commandments, made fast for ever and ever; here is the very heritage of the New Covenant commanded for ever. *One thing*, he saith, *I have desired of the Lord*, Ps. 27, 4. *which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of*

PSALM CXI. *the Lord all the days of my life. For, blessed are they that dwell in the house of the Lord: they will be always praising Him; for His praise endureth for ever.*

LAT.  
CXI.

PSALM CXII.

EXPOSITION.

*A Discourse to the People.*

1. I believe, brethren, that ye remarked and committed to memory the title of this Psalm. *The conversion*, he saith, *of Haggai and Zechariah*. These prophets were not as yet in existence, when these verses were sung. For between the time of David, and the removal of the people of Israel to Babylon, fourteen generations are computed, as Matt. 1, holy Scripture, and chiefly St. Matthew the Evangelist, doth witness; while the restoration of the overthrown temple was expected seventy years after that migration: and when Jerem. 25, 12; these years were completed, under Darius, king of Babylon, 39, 10. these two Prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, were filled with Ezra 1, the Holy Ghost; and either within one year after other began 5. to prophesy that which seemeth to pertain to the restoration Hagg. 1. of the temple, as was foretold so long before. But whoever Zech. 1. fixeth the eye of his heart on things done in the body, and doth not extend his view into the grace of spiritual apprehension, dwelleth in mind among the stones of the temple, wherein a visible fabric is raised aloft by the hands of men; nor is he made a living stone, fit for the temple, which the Lord first typified in His own body, when He said, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*. For the holy Church herself is the more full body of the Lord, whose wead ascended into heaven, Who is in the highest sense a living stone, of Whom the blessed Peter saith, *To Whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

John 2,  
19.

1 Peter  
2, 4—6.

Wherefore also it is contained in Scripture, *Behold, I lay in* <sup>V ER.</sup>  
*Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that* <sup>1.</sup>  
*believeth on Him, shall not be confounded.* Therefore that <sup>Is. 28,</sup>  
 each man may become a living stone fit for such a building, let  
 him understand spiritually the restoration of the temple from  
 the ancient ruin which was made in Adam, as the renovation  
 of a new people, according to the new and heavenly man:  
*that as we have borne the image of the earthly, we may also* <sup>1 Cor.</sup>  
*bear the image of Him Who is from Heaven,* that we may <sup>15, 49.</sup>  
 after all the ages of this world, the seventy years, as it were,  
 which are fixed beforehand in the mystic number of per-  
 fection, and, as it were, after the bondage of a long pilgrimage,  
 not be built together in a framework that shall fall, but be  
 made firm by an immortality that shall last for evermore.  
 For ye should consider the spiritual Jerusalem as no less  
 your own than of the Jews. For so the Apostle saith, *Now* <sup>Eph. 2,</sup>  
*therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but* <sup>19—22.</sup>  
*fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;*  
*and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and*  
*Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone;*  
*in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth*  
*unto an holy temple in the Lord: in Whom ye also are*  
*builded together for an habitation of God through the*  
*Spirit.* This is the temple of God, unto which pertaineth  
 the mystery of the prophecy of Haggai and Zechariah: to  
 which again the same Apostle saith, *For the temple of God* <sup>1 Cor. 3,</sup>  
*is holy, which temple ye are.* Whoever therefore converteth <sup>17.</sup>  
 himself to the work of this building together, and to the  
 hope of a firm and holy edifice, like a living stone from the  
 miserable ruin of this world, understandeth the title of  
 the Psalm, understandeth *the conversion of Haggai and*  
*Zechariah.* Let him therefore chaunt the following verses,  
 not so much with the voice of his tongue as of his life. For  
 the completion of the building will be that ineffable peace  
 of wisdom, the *beginning* of which is the *fear of the Lord*:  
 let him therefore, whom this conversion buildeth together,  
 begin thence.

2. Ver. 1. *Blessed is the man that seareth the Lord: he  
 will have great delight in His commandments.* God, Who  
 alone judgeth both truthfully and mercifully, will see how

PSALM far he obeyeth His commandments: since *the life of man*  
 CXII. *on earth is a temptation*, as holy Job saith. And again it  
 Job 7, 1. *is written: for the corruptible body presseth down the soul,*  
 Wind. 9, 10. *and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that*

1 Cor. 4, 4. 6. *museth many things. But He who judgeth us is the Lord,*  
*nor ought we to judge before the time, until the Lord*  
*cometh, and bringeth to light the hidden things of darkness,*  
*and shall make clear the counsels of the heart: and then*  
*shall every man have praise of God. He therefore will see*  
*how far each man profiteth in His commandments; yet he*  
*who loveth the peace of this building together, shall have*  
*great delight in them; nor ought he to despair, since he*  
*shall have great delight in His commandments, and there is*

Luke 2, *peace on earth for men of good will.*

14. 3. Ver. 2, 3. Next follows, *His seed shall be mighty upon*  
*earth.* The Apostle witnesseth, that the works of mercy are  
 Gal. 6, 9. *the seed of the futuro harvest, when he saith, Let us not be*  
*wearry in well doing, for in due season we shall reap; and*  
 2 Cor. 9, 6. *again, But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap*  
*also sparingly.* But what, brethren, is more mighty than

Luke 19, 10. H. Mark 19, 43. *that not only Zacchæus should buy the kingdom of Heaven*  
*by the half of his goods, but even the widow for two mites,*  
*and that each should possess an equal share there? What*  
*is more mighty, than that the same kingdom should be worth*  
*treasures to the rich man, and a cup of cold water to the*  
*poor? But there are persons who do these things, while*  
*they are seeking earthly possessions, either hoping for a*  
*reward from the Lord here, or desiring the praise of men;*  
*but, the generation of the right ones shall be blessed; that*  
*is, the works of those whose gracious God is the God of*  
*Israel, who are right-hearted; now a right heart is not to*  
*withstand the Father when He chasteneth, and to trust Him*

Ps. 73, 1-14. *when He promiseth; not theirs, whose feet are moved away,*  
*whose treadings go astray and slip, as it is sung in another*  
*Psalm, while they are grieved at the wicked, seeing the*  
*ungodly in such prosperity, and imagiue that their works*  
*perish, because a perishable reward is not given them. But*  
*that man who feareth God, and who by the conversion of an*  
*upright heart is fitted for an holy temple of God, neither*  
*seeketh the glory of men, nor lusteth for earthly riches; but*

nevertheless, *glory and riches shall be in his house.* For <sup>V. 11.</sup> his house is his heart; where, with the praise of God, he <sup>4—9.</sup> liveth in greater riches with the hope of eternal life, than with men flattering, in palaces of marble, with splendidly adorned ceilings, with the fear of everlasting death. *For his righteousness endureth for ever:* this is his glory, there are his riches. While the other's purple, and fine linen, and grand banquets, even when present, are passing away; and when they have come to an end, the burning tongue shall cry out, longing for a drop of water from the finger's end. <sup>Luke 16,</sup>

4. Ver. 4—9. *Unto the right-hearted there ariseth up light in the darkness.* Justly do the godly direct their heart unto their God, justly do they walk with their God, preferring His will to themselves; and having no proud presumption in their own. For they remember that they were some time in darkness, but are now light in the Lord. *Merciful,* <sup>Ephes. 5, 8.</sup> *and just is the Lord God.* It delighteth us that He is *merciful and pitying*, but it perhaps terrifieth us that the Lord God is *just*. Fear not, despair not at all, happy man, who fearest the Lord, and hast great delight in His commandments; be thou sweet, be merciful and lend. For the Lord is just in this manner, that He judgeth without <sup>Jam. 2,</sup> mercy him who hath not shewn mercy; but, (ver. 5.) *Sweet* <sup>13.</sup> *is the man who is merciful and lendeth:* God will not spew him out of His mouth as if he were not sweet. *Forgive,* <sup>Luke 6,</sup> He *saith, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given* <sup>37, 38.</sup> *unto you.* Whilst thou forgivest, that thou mayest be forgiven, thou art merciful; whilst thou givest that it may be given unto thee, thou lendest. For though all be called generally mercy where another is assisted in his distress, yet there is a difference where thou spendest neither money, nor the toil of bodily labour, but by forgiving what each man hath sinned against thee, thou gainest free pardon for thine own sins also. I imagine that these two offices of kindness, of forgiving sins, as in the passage of the Gospel, *forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you;* are thus distinguished in this verse also, *sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth.* Let us not be slothful in these matters, brethren. He who desireth that he himself be avenged, seeketh glory; but listen to the words of

**PSALM CXII.** Scripture, *he that conquereth his anger is better than he that taketh a city.* He who is unwilling to give to the poor, **Prov. 16, 32.** seeketh riches; listen to what is written, *Thou shalt have treasure in heaven.* **Mat. 19, 21.** Thou wilt not then lose honour by forgiving: for it is a very laudable triumph to conquer anger: wilt not grow poor by giving; for a heavenly treasure is a more safe possession. The former verse, *Riches and plentifulness shall be in his house,* was pregnant with this verse.

5. He therefore who doth these things, *shall guide his words with discretion.* His deeds themselves are the words whereby he shall be defended at the Judgment; which shall not be without mercy unto him, since he hath himself shewn mercy. (Ver. 6.) *For he shall never be moved:* he who, called to the right hand, shall hear these words, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* For no works of theirs, save works of mercy, are there mentioned. He therefore shall hear, *Come, ye blessed of My Father;* for, *the generation of the right ones shall be blessed.* Thus, *the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.* (Ver. 7.) *He will not be afraid of any evil hearing;* such as the words which he will **Mat. 25, 34. 41.** hear addressed to those on the left hand, *Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

6. He therefore who seeketh here not his own things, but **Phil. 2, 21.** those of Jesus Christ, most patiently endureth sufferings, waiteth for the promises with faith. Nor is he broken down by any temptations: (ver. 8.) *His heart is established, and will not shrink, until he see beyond his enemies.* His enemies wished to see good things here, and when invisible **Ps. 4, 6.** blessings were promised them, used to say, *Who will shew us any good?* Let our heart therefore be established, and shrink not, until we see beyond our enemies. For they wish to see good things of men in the land of the dying; **Ps. 27, 14.** we trust to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.

7. But it is a great thing to have the heart established, and not to be moved, while they rejoice who love what they see, and mock at him who hopeth for what he seeth not; and he shall not shrink, until he also see not here below, what his enemies see, but above, higher than his enemies,

*what the eye hath not seen, nor hath the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man what the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him.* How great is the value<sup>2, 9.</sup> of this which is not seen, and it is bought for so much as each man is able to give for it. On this account he also *dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor*: he saw not, yet he kept buying; but He was storing up the treasure in heaven, Who deigned to hunger and thirst in the poor on earth. It is no wonder then if *his righteousness remaineth for ever*: He who created the ages being his guardian. *His horn, whose humility was scorned by the proud, shall be exalted with honour.*

8. Ver. 20. *The ungodly shall see it, and he shall be angered*: this is that late and fruitless repentance. For with whom rather than himself is he *angered*, when he shall say, *Our pride, what hath it profited us? the boastfulness of our riches, what hath it given us?* seeing the horn of him exalted with honour, who *dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor. He shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away*: for, *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* For he will no more bring forth leaves and bloom, as would happen if he had repented in season: but he will then repent, when *the desire of the ungodly shall perish*, no consolation succeeding. *The desire of the ungodly shall perish*, when *all things shall pass away like a shadow*, when the flower shall fall down on the withering of the grass. *But the word of the Lord that endureth for ever*, as it is mocked by the vanity of the falsely happy, so will laugh at the perdition of the same when truly miserable.

## PSALM CXIII.

LAT.  
CXII.

## EXPOSITION.

*A Discourse to the people.*

1. Ver. 1—3. YE know, brethren, and ye have very often heard the Lord say in the Gospel. *Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven*; and again, *If any man receive not the kingdom of heaven as a*

Mat. 19,  
14; 18,  
8. and  
Mark 10,  
14. 15.

**PSALM  
CXIII.**

*little child, he shall in no case enter therein:* and in many other passages our Lord, through an extraordinary pattern of humility, chargeth the pride of the old man to lead a new life humbly, by the similitude of the age of infancy. Wherefore, most beloved, when ye hear sung in the Psalms, *Praise the Lord, ye children;* imagine not that that exhortation pertaineth not unto you, because having already passed the youth of the body, ye are either blooming in the prime of manhood, or growing grey with the honours of old age: for unto all of you the Apostle saith, *Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.* What malice in particular, save pride? For it is pride that, presuming in false greatness, suffereth not man to walk along the narrow path, and to enter by the narrow gate; but the child easily entereth through the narrow entrance; and thus no man, save as a child, entereth into the kingdom of heaven. But what is worse than the malice of pride, which disliketh to have even God set over it! For it is written, *The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God.* This pride when it raiseth up itself with swelling neck against the divine commandments, and resisteth the gracious yoke of the Lord, throw ye down, break, crush, and consume, and *Praise the Lord, ye children, praise the Name of the Lord.* For when pride is laid prostrate and extinguished, *praise is perfected from the mouth of babes and infants:* when it is crushed and annihilated, *let him who glorieth, glory in the Lord.* They who think themselves great do not sing thus; they sing not thus who, *though they know God, have not glorified Him as God, or given thanks;* they praise themselves, not God; for they are not children. They rather wish their own name to be celebrated, and praise not the Name of the Lord. Therefore, *they have become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; and professing themselves to be wise, they have become fools;* their own name they wished to be celebrated far and wide to the latest posterity, themselves soon to pass away into a narrow space. It becometh God, it becometh the Lord, to be both always and every where proclaimed. Let Him therefore be alway proclaimed: (ver. 2.) *Blessed be*

1 Cor.  
14, 20.  
Mat. 18,  
3.

Eccles.  
10, 14.

Ps. 8, 2.  
1 Cor 1,  
31.

Rom. 1,  
21.

Rom. 1,  
21 22.

*the Name of the Lord, from this time forth for evermore.* VER. 3, 4.  
Let Him be proclaimed every where: (ver. 3.) *From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord.*

2. If any of the holy children who praise the Name of the Lord were to ask of me and say to me, *for evermore* I understand to mean unto all eternity; but why *from this*, and why is not the Name of the Lord blessed before this, and before all ages? I will answer the infant, who asketh not in contumacy. Unto you it is said, masters and children, unto you it is said, *Praise the Name of the Lord; blessed be the Name of the Lord*: let the Name of the Lord be blessed, *from this*, that is, from the moment ye speak these words. For ye begin to praise, but praise ye without end. Say not, We begin indeed to praise the Lord, because we are children; but when we have grown up, we shall praise ourselves. Not thus, children, not thus; for the Lord saith in Isaiah, *Even to your old age, I AM.* Is. 46, 4. He Who IS, is ever to be praised. *Praise Him, children, from this*, praise Him, old men, *for evermore*. For your old age will indeed grow white with the hoary hairs of wisdom, but will not wither with the age of the flesh. Or, since in this passage he seemeth to signify rather humility than childhood, the contrary of which is the vain and false greatness of pride; and for this reason none but children praise the Lord, since the proud know not how to praise Him; let your old age be childlike, and your childhood like old age; that is, that neither may your wisdom be with pride, nor your humility without wisdom, that ye may *praise the Lord from this for evermore*. Wherever the Church of Christ is diffused in her childlike saints, *Praise ye the Name of the Lord*; that is, *from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord*.

3. Ver. 4. *The Lord is high above all heathen*. The heathen are men: what wonder if the Lord be above all men? They see with their eyes those whom they worship high above themselves to shine in heaven, the sun and moon and stars, creatures which they serve while they neglect the Creator. But not only *is the Lord high above all heathen*;

PSALM but *His glory also is above the heavens.* The heavens look  
 CXIII. up unto Him above themselves; and the humble have Him together with them, who do not worship the heavens instead of Him, though placed in the flesh beneath the heavens.

4. Ver. 5, 6. *Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high; and yet beholdeth the humble things?* Any one would think that He dwelleth in the lofty heavens, whence He may behold the humble things on earth; but *He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth:* what then is His high dwelling, whence He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? Are the humble things He beholdeth His own high dwelling itself? For He thus exalteth the humble, so as not to make them proud. He therefore both dwelleth in those whom He raiseth high, and maketh them heaven for Himself, that is, His own abode; and by seeing them not proud, but constantly subject to Himself, He beholdeth even in heaven itself these very humble things, in whom raised on high He dwelleth. For the Spirit thus speaketh through Isaiah: *Thus saith the Highest that dwelleth on high, that inhabiteth eternity; the Lord Most High, dwelling in the holy.* He hath expounded what He meant by dwelling on high, by the more full expression, *dwelling in the holy.* But who are holy, but the humble, who as children praise God? He therefore addeth: *and giving courage to the meek, and life unto them that are of a humble spirit.* To the holy in whom He dwelleth, unto these humble ones He giveth courage. By giving them courage He setteth them on high, in Whom He hath rest, and dwelleth in them Whom He hath exalted. But since it is the meek to whom He giveth courage, He beholdeth the humble in those very persons in Whom He dwelleth on high. Yet, he saith, He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth.

5. And he hath moved us also to enquire whether the Lord our God beholdeth the same humble things in heaven and in earth: or different humble things in heaven to what He beholdeth on earth. For if they are the same, I see how  
 2 Cor. I can understand this according to the Apostle's words: *For*  
 10, 3. 4. *though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:*

*for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.* Whence then are they mighty, save because they are spiritual? Since therefore the Apostle at once walketh in the flesh, and warreth in the spirit, it is no wonder if his humility both be beholden in heaven on account of the spirit's freedom, and on earth on account of the servitude of the body. For he saith in another passage, *For our conversation is in heaven:* and also of himself, that it was far better for him to depart, and be with Christ, *to abide in the flesh,* he saith, *is more needful for your sakes.* Whoever therefore understandeth both the conversation of the Apostle in heaven, and his abode in the flesh on earth; should at the same time understand the Lord our God dwelling in the exalted saints, how He beholdeth the same, nevertheless, humble before Himself; both in heaven, since they who have in hope risen again with Christ, *set their affections on things above;* and on earth; since they are not as yet released from the chain of the flesh, so that they may be with all their life in Christ. But if the Lord our God beholdeth other humble things in heaven to what He doth on earth; I suppose that He already beholdeth in heaven those whom He hath called, and in whom He dwelleth; while on earth He beholdeth those whom He is now calling, that He may dwell in them. For He hath the one with Him musing on heavenly things, the others He is waking, while they yet dream things earthly.

6. But since it is difficult to call even those humble, who have not as yet submitted their necks in piety to the gracious yoke of Christ, since the divine writings throughout the whole Psalm warn us to understand holy by the word humble; there is also another interpretation, which, Beloved, ye may consider with me. I believe that those are now meant by heavens who shall sit upon twelve thrones, and shall judge with the Lord; and under the name of the earth, the rest of the multitude of the blessed, who shall be set on the right hand, that through works of mercy they may be praised and received into everlasting habitations by those, whom they have made friends to themselves from the mammon of unrighteousness in this mortal life. For unto them the Apostle saith, *If we have sown unto you spiritual*

VER.  
5, 6.

Philipp.  
3, 20.

Philipp.  
1, 23, 24.

Coloss.  
3, 1.

Mat. 19,  
28.

Luke 16,  
9.

1 Cor. 9,  
11.

**PSALM CXIII.** *things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?* Which may be said in these words: if we have

sown unto you heavenly things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your earthly things? In heaven therefore He beholdeth these sowing heavenly things, in earth those yielding earthly things; yet both these and those humble. For, *He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and in earth*; because both are mindful of what they were through their own wickedness, and of what they have become through the Lord's grace. For not unto them alone

Ephes. 5, 8.

saith the Vessel of Election, *For ye were sometimes darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord*: and again, *By*

ib. 2, 8.

*grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast*; but he next addeth himself also, saying, *For we are His workmanship, created unto good works*. He speaketh also separately of himself and of those who are beheld in

Eph. 2,

heaven, *for we were by nature the children of wrath, even*

3—10.

*as others*. And again, *For we ourselves also were sometimes*

Titus 3,

*foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another*: but after that the kindness and love of God our

3—5.

*Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration*. Behold the humble

1 Cor. 2,

things which are beheld in heaven. For they are *spiritual,*

15.

*and judge all things*; but nevertheless humble, lest they be cast down and judged. What saith he of himself in-

1 Cor.

dividually; are not his words of like sort? *For I am not*

15, 9.

*meet*, he saith, *to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted*

1 Tim.

*the Church of God; but I obtained mercy, because I did it*

1, 13.

*ignorantly in unbelief*.

7. Ver. 6—8. Lastly, after these verses, in which the Spirit saith in the Psalm, *Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth?* wishing to teach us why they are called humble things in heaven, when they are now mighty in spiritual power and worthy of judgment-seats; he added at once, (ver. 6.) *He taketh up the destitute out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire*; (ver. 7.) *that*

*The humble that are seen in heaven were taken from the mire.* 273

*He may set Him with the princes, even with the princes of* <sup>VER.</sup>  
*His people.* Let not then the heads of the exalted disdain 7.  
to be humble, beneath the Lord's right hand. For though  
the faithful steward of the Lord's money be placed together <sup>Mat. 19,</sup>  
with the princes of the people of God, although he be <sup>28.</sup>  
destined to sit on the twelve seats, and even to judge  
angels; yet he is taken up destitute from the dust, and  
lifted from out of the mire. Was not he possibly lifted up  
from the mire, who *served divers lusts and pleasures?* But  
perhaps when he was writing this, he was no longer destitute,  
no longer poor. Why then doth he still *groan beneath his* <sup>2 Cor. 5,</sup>  
*burden, longing to be clothed with a heavenly habitation?* <sup>2.</sup>  
Why, lest he be lifted up, is he buffeted, and made subject  
to the angel of Satan, the thorn of his flesh? He is high <sup>2 Cor.</sup>  
indeed, the Lord dwelling in him, and having that Spirit <sup>12, 7.</sup>  
which *searcheth all things, even the deep things of God*: he <sup>1 Cor. 2,</sup>  
is therefore in heaven; but even in heaven the Lord beholdeth <sup>10.</sup>  
humble things.

8. What then, brethren, if we have already heard of those  
humble things which are in heaven, lifted up from the mire,  
that they might be set with the princes of the people; have  
we by consequence heard nothing of the humble things  
which the Lord beholdeth on the earth? For those friends  
who will judge with their Lord are fewer, while those whom  
they receive into everlasting habitations are more in number.  
For although the whole of a heap of corn compared with the  
separate chaff may seem to contain few in number; yet  
considered by itself, it is abundant. For *more are the* <sup>Is. 54, 1.</sup>  
*children of the desolate than those of her that hath the*  
*husband*: more are the children of her who conceived  
through grace in old age, than of her who from her child-  
hood hath been wedded to the bond of the Law. And  
I say, hath conceived in old age; regarding Sarah our  
mother in the one Isaac, the mother of the faithful through-  
out all nations. But consider the character in Isaiah: as if  
by no means that of a mother, nor of one who hath given  
birth to any. And yet what is said unto her? *The children,* <sup>Is. 49,</sup>  
*he saith, which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the* <sup>20, 21.</sup>  
*other, shall say again in thy ears, The place is too strait*  
*for us; make room yet for us that we may dwell. Then*

274 *Children of the Church shall be found more than she knows.*

PSALM CXIV. *thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing that I know I am childless and a widow? Who hath brought me up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?* The Church then speaketh thus in that

sense, wherein she seemeth to bear no offspring among those crowds who have not given up all things, that they might follow the Lord, and might sit upon the twelve thrones. But how many in the same crowd, who make unto them-

selves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, shall stand on the right hand through works of mercy? He not only then lifteth up from the mire him whom He is to place with the princes of His people; but also, (ver. 8.) *Maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children:* He who dwelleth on high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth, the seed of Abraham like the stars of heaven, holiness set on high in heavenly habitations; and like the sand on the sea shore, a merciful and countless multitude gathered together from the harmful waves, and the bitterness of impiety.

LAT.  
CXIII.

## PSALM CXIV.

*Sermon I. On the first part of the Psalm.*

1. WE read indeed, and hold it in our minds, most beloved brethren, as a well-known truth, that, as is detailed in the Book of the Exodus, the people of Israel, when freed from the unjust domination of the Egyptians, passed over by a dry path between the divided waves of the sea: that the river Jordan also, when they were entering across it into the land of promise, when touched by the feet of the priests who bore the Ark, stood still from above with bridled stream, while it flowed down from below, where it ran on into the sea, until the whole people passed over, the priests standing on the dry ground; we know these things, but yet we should not imagine that in this Psalm, to which we have now answered by chaunting Allelujah, it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, that while we call to mind those deeds of the past, we should not consider that things like unto them were yet to take place. For *these things*, as the

1 Cor.  
10, 11.

Apostle saith, *happened unto them for ensamples; and they* VER.  
1—6. *are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world are come.* When therefore we read in the Psalm, (ver. 1.) *When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people,* (ver. 2.) *Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion;* (ver. 3.) *the sea saw that and fled, Jordan was driven back:* think not that past deeds are related unto us, but rather that the future is predicted; since, while those miracles also were going on in that people, things present indeed were happening, but not without an intimation of things future. And therefore that he, who in his Psalms was prophesying these events, might shew that he was acting the same scene in words as was there acted in deeds, one and the same Spirit performing both those deeds and these words, that that which was reserved to be manifested at the end of the world, might be announced by foregoing figures of words and deeds; he hath not described exactly the same deeds as were there done, but some things he hath related differently to what we have learnt and read there: that he might not truly be thought to be repeating past acts rather than to be prophesying future things. For in the first place, we read not that the Jordan was driven back, but that it stood still on the side nearest the source of its streams, while the people were passing through; next, we read not of the mountains and hills skipping: all which he hath added, and repeated. For after saying, *The sea saw that, and fled; Jordan was driven back:* he added, (ver. 4.) *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep:* and then asketh, (ver. 5.) *What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back?* (ver. 6.) *Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like young sheep?*

2. Let us therefore consider what we are taught here; since both those deeds were typical of us, and these words exhort us to recognise ourselves. For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which hath been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham: unto us the Apostle saith, *Therefore are ye the seed of Abraham.* Since as he saith Gal. 3,  
29. *Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision—* Rom. 4,  
10. &c.

**PSALM CXIV.** *faith was counted unto Abraham for righteousness; and, he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, yet*

**Rom. 4, 3—17.** *being uncircumcised.* For he unto whom it was said, *I have made thee a father of many nations*, was not a father to the carnally circumcised nation only. Many nations meaneth not some in particular, but all: and this is openly expressed

**Gen. 22, 18.** *in the words, And in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* Let therefore no Christian consider himself alien to the name of Israel. For we are joined in the corner-stone with those among the Jews who believed, among whom we find the Apostles chief. Hence our Lord in another passage

**John 10, 16.** *saith, And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd.* The Christian people then is rather Israel, and the same is preferably the house of Jacob; for Israel and Jacob are the same. But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their birthright, so that they belonged not to Jacob, but rather to Esau. For ye know that it was said

**Gen. 25, 33. 23.** *with this hidden meaning, That the elder shall serve the younger.*

3. But Egypt, since it is said to mean affliction, or one who afflicteth, or one who oppresseth, is often used for an emblem of this world; from which we must spiritually

**2 Cor. 6, 14.** *withdraw, that we may not be bearing the yoke with unbelievers.* For thus each one becometh a fit citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, when he hath first renounced this world; just as that people could not be led into the land of promise, save first they had departed from Egypt. But as they did not depart thence, until freed by Divine help; so no man is turned away in heart from this world, unless aided by the gift of the Divine mercy. For what was there once prefigured, the same is fulfilled in every faithful one in the daily travailings of the Church, in this end of the world,

in this, as the blessed John writeth, last time. Hear the V ER. Apostle the teacher of the Gentiles, thus instructing us: 4-6.  
*I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant, how that* John 2,  
*all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through* 18.  
*the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and* 1 Cor.  
*in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and* 10, 16.  
*did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of*  
*that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was*  
*Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased,*  
*for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these*  
*things were our examples. What more do ye wish, most*  
*beloved brethren? For it is surely clear, not from human*  
*conjecture, but from the declaration of an Apostle, that is, of*  
*God and our Lord: for God spoke in them, and though*  
*from clouds of flesh, yet it was God who thundered: surely*  
*then it is clear by so great testimony that all these things*  
*which were done in figure, are now fulfilled in our salvation;*  
*because then the future was predicted, now the past is read,*  
*and the present observed.*

4. Hear what is even more wonderful, that the hidden and veiled mysteries of the ancient books, are in some degree revealed by the ancient books. For Micah the prophet speaketh thus. *According to the days of thy* Mic. 7,  
*coming out of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous* 15-19.  
*things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all*  
*their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth,*  
*their ears shall be deaf: licking the dust like serpents,*  
*dragging the earth: they shall be disturbed from their close*  
*places: they shall be beside themselves at the Lord our*  
*God, and shall fear because of Thee. Who is like unto*  
*this God, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the trans-*  
*gression of the remnant of Thine heritage? He retaineth*  
*not His anger for a testimony, because He is of good will*  
*and merciful. He will turn again, He will have com-*  
*passion upon us; He will drown our iniquities: and Thou*  
*will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Ye see,*  
*brethren, that the holy mysteries are here more clearly*  
*revealed. In this Psalm, therefore, although the wonderful*  
*spirit of prophecy doth look into the future, yet it seemeth*

PSALM  
CXIV.

as it were, to be merely detailing the past. *Judah, he saith, was His sanctuary: the sea saw that and fled: was, saw, and fled,* are words of the past tense; and *Jordan was driven back, and the mountains skipped, and the earth trembled,* in like manner have a past expression, without however any difficulty in understanding by them the future. Otherwise we are compelled, contrary to the testimony of the Gospel, to understand these words not as foretold of the future, but as related of the past: *They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.* Although these words are expressed in the past tense, nevertheless they foretold that which, being destined to happen so long afterwards, should be fulfilled in our Lord's Passion. Nevertheless, most beloved, that prophet whom I have mentioned hath sharpened even dull minds, and extended their view without hesitation to understand the future from the past: so that not only on apostolical authority do we believe that they were our examples, but that this was not passed over even by the prophets themselves, so that even by their declarations, seeing and rejoicing, sure and fearless, from the treasury of God we may bring forth both new and old things, agreeing harmoniously with each other. For though it was so long after the departure of that people from Egypt, and so long before these seasons of the Church, that he sang what I have quoted; nevertheless, he witnesseth that he is foretelling the future without any question. *According to the days, he saith, of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded.* This is what is here said, *The sea saw that, and fled:* for if in this passage, through words of the past tense the future is secretly revealed, as is the case; who would venture to explain the words, *shall see and be confounded,* of past events? And a little lower down he alludeth more clearly than light itself to those very enemies of ours, who followed us flying, that they might slay us, that is, our sins, which are overwhelmed and extinguished in Baptism, just as the Egyptians were drowned in the sea, saying, *Since He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He is of good will and merciful, He*

*The sea of the nations makes way for the spiritual Israel.* 279

*will turn again, He will have compassion upon us, He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* VER.  
4-6.

5. What is it, most beloved? ye who know yourselves to be Israelites according to Abraham's seed, ye who are of the house of Jacob, heirs according to promise, know that even ye have gone forth from Egypt, since ye have renounced this world; that ye have gone forth from a foreign people, since by the confession of piety, ye have separated yourselves from the blasphemies of the Gentiles. For it is not your tongue, but a foreign one, which knoweth not how to praise God, to Whom ye sing Allelujah. For *Judah* hath become *His sanctuary* in you; for *he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and by circumcision of the heart.* Rom. 2,  
28. 29. Examine then your hearts, if faith hath circumcised them, if confession hath cleansed them; in you *Judah* hath become *His sanctuary*, in you *Israel* hath become *His dominion*. For *He gave* John 1,  
12. unto you *the power to become the sons of God*.

6. And now let each of you call to mind, that when he wished to apply his heart unto God, and to submit his devout mind to His gracious yoke, departing from the former longings of his ignorance, and forsaking and throwing aside the carnal deeds of this world, (in which he toiled fruitlessly, as if he were making bricks in Egypt beneath the cruel domination of the devil,) when he hath heard the voice of the Lord, saying, *Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,* Mat. 11,  
28. to run beneath the light burden of Christ: let therefore each of you call to mind how all worldly obstacles yielded, how the voices of those who would dissuade have either not dared to burst forth, or when they have meditated on the Name of Christ that hath been exalted and honoured throughout all lands, have been silenced in trembling. Therefore, *the sea saw that, and fled*; that the road might without opposition be opened for thee towards spiritual liberty.

7. But I would not that ye should seek without yourselves, how the Jordan was turned back, I would not ye should augur any thing evil. For the Lord chideth those who have

**PSALM CXIV.** *turned their back unto Him, and not their face.* And whoever forsaketh the source of his being, and turneth away from his Creator; as a river into the sea, he glides into the bitter wickedness of this world. It is therefore good for him that he turn back, and that God Whom he had set behind his back, may be before his face as he returneth; and that the sea of this world, which he had set before his face, when he was gliding on towards it, may become behind him; and that he may so forget what is behind him, that he may *reach forward to what is before him*; which is profitable for him when once converted. For before he is converted, if he forgetteth what is behind him, he forgetteth God; because he had rendered Him behind him, towards Whom he had turned his back: and if he reacheth forth unto those things which are before him, he reacheth forth towards the world; since he had placed the world, whither he was eagerly running, before his face. The Jordan therefore signifieth those who have received the grace of Baptism; and thus the Jordan is turned back, when they are turned unto God, so that they may no longer have Him behind them, but *with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory.*

**Jerem.** 2, 27.  
**Philipp.** 3, 13.  
**2 Cor.** 3, 18.

8. Ver. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams*: the faithful stewards of the word of truth, the holy Apostles, the holy preachers of the Gospel. *And the little hills like young sheep.* These are those unto whom it is said, *In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel*: these are they to whom it is said, *I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you*; these are they of whom it is said, *Bring young rams unto the Lord.* Listen throughout all lands, ye who know how to admire these things, and how to rejoice and sing unto the Lord your God; observe how these things, which so long before were done and prophesied in figure, are fulfilled throughout all nations.

**1 Cor.** 4, 15.  
**Ps.** 29, 1.  
**LXX.**

9. Ask in these words: (ver. 5.) *What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?* (ver. 6.) *ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like young sheep?* Why is it, O world, that

thy hindrances have yielded? Why is it, O so many thousands <sup>VER. 7. 8.</sup> of faithful ones in the whole world, who renounce this world, that ye have turned unto your Lord? Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom it shall be said at the end, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things?* <sup>Mat. 25, 21.</sup> Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom it shall be said in the end, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?* <sup>ib. 34.</sup>

10. All these things will respond to you, and you will respond to yourselves: (ver. 7.) *Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.* What meaneth, *at the presence of the Lord*, save at the presence of Him Who said, *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* <sup>Mat. 28, 20.</sup> For the earth trembled; but because it had remained slothful, it was made to tremble, so that it might be more firmly fixed at the presence of the Lord.

11. Ver. 8. *Who turned the hard rock into standing waters, and the flint stone into springing wells.* For He melted Himself, and what may be called His hardness to water those who believe on Him, that He might in them become *a fountain of water gushing forth unto everlasting life;* because formerly, when He was not known, He seemed hard. Hence they who said, *This is an hard saying, Who can bear it?* <sup>John 6, 60.</sup> were confounded, and waited not until He should flow and stream upon them when the Scriptures were revealed. The rock, that hardness, was turned into pools of water, that stone into fountains of waters, when on His resurrection, *He expounded unto them, commencing with Moses and all the prophets, how Christ ought to suffer thus;* and sent the Holy Ghost, of Whom He said, *If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.* <sup>John 7, 37.</sup>

12. Psalm cxv. ver. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise.* For that grace of the water that gushed from the rock, *(now that rock was Christ,)* <sup>1 Cor. 10, 4.</sup> was not given on the score of works that had gone before, but of His mercy *that justifieth the ungodly.* For *Christ died for sinners,* that men might not seek any glory of their own, but in the Lord's Name. <sup>Rom. 4, 5. Rom. 5, 6.</sup>

PSALM  
CXV.

13. Ver. 2. *For Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.* Observe how often these two qualities, loving mercy and truth, are joined together in the holy Scriptures. For in His loving mercy He called sinners, and in His truth He judgeth those who when called refused to come. *That the heathen may not say, Where is now their God?* For at the Mat. 24, last, His loving mercy and truth will shine forth, when *the* 30. *sign of the Son of man shall appear in heaven, and then shall all tribes of the earth cry woe; nor shall they then say, Where is their God?* when He is no longer preached unto them to be believed in, but displayed before them to be trembled at.

14. Ver. 3. *As for our God, He is in heaven above.* Not in heaven, where they see the sun and moon, works of God which they adore, but *in heaven above*, which overpasseth all heavenly and earthly bodies. Nor is our God in heaven in such a sense, as to dread a fall that should deprive Him of His throne, if heaven were withdrawn from under Him. *In heaven and earth He hath made whatsoever pleased Him.* Nor doth He stand in need of His own works, as if He had place in them where He might abide; but endureth in His own eternity, wherein He abideth and hath done whatsoever pleased Him, both in heaven and earth; for they did not support Him, as a condition of their being created by Him: since, unless they had been created, they could not have supported Him. Therefore, in whatsoever He Himself dwelleth, He, so to speak, containeth this as in need of Himself, He is not contained by this as if He needed it. Or it may be thus understood; *In heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him*, whether among the higher or the lower orders of His people, He hath made His grace His free gift, that no man may boast in the merits of his own works: since whether the mountains skip like rams, or the little hills like young sheep; the earth hath trembled before the face of the Lord, that men might not abide for ever in earthly degradation.

PSALM CXV.

LAT.  
CXIII.  
Part II.

EXPOSITION II.

*On the second part of the Psalm.*

(i. e. on Psalm cxv.)

1. ALTHOUGH perhaps there is one connection of all the Psalms visible to such as carefully regard them, so that none succeedeth which may not follow from the preceding one; nevertheless, let us so consider this, as if both were one, this, namely, and the preceding one. For as in the former it was said, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise, for Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake: that the heathen may not say, Where is their God?* because we worship an invisible God, Who is known unto the bodily eyes of none, and to the pure hearts of few; as if the heathen might say, *Where is their God?* because they can shew their gods to the eyes; he first reminded us, that the presence of our God is shewn by His works; for since *He is in heaven above, in heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him.* ver. 3. And as if he should say, let the heathen shew their gods; (ver. 4.) *Their idols, he saith, are silver and gold, even the work of men's hands;* that is, although we cannot display our God to your carnal eyes, Whom ye ought to recognise through His works; yet be not seduced by your vain pretences, because ye can point with the finger to the objects of your worship. For it were much worthier for you not to have what to point to, than that your hearts' blindness should be displayed in what is exhibited to these eyes by you: for what do ye exhibit, save gold and silver? They have indeed both bronze, and wood, and earthenware idols, and of different materials of this description; but the Holy Spirit preferred mentioning the more precious material, because when every man hath blushed for that which he sets more by, he is much more easily turned away from the worship of meaner objects. For it is said in another passage of Scripture

PSALM concerning the worshippers of images, *Saying to a stock, CXV. Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me II. forth.* But lest that man who speaketh thus not to a stone or stock, but to gold and silver, seem wiser to himself; let him look this way, let him turn hitherwards the ear of his heart: *The idols of the Gentiles are gold and silver.* Nothing mean and contemptible is here mentioned: and indeed to that mind which is not earth, both gold and silver is earth, but more beautiful and brilliant, more solid and firm. Employ not then the hands of men, to create a false Deity out of that metal which a true God hath created; nay, a false man, whom thou mayest worship for a true God; one whom any man who should receive into his friendship as a true man, would be insane. For resemblance of figure, and the imitation of the limbs, hurrieth away the weak hearts of mortals with its degrading affection: but as thou shewest each member as it is constructed, so also shew the duties of each of those members, whose figure, O human vanity, doth attract thee.

2. Ver. 5—7. For *they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not. They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not. They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not; neither cry they through their throat.* Even their artist therefore surpasseth them, since he had the faculty of moulding them by the motion and functions of his limbs: though thou wouldest be ashamed to worship that artist. Even thou surpassest them, though thou hast not made these things, since thou doest what they cannot do. Even a beast doth excel them; for unto this it is added, *neither cry they through their throat.* For after he had said above, *they have mouths, and speak not;* what need was there, after he had enumerated the limbs from head to feet, to repeat what he had said of their crying through their throat; unless, I suppose, because we perceive that what he mentioned of the other members, was common to men and beasts? For they see, and hear, and smell, and walk, and some, apes for instance, handle with hands. But what he had said of the mouth, is peculiar to men: since beasts do not speak. But that no one might refer what hath been said to the works of human members

alone, and prefer men only to the Gods of the heathen; after all this he added these words, *neither cry they through their throat*: which again is common to men and cattle. Whereas if he had first said it, when he began to enumerate the members from the mouth, *they have a mouth, and speak not*; even thus every thing will apply to human nature, nor would the perceptions of the hearer remark any thing common to beasts. But since he said of the mouth what is peculiar to man, and after enumerating the parts of the body which he seemed to have concluded by the mention of the feet, added, *neither cry they through their throat*; he hath attracted the attention of the reader or listener, so that while he seeketh why this was added, he findeth himself admonished, that he ought to prefer not men only, but even beasts, to the idols of the heathen: so that if they are ashamed to worship a beast whom God hath created with sight, hearing, smell, touch, powers of walking, crying with its throat, they might see how shameful a thing it is to worship a dumb idol, destitute of life and sensibility; possessed of a resemblance to human limbs for this reason, that a soul devoted to carnal senses might yield its affections to a figure that seemed to live and have animation, when it saw those members which it knew to be endued with life and animation in its own body. How much better then do mice and serpents, and other animals of like sort, judge of the idols of the heathen, so to speak, for they regard not the human figure in them when they see not the human life. For this reason they usually build nests in them, and unless they are deterred by human movements, they seek for themselves no safer habitations. A man then moveth himself, that he may frighten away a living beast from his own god; and yet worshippeth that god who cannot move himself, as if he were powerful, from whom he drove away one better than the object of his worship. For he drove away a thing that saw from a thing that was blind: one that heard from one that was deaf, one that had voice from one that was dumb, one that walked from one that could not move, one that had feeling from the insensible, the living from the dead, nay the worse than the dead. For as it is clear that the dead liveth not, so also it is clear that he hath once lived.

**PSALM CXV.** Wherefore even the dead surpasseth a deity who neither liveth nor hath lived.

3. What, my most beloved brethren, is more clear, what more evident than this? What child if questioned would not reply, that this was certain, that *the idols of the heathen have mouths, and speak not; have eyes, and see not;* and the rest, as the inspired text hath described? Why then doth the Holy Spirit take such care to insinuate and inculcate these things in many passages as if men were ignorant of them, as if they were not most open and notorious to all men; except that the figure of the limbs, which they have seen endued with life in living beings, and which we are wont to feel in ourselves, although, as they maintain, constructed for a certain statue and set on a lofty pedestal, when it hath begun to be adored and honoured by the multitude, produceth in each man a most depraved and deceptive feeling, so that, since he findeth not a vital power of motion, he believeth a hidden deity; and yet doth not think that the image, which is like a living body, is without a living inhabitant, being seduced by its figure, and influenced by the authority of seemingly wise institutions and reverential crowds. Hence such notions of men invite evil spirits to take possession of such idols of the heathen, by the varied deceptions of whom, when presiding over them, deadly errors are sown and multiplied. In other passages the inspired writers guard against these things, lest any one should say, when the idols have been ridiculed, "I worship not this visible thing, but the divinity which doth invisibly dwell therein." Thus in another Psalm the same Scripture Ps. 96, 5. thus condemneth these divinities, *As for all the Gods of the heathen, they are but idols: but it is the Lord that made the heavens.* The Apostle also saith; *Not that the idol is any thing, but that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.*

1 Cor.  
10, 19.  
20.

4. But they seem to themselves to have a purer religion, who say, I neither worship an idol, nor a devil; but in the bodily image I behold an emblem of that which I am bound to worship. They therefore interpret these images, by stating one to represent the earth, whence they constantly call it the

temple of Tellus; another the sea, as the image of Neptune; V. 7.  
 another air, as that of Juno; another fire, as that of Vulcan; 7.  
 another the morning star, as that of Venus; another the sun,  
 another the moon, to whose images they give the same name,  
 as in that of Tellus; the various stars too they represent by  
 various figures, and so with other works of creation; for  
 we cannot enumerate them all. And when they begin to  
 be ridiculed for worshipping bodies, and chiefly the earth,  
 and air, and the sea, and fire, all of which we use in  
 common: (for they are not so much ashamed of their  
 adoration of heavenly bodies, since we cannot touch or  
 reach them with our bodies, save by the light of our eyes:)  
 they presume to reply, that they worship not the bodies  
 themselves, but the deities which preside over the govern-  
 ment of them. One sentence of the Apostle, therefore,  
 testifieth to their punishment and condemnation; *Who, he* Rom. 1,  
*saith, have changed the truth of God into a lie, and* 25.  
*worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator,*  
*Who is blessed for ever.* For in the former part of this  
 sentence he condemned idols; in the latter, the account  
 they give of their idols: for by designating images wrought  
 by an artificer by the names of the works of God's creation,  
 they change the truth of God into a lie; while, by consider-  
 ing these works themselves as deities, and worshipping them  
 as such, they serve the creature more than the Creator, Who  
 is blessed for ever.

5. But who worshippeth or prayeth with his eyes upon  
 an idol, who is not so affected, as to imagine that he is  
 listened to, as to hope that what he desireth is given him by  
 his idol? Thus men who are bound by such superstitions,  
 usually turn their back to the sun itself, pour forth their  
 prayers to a statue which they call the sun; and when they  
 are struck by the dashing of the waves behind them, they  
 strike with their groans the statue of Neptune, as if it could  
 perceive, which they worship in place of the sea itself. For  
 this is a sort of necessary effect of this figure endued with  
 limbs, that the mind which liveth in the bodily senses,  
 should be inclined to suppose that that body which it seeth  
 so closely to resemble its own body, is more apt to feel than  
 a circular sun and an expanse of waves, and any thing

**PSALM CXV.** which it beholdeth not formed with the same features as those which it constantly seeth endowed with life. In opposition to this affection, whereby human and carnal weakness may easily be snared, the holy Scripture setteth forth sentiments universally recognised, whereby it may arouse the minds of men sleeping in the thralldom of their bodies. *The idols, it saith, of the heathen are gold and silver.* But it is God Who made gold and silver. *Their idols, he saith, are the work of men's hands:* for they worship what they have constructed out of gold and silver.

6. But, it will be said, we also have very many instruments and vessels made of materials or metal of this description for the purpose of celebrating the Sacraments, which being consecrated by these ministrations are called holy, in honour of Him Who is thus worshipped for our salvation: and what indeed are these very instruments or vessels, but the work of men's hands? But have they mouth, and yet speak not? have they eyes, and see not? do we pray unto them, because through them we pray unto God? This is the chief cause of this insane profanity, that the figure resembling the living person, which induces men to worship it, hath more influence in the minds of these miserable persons, than the evident fact that it is not living, so that it ought to be despised by the living. For idols have more power in perverting an unhappy mind because they have a mouth, have eyes, have ears, noses, hands, feet, than in rectifying it, because they speak not, see not, hear not, smell not, touch not, walk not.

7. The result that ensueth is that described in the next verse; (ver. 8.) *They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them.* Let them therefore see with open eyes, and worship with shut and dead understandings, idols that neither see nor live.

8. Ver. 9—11. *But the house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord. For hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man Rom. 8, seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we 24. 25. see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* But that this patience may endure to the end, *He is their helper and defender.* Do perhaps spiritual persons (by whom carnal Gal. 6, minds are built up in the spirit of meekness, because they 1.

pray as higher for lower minds) already see, and is that <sup>VER.</sup> already to them reality which to the lower is hope? It is <sup>10-14.</sup> not so. For even (ver. 10.) *the house of Aaron hath hope in the Lord.* Therefore, that they also may stretch forward perseveringly towards those things which are before them, and may run perseveringly, until they may apprehend that <sup>Philip. 3, 12-14.</sup> for which they are apprehended, and may know even as <sup>1 Cor. 13, 12.</sup> they are known, *He is their helper and defender.* For both *fear the Lord, and have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and defender.*

9. For we do not by our deservings prevent the mercy of God; but, (ver. 12.) *The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us. He hath blessed the house of Israel, He hath blessed the house of Aaron.* But in blessing both of these, (ver. 13.) *He hath blessed all that fear the Lord.* Dost thou ask, who are meant by both of these? He answereth, *both small and great.* That is, the house of Israel with the house of Aaron, those who among that nation believed in Jesus the Saviour; for *God was not well pleased with all of* <sup>1 Cor. 10, 6.</sup> *them. For what, if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid. For* <sup>Rom. 3, 3.</sup> *they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither, because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, as it is written, a remnant was saved.* For in the character of those who out of that nation believed, it is said, *Except* <sup>Rom. 9, 6. 7. 28.</sup> *the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as* <sup>29.</sup> *Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.* Seed, because when it has been scattered over the earth, it multiplied.

10. For the great ones, of the house of Aaron, have said, (ver. 14.) *May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children.* And thus it hath happened. For children that have been raised even from the stones have <sup>Matt. 3,</sup> flocked unto Abraham: sheep which were not of this fold, <sup>9.</sup> have flocked unto him, that there might be one flock, and <sup>John 10,</sup> one shepherd; the faith of all nations was added, and the <sup>6. 7. 28.</sup> number grew, not only of wise priests, but of obedient peoples; the Lord increasing not only their fathers more and more, who in Christ might shew the way to the rest who should imitate them, but also their children, who should follow their fathers' pious footsteps. For he speaketh thus

PSALM unto those whom through the Gospel he had begotten in  
 CXV.  
 I Cor. 4, Christ: *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me, even*  
 15. 16. *as I of Christ.* The Lord therefore hath added, not only  
 unto the mountains that skip like rams, but also unto the  
 little hills that skip like young sheep.

11. Therefore the Prophet saith unto these great and small, the mountains and the little hills, the rams and the young sheep, what followeth; (ver. 15.) *Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.* As if he should say, Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made the heaven in the great, earth in the small: not this visible heaven, studded with luminaries which are objects to these eyes. For, (ver. 16.) *The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; Who hath elevated the minds of some saints to such a height, that they became teachable by no man, but by God Himself; in comparison of which heaven, whatever is discerned with carnal eyes is to be called earth; which He hath given to the children of men; that when it is contemplated, whether in that region which illumineth above, as that which is called heaven, or in that which is illumined beneath, which is properly called earth, (since in comparison with that which is called heaven of heaven, the whole, as we have said, is earth;) the whole therefore of this earth He hath given to the children of men, that by the consideration of it, as far as they can, they may conceive of the Creator, Whom with their yet weak hearts they cannot see without that aid to their conception.*

12. There is another way of understanding these words, *The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men; which I ought not to conceal; that your attention may not stray away from what I have said. For I had said, that the small and the great are signified by what followeth: Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.* If therefore we understand the great by the word heaven, the small by earth; since the small are destined to become heaven by growth, and in this very hope are nourished by milk; so those great ones are the heaven of the earth, when they nourish the little ones, that they may understand that they are heaven of heaven, when they consider in what hope the little ones are nourished.

But nevertheless since they derive the truth and richness of wisdom, not from man nor through man, but through God <sup>VER.</sup> 17. Himself, they have received little ones who shall be heaven, that they may know that they are heaven of heaven; as yet however earth, unto which they say, *I have planted, Apollos* <sup>1 Cor. 3,</sup> *watered, but God gave the increase.* For to those very sons <sup>6.</sup> of men whom He made heaven, He Who knoweth how to provide for the earth through heaven, hath given earth upon which they may work. May they therefore abide, heaven and earth, in their God, Who made them, and let them live from Him, confessing unto Him, and praising Him; for if they choose to live from themselves, they shall die, as it is written, *From the dead, as though he were not,* <sup>Eccles.</sup> *confession ceaseth.* But, (ver. 17.) *The dead praise not* <sup>17, 26.</sup> *Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence.* For the Scripture in another passage proclaimeth, *The* <sup>Prov.</sup> *sinner, when he cometh into the abyss of wickednesses,* <sup>18, 3,</sup> *scorneth.* <sup>LXX.</sup> *But we, who live, will praise the Lord, from this time forth for evermore.*

PSALM CXVI.

LAT.  
CXV

EXPOSITION.

*A Sermon to the common people.*

1. Ver. 1. *I have loved, since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer.* Let the soul that is sojourning in absence from the Lord sing thus, let that sheep which had strayed sing thus, let that son who had *died and returned to life,* <sup>Luke 15,</sup> who had *been lost and was found;* <sup>6. 24.</sup> let our soul sing thus, brethren, and most beloved sons. Let us be taught, and let us abide, and let us sing thus with the Saints: *I have loved: since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer.* Is this a reason for having loved, that the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer? and do we not rather love, because He hath heard, or that He may hear? What then meaneth, *I have loved, since the Lord will hear?* Doth he, because hope is wont to inflame love, say that he hath loved, since

**PSALM CXVI.** he hath hoped that God will listen to the voice of his prayer?

2. Ver. 2, 3. But whence hath he hoped for this? Since, he saith, *He hath inclined His ear unto me: and in my days I have called upon Him.* I loved, therefore, because He will hear; He will hear, *because He hath inclined His ear unto me.* But whence knowest thou, O human soul, that God hath inclined His ear unto thee, except thou sayest, *I have believed?* These three things, therefore, *abide, faith, hope, charity:* because thou hast believed, thou hast hoped; because thou hast hoped, thou hast loved. If I now seek why the soul believed that God inclined His ear unto it:
- 1 Cor. 13, 13.** shall I not be answered, *Because He first loved us, and spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.*
- Rom. 8, 32.** For *how shall they call upon Him in Whom they have not believed?* saith the Teacher of the Gentiles: *and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?* When I perceived all these things done towards me, how should I not believe that
- Rom. 8, 9.** the Lord hath inclined his ear unto me? But *He hath so commended His love towards us, that Christ died for the ungodly.* When therefore the beautiful feet of them that
- Is. 52, 7.** preached peace, that published good tidings, preached these
- Joel 2, 32.** things to me, that *whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved, I believed* that His ear was inclined unto me, *and in my days I have called upon Him.*
3. And what are thy days, since thou hast said, *In my days I have called upon Him?* Are they those perchance,
- Gal. 4, 4.** in which *the fulness of time came, and God sent His Son,*
- Is. 49, 8.** Who had already said, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee?* Thou hast heard from the lips of the preacher who came unto thee
- 2 Cor. 6, 2.** with beautiful feet, *Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation;* and thou hast believed, and in thy days hast called upon the Lord, and said, (ver. 5.) *O Lord, deliver my soul.* This is indeed true: but I may rather call my days the days of my misery, the days of my mortality, the days according to Adam, full of toil and
- Ps. 69, 2.** sweat, the days according to the ancient corruption. *For*

*I lying, stuck fast in the deep mire*, in another Psalm also <sup>VER.</sup> have cried out, *Behold, Thou hast made my days old*; in <sup>3-6.</sup> these days of mine have I called upon Thee. For my days <sup>Ps.39,5.</sup> are different from the days of my Lord. I call those my days, which by my own daring I have made for myself, whereby I have forsaken Him: and, since He reigneth every where, and is all powerful, and holdeth all things, I have deserved prison; that is, I have received the darkness of ignorance, and the bonds of mortality. *I will call upon Him in these my days*; for elsewhere also I cry out, *Bring my* <sup>Ps. 142,</sup> *soul out of prison*; and since, in the *day of salvation*, which <sup>7.</sup> He hath given me, He hath aided me; *the sorrowful sighing* <sup>Ps. 79,</sup> *of the prisoners cometh before Him*. For in these days of <sup>11.</sup> mine, (ver. 3.) *The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me*: pains that would not have overtaken me, had I not wandered from Thee. But now they have overtaken me; but I found them not, while I was rejoicing in the prosperity of the world, in which the snares of hell deceive the more.

4. Ver. 4—6. But after *I too found trouble and heaviness, I called upon the Name of the Lord*. For trouble and profitable sorrow I did not feel; trouble, wherein He giveth aid, unto Whom it is said, *O be Thou our help in trouble: and* <sup>Ps.60,2.</sup> *vain is the help of man*. For I thought I might rejoice and exult in the vain help of man; but when I had heard from my Lord, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be* <sup>Matt.5,</sup> *comforted*: I did not wait until I should lose those temporal <sup>4.</sup> blessings in which I rejoiced, and should then mourn: but I gave heed to that very misery of mine which caused me to rejoice in such things, which I both feared to lose, and yet could not retain; I gave heed to it firmly and courageously, and I saw that I was not only agonised by the adversities of this world, but even bound by its good fortune; and thus *I found the trouble and heaviness* which had escaped me, and *called upon the Name of the Lord*; (ver. 5.) *O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.—O wretched man that I am! who* <sup>Rom.7,</sup> *shall deliver me from the body of this death, save the grace* <sup>24. 25.</sup> *of God through Jesus Christ our Lord?* Let then the holy people of God say, *I have found trouble and heaviness, and I called upon the Name of the Lord*: and let the remainder

PSALM CXVI. of the heathen hear, who do not as yet call upon the Name of the Lord; let them hear and seek, that they may discover trouble and heaviness, and may call upon the Name of the Lord, and be saved. We do not enjoin them to seek for a sorrow they have no cause for, but to discover that which they unwittingly harbour; nor is it our desire concerning them, that those earthly necessities, which they require while they live in this mortal state, should be wanting to them; but that they may mourn for this, that, having lost that fulness that cometh from heaven, they have deserved to be in want of those earthly blessings which are not permanently to be enjoyed, but which are needful for sustenance. Let them acknowledge and mourn for this misery; He who willed not even that they should be miserable, will make them blessed in their mourning.

5. *Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.* He is gracious, righteous, and merciful. Gracious in the first place, because He hath inclined His ear unto me; and I knew not that the ear of God had approached my lips, till I was aroused by those beautiful feet, that I might call upon the Lord's Name: for who hath called upon Him, save he whom He first called? Hence therefore He is in the first place *gracious*; but *righteous*, because He scourgeth; and again, *merciful*, because He receiveth; for *He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth*; nor ought it to be so bitter to me that He scourgeth, as sweet that He receiveth. For how should not (ver. 6.) *The Lord, who keepeth little ones*, scourge those whom, when of mature age, He seeketh to be heirs; Heb.12, 6. 7. *for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?—I was in misery, and He helped me.* He helped me, because I was in misery; for the pain which the physician causeth by his knife is not penal, but salutary.

6. Ver. 7. *Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath done good to thee: not for thy deservings, or through thy strength; but because the Lord hath done good to thee.* (Ver. 8.) *Since, he saith, He hath delivered my soul from death.* It is wonderful, most beloved brethren, that, after he had said that his soul should turn unto rest, since the Lord had rewarded him; he added, since *He hath delivered my soul from death.* Did it turn unto rest,

because it was delivered from death? Is not rest more usually said of death? What is the action of him, whose life is rest, and death disquietude? Such then ought to be the action of the soul, as may tend to a quiet security, not one that may increase restless toil; since He hath delivered it from death, Who, pitying it, said, *Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Meek therefore and humble, following, so to speak, Christ as its path, should the action of the soul be that tendeth towards repose; nevertheless, not slothful and supine; that it may finish its course, as it is written, *In quietness make perfect thy works.* For, that *quietness* might not lead to sloth, it is added, *make perfect thy works.* For it is not as it is in this life, where the repose of sleep doth refresh us for action; but a good habit of the soul leadeth to an ever watchful rest.

7. But that God, of Whom it is here said, *For the Lord hath done good to me. And why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling:* bestoweth all things. Whoever feeleth the chain of this flesh, chaunteth these things as fulfilled in hope towards himself. For it is truly said, *I was in misery, and He delivered me;* but the Apostle saith this also truly, that we are saved by hope. And that we are delivered from death, is well said to be already fulfilled, so that we may understand the death of unbelievers, of whom he saith, *Leave the dead to bury their dead:* and that in the former Psalm, *The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence; but we who live will praise the Lord.* A faithful believer may therefore understand that his soul is delivered from this death, for this very reason, that instead of being unbelieving it hath believed; whence the Saviour Himself saith, *He that believeth on Me, is passed from death unto life.* But the rest is fulfilled in hope in those who have not yet departed from this life. But now when we consider our most dangerous falls, our eyes cease not from tears; but He will then clear our eyes of tears, when He shall save our feet from falling. For there will then be no

VER.  
8.

Mat. 11,  
28—30.

Eccelus.  
3, 19.

Rom. 8,  
24.

Matt. 8,  
22.

Ps. 115,  
17. 18.

John 5,  
24.

**PSALM CXVI.** slipping of our feet as they walk, when there will be no sliding of the weak flesh. But now, however firm our path, which is Christ, be; yet since we place flesh, which we are enjoined to subdue, beneath us; in the very work of chastening and subduing it, it is a great thing not to fall: but not to slip in the flesh, who can attain?

8. Wherefore since we both are in the flesh, and are not in the flesh, (for we are in the flesh in respect of that chain which is not as yet loosened, because, *to be released and to be with Christ is by far the best*; and we are not in the flesh, because we have given the first-fruits of the Spirit unto God, if we are able to say that *our conversation is in heaven*; and if, as it were, with our head we please God, while with our feet, as it were, with the farthest regions of the soul we perceive the slippery ground we tread upon,) hear how that which is expressed as if it were already accomplished belongeth to hope: He hath delivered, it is said, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: and yet he saith not, *I please*; but, *I shall please in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living*; sufficiently shewing that he doth not as yet please in the sight of the Lord, on that side which is in the land of the dead, that is, in mortal flesh. *For they that are in the flesh, cannot please God.* Whence the same Apostle goeth on to add, *But ye are not in the flesh*; which he saith in this sense, that *the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the Spirit of life because of righteousness*; in respect of which they pleased God, because in respect of the Spirit they were not in the flesh. But who can please a living God, in a dead body? But what saith he? *But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Then shall we be in the *land of the living*, pleasing in the sight of the Lord in every respect, absent from Him in no respect. *For whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*; and, inasmuch as we are absent from Him, so far we are not *in the land of the living*. *But we are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord; wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we*

Philipp.  
1, 23.

Philipp.  
3, 20.

Rom. 8,  
8.

ib. 9.

ib. 10.

Rom. 8,  
11.

2 Cor. 5,  
7. 8.

*Christ preached when Truth is preached though for bad ends. 297*

*may be accepted of Him. We labour indeed now, because* <sup>VER. 8.</sup>  
*we are awaiting the redemption of our body: but, when* <sup>Rom. 8,</sup>  
*death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and this* <sup>23.</sup>  
*corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal* <sup>1 Cor. 15, 53.</sup>  
*immortality; then there will be no weeping, because there* <sup>54.</sup>  
*will be no falling; and no falling, because no corruption.*  
*And therefore we shall then no longer labour to please, but*  
*we shall be entirely pleasing in the sight of the Lord, in the*  
*land of the living.*

PSALM CXVI.

LAT.  
CXV.

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EXPOSITION.  
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*A Sermon to the common people.*

1. I IMAGINE that what the Apostle saith is very well known to you, holy brethren: *for all men have not faith;* <sup>2 Thess. 3, 2.</sup> and that the number of the unbelieving is wont to be the greater, ye are not ignorant: on which account it is said, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* Among whom we <sup>Is. 53, 1.</sup> numbered those also, of whom the Apostle saith, *For all* <sup>Rom. 10, 16.</sup> *seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;* who, <sup>Philipp. 2, 21.</sup> in another passage he saith, *preach the word of God, not in* <sup>Philipp. 1, 17.</sup> *sincerity, but for occasions, not purely,* that is, not in a temper of pure and sincere love. For they felt one thing, as appeared in their conduct, and preached another, that under a holy name they might please men: for of these again he saith, *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus* <sup>Rom. 16, 18.</sup> *Christ, but their own belly.* Yet He alloweth them to preach Christ. For though they rather believed those things which they did, tending unto death: yet they preached those things, which, if others did, believing them, they would be saved; for they preached nothing beside the rule of faith. For these the Apostle doth exclude, in these words, *If any man preach any other gospel unto you than* <sup>Gal. 1, 9.</sup> *that ye have received, let him be accursed.* They who preach falsehood, preach not Christ; for Christ is Truth.

**PSALM CXVI.** But of these men he saith that they preach Christ, but not purely, that is, not with a mind simple and pure, and Gal.5,6. with sincere faith that worketh by love; for while they were providing for earthly desires, they preached the kingdom of heaven, with falsehood in their hearts, and truth on their tongue. The Apostle therefore, aware that they who believed even by the preaching of Judas were delivered, Philipp.1, 18. alloweth these men in this way: *Whether, he saith, in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached.* For it was truth which they preached, though they preached not with truth, that is, with a true heart. These now speak what they believe not, and are therefore reprobate; although they may be profitable unto those whom the Lord teacheth, saying, Mat.23, 8. *Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not.* Wherefore, except because they believe not that what they enjoin is profitable? But others there are, who believe and say not what they believe, either from sloth or fear. For although the servant had a talent, yet because he chose not to spend it, he is addressed, by the Lord his judge, *Thou wicked and slothful servant.* And in another passage of the Gospel it is said, that many would have believed in Him among the chief men of the Jews, but that they did not acknowledge Him, that they might not be expelled from the synagogues; but they also were reprov'd and censured; John12, 43. for the Evangelist goeth on to say, *For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* If therefore both they who believe not the truth which they utter, and they who utter not the truth which they believe, are deservedly reprov'd; what servant shall he be who may truly be termed faithful, save he to whom it is said, Mat.25, 21—29. *Well done, thou good servant, since thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?* Such a servant, then, neither speaketh before he believeth, nor is silent when he hath believed: lest he should use his talent so as not to have it himself, or by not using it while he hath it should cease to have it. For thus it is said, *For unto him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

2. Ver. 10. Let therefore that good servant, singing **Vna.** Allelujah, that is, offering unto the Lord the sacrifice of **10. 11.** praise, from Whom he will hear the words, *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*; let him rejoice and say, *I believed, and therefore will I speak*: that is, I have believed perfectly. For they who refuse to utter what they believe, do not perfectly believe: for to this very belief it pertaineth to believe that which is said, *Whosoever shall confess Me before **Mat. 10,** men, Him will I confess also before My Father which is in **32.** heaven.* For that servant was called faithful, not only **Mat. 25,** because he received, but because he expended and gained **21. 23.** more. So also in this passage he saith not, *I believed, and I spoke*; but he saith, that he spoke, because he believed. For he at the same time believed both what reward he ought to expect for speaking, and what punishment for keeping silence. *I believed, saith he, and therefore did I speak. But I was sorely brought down.* For he suffered many tribulations, for the sake of the word which he faithfully held, faithfully preached; and he was sorely brought down; as they feared who loved the praise of men better than that of God. But what meaneth, *But I*? He should rather say, *I believed, and therefore I have spoken, and I was sorely brought down*: why did he add, *But I*, save because a man may be sorely brought down by those who oppose the truth, the truth itself cannot, which he believeth and speaketh? Whence also the Apostle, when he was speaking of his chain, saith, *the word of God is not bound.* So this man **2 Tim. 2, 9.** also, since there is one person of the holy witnesses, that is, of the Martyrs of God, saith, *I believed, and therefore will I speak. But I*; not that which I believed, not the word which I have delivered; *but I was sorely brought down.*

3. Ver. 11. *I said in my trance, All men are liars.* By trance he meaneth fear, which when persecutors threaten, and when the sufferings of torture or death impend, human weakness suffereth. For this we understand, because in this Psalm the voice of Martyrs is heard. For trance is used in another sense also, when the mind is not beside itself by fear, but is possessed by some inspiration of revelation. *But I said in my haste, All men are liars.* In consternation he hath had regard to his infirmity, and hath seen that he

PSALM ought not to presume on himself; for as far as pertaineth  
 CXXVI. to the man himself, he is a liar, but by the grace of God he  
 is made true; lest yielding to the pressure of his enemies he  
 might not speak what he had believed, but might deny it;  
 even as it happened to Peter, since he had trusted in himself,  
 and was to be taught that we ought not to trust in man.  
 And if every one ought not to trust in man, surely not in  
 himself; because he is a man. Rightly therefore in his fear  
 did he perceive that every man was a liar; since they also  
 whom no fear robs of their presence of mind, so that they  
 never lie by yielding to the persecutors, are such by the gifts  
 of God, not by their own strength. Therefore it is most  
 truly said, *Every man is a liar*; but God is true, Who said,  
 I have said, ye are Gods, and ye are all the children of the  
 Most Highest. *But ye shall die like men: and fall like  
 one of the princes.* He consoleth the humble, and filleth  
 them not only with the faith to believe, but with the courage  
 to preach the truth, if they be continually subject to God,  
 and imitate not the devil, one of the princes, who abode not  
 in the truth, and fell. For if all men are liars, so far will  
 they not be liars, as they are not men; since they will be  
 Gods, and the children of the Most Highest.

Ps. 82,  
 v. 7.

4. Ver. 12. The most devoted people of faithful witnesses,  
 then, considering this, how the mercy of God doth not  
 abandon human infirmity, in the fear of which infirmity  
 it is said, *All men are liars*; how it consoleth the meek,  
 and filleth with the spirit of courage the fearful, so that they  
 live again when their heart is nigh dead, and trust not in  
 themselves, but in *Him Who raiseth the dead, and maketh  
 the tongues of children eloquent*; Who saith, *But when they  
 deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak;*  
*for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak;*  
*for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father  
 which speaketh in you*; he then who had said, *I said in my  
 haste, All men are liars*, considering all these things, and  
 seeing that he was made thankful by the grace of God;  
*What, he asketh, what reward shall I give unto the Lord,  
 for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me?* He  
 saith not, for all the benefits that He hath done unto me;  
 but, *for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me.*

ψ(Ver. 1,  
 v. 11  
 v. 14  
 v. 10,  
 v. 20)

What deeds then on the man's part had preceded, that all the benefits of God were not said to be given, but returned? <sup>VER. 13-16.</sup> What had preceded, on the man's part, save sins? God therefore repayeth good for evil, whilst unto Him men repay evil for good; for such was the return of those who said, *This is the heir: come, let us kill him.* <sup>Mat. 21, 38.</sup>

5. Ver. 13-15. But this man seeketh what he may return unto the Lord, and findeth not, save out of those things which the Lord Himself returneth. (Ver. 13.) *I will receive,* he saith, *the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.* O man, a liar by thy own sin, true by the gift of God, and therefore no longer a man; Who hath given thee the cup of salvation, which when thou takest, and callest upon the Name of the Lord, thou shalt return unto Him a reward for all that He hath returned unto thee? Who, save He Who saith, *Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of?* <sup>Mat. 20, 22.</sup> Who hath given unto thee to imitate His sufferings, save He Who hath suffered before for thee? And therefore, (ver. 15.) *Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints.* He purchased it by His Blood, which He first shed for the salvation of slaves, that they might not hesitate to shed their blood for the Lord's Name; which, nevertheless, would be profitable for their own interests, not for those of the Lord.

6. Ver. 16. Let therefore the slave purchased at so great a price confess his condition, and say, *Behold, O Lord, how that I am Thy servant: I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid.* He is then both bought, and a home-bred slave. Was he bought together with his mother? Or, since he is a home-bred slave, was he stolen for the sin of his running away, and therefore bought, because redeemed? For he is the handmaid's son, because all creation is subject to the Creator, and oweth a most true service to the most true God: which while it yieldeth, it is free, receiving this grace from the Lord, that it may serve Him, not by compulsion, but by free-will. This, therefore, is the son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, the free mother of us <sup>Gal. 4, 26.</sup> all. And free indeed from sin she is, but the handmaid of righteousness; to whose sons still pilgrims it is said, *Ye have been called unto liberty;* and again he maketh them servants, <sup>Gal. 5, 13.</sup>

**PSALM CXVJ.** when he saith, *but by love serve one another*: to whom it is also said, *When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.* Let therefore that servant say unto God, Many call themselves martyrs, many Thy servants, because they hold Thy Name in various heresies and errors; but since they are beside Thy Church, they are not the children of Thy handmaid. But *I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid.*

7. Ver. 17. *Thou hast broken my bonds asunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise.* For I have not found any deserts of mine, since Thou hast broken my bonds asunder; I therefore owe Thee the sacrifice of praise; because, although I will boast that I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid, I will glory not in myself, but in Thee, my Lord, Who hast broken asunder my bonds, that when I return from my desertion, I may again be bound unto Thee.

8. Ver. 18. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord.* What vows wilt thou pay? What victims hast thou vowed? what burnt-offerings, what holocausts? Dost thou refer to what thou hast said a little before, *I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the Name of the Lord*; and, *I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving*? and indeed whosoever well considereth what he is vowing to the Lord, and what vows he is paying, let him vow himself, let him pay himself as a vow: this is exacted, this is due. On looking at the coin, the Lord saith, *Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's*: his own image is rendered unto Cæsar: let His image be rendered unto God.

9. Ver. 19. But he who remembereth that he is not only the servant of God, but also the son of God's handmaid, seeth where he may pay his vows, being made like unto Christ through the cup of salvation. *In the courts*, he saith, *of the Lord's house.* What is the Lord's house, the same is the Lord's handmaid: and what is God's house, save all His people? It therefore followeth, *In the sight of all His people.* And he now more openly nameth his mother

herself. For what else is His people, but what followeth, *In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem?* For then that which is returned is grateful, if it be returned from peace, and in peace. But they who are not sons of this handmaid, have loved war rather than peace. But that no one may think that by the courts of the Lord's house, and all His people, the Jews are meant, because he closed this Psalm with the words, *In the midst of thee, Jerusalem*, in whose name the carnal Israelites glory; hear the following Psalm, which is comprised in four verses.

VER.  
19.

PSALM CXVII.

LAT.  
CXVI.

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EXPOSITION.  
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*A Sermon to the people.*

1. Ver. 1. *O praise the Lord, all ye heathen: praise Him, all ye nations.* These are the courts of the Lord's house, this all His people, this the true Jerusalem. Let those rather listen who have refused to be the children of this city, since they have cut themselves off from the communion of all nations. (Ver. 2.) *For His merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.* These are those two things, loving-kindness and truth, which in the 113th Psalm I admonished you should be committed to memory. But *the merciful kindness of the Lord is ever more and more towards us*, since the furious tongues of hostile nations have yielded to His Name, through which we have been freed: *and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever*, whether in those things which He promised to the righteous, or in those which He hath threatened to the ungodly.

Dona-  
tists.

LAT.  
CXVII.

## PSALM CXVIII.

## EXPOSITION I.

1. WE have heard, my brethren, the Holy Spirit warning and exhorting us to offer the sacrifice of confession unto God. Now confession is either of His praise, or of our sins. Now that confession, whereby we confess unto God our sins, is known unto all; so that the less learned multitude imagine that this only is meant by the word confession in the holy Scriptures; for when this word hath once been heard from the lips of the reader, immediately the pious sound of the beating of breasts followeth. But they ought to consider <sup>Ps. 43, 4.</sup> in what sense it is said in another Psalm: *For I will enter into the place of the admirable tabernacle, even unto the house of God; in the voice of thanksgiving and confession; of the sound of them that keep holy day.* For here it is surely clear, that the voice and sound of confession doth not relate to the sadness of penitence, but to the joyfulness of a crowded festivity. Or if any one still doubteth concerning so clear a testimony, what will he say to this passage in <sup>Ecclus. 20, 16—17.</sup> Ecclesiasticus: *Bless the Lord, all His works, magnify His Name, and confess to His praise with the songs of your lips, and with harps, and in confession. Ye shall say after this manner: All the works of the Lord are exceeding good.* Here certainly the dullest person cannot doubt that confession meaneth the praises of God; unless indeed there is perversity so great in any man's mind, that he dare to say even that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself confessed His sins unto His Father. But if any ungodly person should attempt to make this objection on the ground of the word confession, he would easily be refuted by the context itself: for thus <sup>Luke 10, 41.</sup> He speaketh: *I confess unto Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.* Who would not understand Him to say this in praise of the Father? Who

would not see that this confession doth not pertain to sorrowfulness of heart, but to joy; especially since the Evangelist saith immediately before, *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I confess unto Thee, O Father.* <sup>VER. 1—4.</sup> <sup>Luke 10, 21.</sup>

2. Ver. 1. Wherefore, most beloved, since it is not on any ground to be questioned, with so many concurrent testimonies, the like of which ye may of yourselves remark in the Scriptures, that the word confession is used in the inspired writings, not only in the sense of sin, but in that of the praises of God; what more harmonious interpretation can we arrive at, than that we are taught in this Psalm, when we chaunt Allelujah, which meaneth, Praise the Lord, that we should, when we hear the words, *Confess unto the Lord*, praise the Lord? The praise of God could not be expressed in fewer words than these, *For He is good.* I see not what can be more solemn than this brevity, since goodness is so peculiarly the quality of God, that the Son of God Himself when addressed by some one as, *Good Master*, by one, namely, who beholding His flesh, and comprehending not the fulness of His divine nature, considered Him as man only, replied, *Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.* <sup>Mark 10, 17.</sup> And what is this but to say, If thou wishest to call Me good, recognise Me as God? But since it is addressed, in revelation of things to come, to a people freed from all toil and wandering in pilgrimage, and from all admixture with the wicked, which freedom was given it through the grace of God, Who not only doth not evil for evil, but even returneth good for evil; it is most appropriately added, *Because His mercy endureth for ever.*

3. Ver. 2. *Let Israel now confess that He is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever.* (Ver. 3.) *Let the house of Aaron now confess that His mercy endureth for ever.* (Ver. 4.) *Yea, let all now that fear the Lord confess that His mercy endureth for ever.* Ye remember, I suppose, most beloved, what is the house of Israel, what is the house of Aaron, and that both are those that fear the Lord. For they are *the little and the great*, who have already in another Psalm been happily introduced into your hearts: in the number of whom all of us should rejoice that we are joined <sup>Ps. 115, 12, 13.</sup>

**PSALM CXVIII.** together, in His grace Who is good, and Whose mercy endureth for ever; since they were listened to who said, **Pm. 115, 14.** *May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children; that the host of the Gentiles might be added to the Israelites who believed in Christ, of the number of whom are the Apostles our fathers, for the exaltation of the perfect and the obedience of the little children; that all of us when made one in Christ, made one flock under one Shepherd, and the body of that Head, like one man, may say, I called upon the Lord in trouble, and the Lord heard me at large.* The narrow straits of our tribulation are limited: but the **Rom. 8, 33.** large way whereby we pass along hath no end. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?*

**4. Ver. 6, 7.** *The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man doeth unto me.* But are men, then, the only enemies that the Church hath? What is a man devoted to flesh and blood, save flesh and blood? But the Apostle saith, **Ephes. 6, 8.** *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the princes and rulers of the darkness of this world; that is, the rulers of the wicked, of those who love this world, and are therefore darkness; for we also were at one time darkness, but now are we light in the Lord.* Against, he saith, **Ephes. 6, 12.** *spiritual wickedness in high places; that is, the devil and his angels; that devil whom elsewhere he calleth the prince of the power of the air.* Hear therefore what followeth: **Ephes. 2, 2.** *(ver. 7.) The Lord is my helper: therefore shall I despise mine enemies.* From what class soever my enemies may arise, whether from the number of evil men, or from the number of evil angels; in the Lord's help, unto Whom we chaunt the confession of praise, unto Whom we sing Allelujah, they shall be despised.

**5. Ver. 8.** But, when my enemies have been brought to contempt, let not my friend present himself unto me as a good man, so as to bid me repose my hope in himself: for *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man.* Nor let any one, who may in a certain sense be stiled a good angel, be regarded by myself as one in whom I ought to put my trust: for *no one is good, save God alone; and when a man or an angel appear to aid us, when they do this of sincere affection, He doth it through*

them, Who made them good after their measure. (Ver. 9.) VER. 9-12.  
*It is therefore better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes.* For angels also are called princes, even as we read in Daniel, *Michuel, your prince.* Dan. 12, 1.

6. Ver. 10, 11. *All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side; but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them.* In the words, *All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them*, he signifieth the toils and the victory of the Church; but, as if the question were asked how she could have overcome so great evils, he looketh back to the example, and declareth what she had first suffered in her Head, by adding what followeth, *They kept me in on every side*: and the words, *All nations*, are with reason not repeated here, because this was the act of the Jews alone. *But in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them*, because there that very religious nation, (which is the body of Christ, and in behalf of which was done all that was done in mortal form with immortal power, by that inward divinity, through the outward flesh,) suffered from persecutors, of whose race that flesh was assumed and hung upon the Cross.

7. Ver. 12. *They came about me as bees do a hive, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns: and in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them.* Here then the order of the words corresponds with the order of events. For we rightly understand that our Lord Himself, the Head of the Church, was surrounded by persecutors, even as bees surround a hive. For the Holy Spirit is speaking with mystic subtlety of what was done by those who knew not what they did. For bees make honey in the hives: while our Lord's persecutors, unconscious as they were, rendered Him sweeter unto us even by His very Passion; so that we may taste and see how sweet is the Lord, *Who died for our sins, and arose for our justification.* Ps. 34, 8. Rom. 4, 25. But what followeth, *and burned up even as the fire among the thorns*, is better understood of His Body, that is, of a people spread abroad, whom all nations compassed about, since it

**PSALM CXVIII.** was gathered together from all nations. They *burned up even as the fire among the thorns*, when they consumed this sinful flesh, and the grievous piercings of this mortal life, in the flame of persecution. *And, he saith, in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them:* either because they themselves, that wickedness, which in them persecuted the righteous, having been extinguished, were joined with the people of Christ; or because the rest of them, who have at this time scorned the mercy of Him Who calleth them, will at the end feel the truth of Him Who judgeth them.

8. Ver. 13. *I have been driven on like a heap of sand, so that I was falling, but the Lord upheld me.* For though there were a great multitude of believers, that might be compared to the countless sand, and brought into one communion as into one heap; yet *what is man, save Thou be mindful of Him?* He said not, the multitude of the Gentiles could not surpass the abundance of my host, but, *the Lord, he saith, hath upheld me.* The persecution of the Gentiles succeeded not in pushing forward, to its overthrow, the host of the faithful dwelling together in the unity of the faith; since they trusted in Him, Who would uphold both individuals and all collectively; because He could never have been wanting to them when they called upon Him.

9. Ver. 14. *The Lord is my strength and my praise, and is become my salvation.* Who then fall, when they are pushed, save they who choose to be their own strength and their own praise? For no man falleth in the contest, except he whose strength and praise faileth. He therefore whose strength and praise is the Lord, falleth no more than the Lord falleth. And for this reason He hath become their salvation; not that He hath become any thing which He was not before, but because they, when they believed on Him, became what they were not before, and then He began to be salvation unto them when turned towards Him, which He was not to them when turned away from Himself.

10. Ver. 15. *The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous;* where they who raged against their bodies thought there was the voice of sorrow and destruction. For they did not know the inward joy of the saints in their future hope. Whence the Apostle also saith, *As sorrowful,*  
2 Cor. 6, 10.

yet *always rejoicing*; and again, *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.*

VER.  
16—19.  
Rom. 5,

1. Ver. 16. *The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass.* What mighty things? saith he. *The right hand of the Lord, he saith, hath exalted me.* It is a mighty thing to exalt the humble, to deify the mortal, to bring perfection out of infirmity, glory from subjection, victory from suffering, to give help, to raise from trouble; that the true salvation of God might be laid open to the afflicted, and the salvation of men might remain of no avail to the persecutors. These are great things: but what art thou surprised at? hear what he repeateth. Man exalted not himself, man perfected not himself, man gave not himself the glory, man conquered not, man was not salvation to himself: *The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass.*

12. Ver. 17. *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.* But they, while they were dealing havoc and death on every side, thought that the Church of Christ was dying. Behold, he now declareth the works of the Lord. Every where Christ is the glory of the blessed Martyrs. By being beaten He conquered those who struck Him; by being patient of torments, the tormentors<sup>1</sup>; by loving, those who raged against Him.

<sup>1</sup> Mss.  
facien-  
tes. Edd.  
impatien-  
tes.

13. Ver. 18. Nevertheless, let him point out to us, why the body of Christ, the holy Church, the people of adoption, suffered such indignities. *The Lord, he saith, hath chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death.* Let not then the boastful wicked imagine that aught hath been permitted to their power: they would not have that power, were it not given them from above. Oft doth the father of a family command his sons to be corrected by the most worthless slaves; though he designeth the heritage for the former, fetters for the latter. What is that heritage? Is it of gold, or silver, or jewels, or farms, or pleasant estates? Consider how we enter into it: and learn what it is.

14. Ver. 19. *Open me, he saith, the gates of righteousness.* Behold, we have heard of the gates. What is within? *That I may, he saith, go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.* This is the confession of praise full of wonder, *even Ps. 42, 4.*

114 *The gates of righteousness. The Head Stone of the corner.*

~~shall~~ *enter the house of God, in the voice of joy and confession of praise, among such as keep holiday: this is the everlasting bliss of the righteous, whereby they are blessed who dwell in the Lord's house, praising Him for evermore.*

15. Ver. 20. But consider how the gates of righteousness are entered into. *These are the gates of the Lord, he saith, the righteous shall enter into them.* At least let no wicked man enter there, that Jerusalem which receiveth not one **Rev. 22,** uncircumcised, where it is said, *Without are dogs.* Be it **16.** enough, that in my long pilgrimage *I have had my habitation Ps. 120,* among the tents of Kedar: and that, *with them that were 5.* enemies unto peace I laboured for peace: I endured even unto the end the intercourse of the wicked, but *these are the gates of the Lord: the righteous shall enter into them.*

16. Ver. 21. *I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.* How often is that confession proved to be one of praise, that doth not point out wounds to the physician, but giveth thanks for the health it hath received. But the Physician Himself is the Salvation.

17. Ver. 22. But who is this Whom we speak of? *The Eph. 2,* Stone which the builders rejected; for, *It hath become the 15. 16.* head Stone of the corner; to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body; circumcision, to wit, and uncircumcision.

18. Ver. 23. *By the Lord was it made unto it:* that is, it is made into the head stone of the corner by the Lord. For although He would not have become this, had He not suffered; yet He became not this through those from whom He suffered. For they who were building, refused Him: but in the edifice which the Lord was secretly raising, that was made the head stone of the corner which they rejected. *And it is marvellous in our eyes:* in the eyes of the inner man, in the eyes of those that believe, those that hope, those that love; not in the carnal eyes of those who, through scorning Him as if He were a man, rejected Him.

19. Ver. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made.* This man remembereth that he had said in former Psalms, **Ps. 114,** *Since He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will*

*The great bless the little ones from the House of the Lord.* 311

*I call upon Him as long as I live; making mention of his* VER. 25—27.  
old days; whence he now saith, *This is the day which the Lord hath made*; that is, wherein He hath given me Salvation. This is the day whereof He said, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee*; that is, a day wherein He, the Mediator, hath become the head Stone of the corner. *Let us rejoice, therefore, and be glad in Him.*

20. Ver. 25. *Save me now, O Lord: prosper Thou well my way, O Lord.* Because it is the day of Salvation, *save me*: because we, returning from a long pilgrimage, are separated from those who hated peace, with whom we were peaceful, and who, when we spoke to them, made war upon us without a cause; *prosper well our way* as we return, since Thou hast become our Way.

21. Ver. 26. *Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.* Cursed, therefore, is he that cometh in his own name; as He saith in the Gospel; “*I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*” John 5, 43. *We have blessed you out of the house of God.* I believe that these are the words of the great to the little, of those great ones, to wit, who in spirit commune with God the Word, Who is with God, as they may in this life; and yet temper their discourse for the sake of the little ones, so that they may sincerely say what the Apostle saith: *For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us.* 2 Cor. 5, 13, 14. They bless the little children from the inner house of the Lord, where that praise faileth not age after age: consider therefore what they proclaim from thence.

22. Ver. 27. *God is the Lord, Who hath shewed us light.* That Lord, Who came in the Lord’s Name, Whom the builders refused, and Who became the head Stone of the corner, that *Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ,* Mat. 21, 9, 42, 1 Tim. is God, He is equal with the Father, He hath shewed us 2, 5. light, that we might understand what we believed, and declare it to you who understand it not as yet, but already believe it. But that ye also may understand, *Declare a holy day in full assemblies, even unto the horns of the*

PSALM *altar*; that is, even unto the inner house of God, from  
 CXVIII. which we have blessed you, where are the high places of  
 the altar. *Declare a holy day*, not in a slothful manner,  
 but *in full assemblies*. For this is the voice of joyfulness  
 Ps.42,4. among those that keep holy day, who walk *in the place of*  
*the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God*. For  
 if there be there the spiritual sacrifice, the everlasting sacri-  
 fice of praise, both the Priest is everlasting, and the peaceful  
 mind of the righteous an everlasting altar. This we say  
 more openly, brethren: whoever desire to understand God  
 the Word, let not flesh suffice for them, because for their  
 sakes the Word was made flesh, that they might be nourished  
 with milk; nor let this holy day suffice on earth, in which  
 that Lamb was slain: but let it be declared in the public  
 paths, until, our minds being raised by God, we reach the  
 inner Divinity of Him, Who hath deigned to vouchsafe to  
 us, that we might be fed with milk, a human nature out-  
 wardly.

23. Ver. 29. And what shall we sing there, save His  
 praises? What else shall we say there, save, *Thou art my*  
*God, and I will confess unto Thee; Thou art my God, and*  
*I will praise Thee. I will confess unto Thee, for Thou hast*  
*heard me, and art become my Salvation*. We will not say  
 these things in loud words; but the love that abideth in Him  
 of itself crieth out in these words, and these words are love  
 itself. Thus, as he began with praise, so he endeth: (ver. 29.)  
*Confess unto the Lord, for He is gracious, and His mercy*  
*endureth for ever*. With this the Psalm commenceth, with  
 this it endeth; since, as from the commencement which we  
 have left behind, so in the end, whither we are returning,  
 there is not any thing that can more profitably please us,  
 than the praise of God, and Allelujah evermore.

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PSALM CXIX.

EXPOSITION.

*Preface.*

I HAVE expounded all the rest of the Psalms, which we  
 know the Book of the Psalms containeth, which by the

custom of the Church is styled the Psalter, partly by PREF. preaching among the people, partly by dictations, as well as I, by the Lord's help, was able: but I put off the 118th Psalm, as well on account of its well-known length, as on account of its depth being fathomable by few. And when my brethren deeply regretted that the exposition of this Psalm alone, as far as pertaineth to the Psalms of the same volume, was wanting to my works, and strongly pressed me to pay this debt, I yielded not to them, though they long entreated and solicited me; because as often as I began to reflect upon it, it always exceeded the utmost stretch of my powers. For in proportion as it seemeth more open, so much the more deep doth it appear to me; so that I cannot shew how deep it is. For in others, which are understood with difficulty, although the sense lie hid in obscurity, yet the obscurity itself appeareth; but in this, not even this is the case; since it is superficially such, that it seemeth not to need an expositor, but only a reader and listener. And now that at length I approach its interpretation, I am utterly ignorant what I can achieve in it: nevertheless, I hope that God will aid me with His Presence, that I may effect something. For thus He hath done in all those which, though at first they seemed to me difficult, and almost impracticable, I have succeeded in adequately expounding. But I decided to do this by means of sermons, which might be delivered among the people, such as the Greeks term *ὁμιλίαι*. For this is, I think, more equitable, that the assemblies of the Church be not defrauded of the comprehension of this Psalm, by the singing of which, as much as by that of others, they are wont to be charmed. But let the preface end here: we must now speak of the Psalm itself, to which we have thought it right to make this Preface.

PSALM CXIX.

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*Discourse I.*

1. Ver. 1. FROM its commencement, dearly beloved, doth this great Psalm exhort us unto bliss, which there is no one

**PSALM** who desireth not. For who either can, or could, or ever  
**CXIX.** will be found, who is unwilling to be blessed? What need  
I. therefore is there of exhortation unto that which the human  
mind of its own accord seeketh? For truly, he who exhorteth  
aims at this, that the will of him with whom he dealth may be  
excited towards that on account of which the exhortation is  
employed. Why then are we exhorted to will that which  
we cannot but will; save because, though all desire bliss,  
yet most men know not by what means to attain to it? And  
therefore this is the lesson which he teacheth, who saith,  
*Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk  
in the law of the Lord.* As much as to say, I know what  
thou wishest, thou art seeking bliss: if then thou wouldest  
be blessed, be undefiled. For the former all desire, the  
latter fear: yet without it, what all wish cannot be attained.  
But where will any one be undefiled, save in the way? In  
what way, save in the law of the Lord? And on this account,  
*Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk  
in the law of the Lord,* is not said superfluously, but is an  
exhortation necessary to our minds. For what good that is  
whereunto many are slothful, (that is, that they should walk  
undefiled in the way, which is the law of the Lord,) is thus  
shewn, when it is declared, that they who do this are blessed,  
so that on account of that which all wish, that may be done  
which most do not wish. For to be blessed is so great a  
good, that both good and bad men wish for it. Nor is it  
wonderful that good men are good on this account; but this  
is wonderful that wicked men are wicked, that they may be  
blessed. For whoever abandons himself to lusts, and is cor-  
rupted by luxury and debauchery, seeketh somewhat blissful  
in his wickedness, and thinketh himself miserable, when he  
attaineth not to the pleasure and joy of his lust, while he  
never hesitates to boast of his bliss, when he doth attain it.  
And whoever burneth with the flames of avarice, collecteth  
for this reason riches by every means he can, that he may  
be blessed; whoever desireth to shed the blood of his  
enemies, whoever seeketh dominion, whoever feedeth his  
cruelty by the disasters of others, seeketh bliss in all his  
crimes. These then, waunderers, and seekers of a false bliss  
by true misery, are recalled to the way by these divine

words, if they be listened to: *Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord:* as <sup>VER.</sup> 2, 3. if he said, Whither are ye going? ye are perishing, and ye know it not. The road ye are traversing is not the road to where ye wish to go: for ye wish to be blessed; but those roads whereby ye run are miserable, and lead unto still greater misery. Seek not so great a good through evil means: if ye wish to reach that end, come hither, travel by this road. Ye who cannot abandon the wish for blessedness, abandon the wickedness of a perverse road. Ye are wearied with fruitless endeavours to reach what ye are polluted by attaining. But they are not blessed who are polluted with error, who walk in the perverse ways of the world; but, *Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord.*

2. Ver. 2. Listen now to what he addeth: *Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart.* No other class of the blessed seemeth to me to be mentioned in these words, than that which has been already spoken of. For to examine into the testimonies of the Lord, and to seek Him with all the heart, this is to be undefiled in the way, this is to walk in the law of the Lord. He then goeth on to say, (ver. 3.) *For they who do wickedness, shall not walk in His ways.* If therefore they who walk in the way, that is, in the law of the Lord, are those who search His testimonies, and seek Him with all their heart; doubtless they who do wickedness, search not His testimonies. And yet we know that the workers of wickedness do search the testimonies of the Lord for this reason, that they prefer being learned to being righteous: we know that others also search the testimonies of the Lord, not because they are already living well, but that they may know how they ought to live. Such then do not as yet walk undefiled in the law of the Lord, and for this reason are not as yet blessed. How then are we to understand, *Blessed are they that search His testimonies;* since we see men search into His testimonies without being blessed, because they are not undefiled? For the Scribes and Pharisees, sitting in the seat of Moses, of whom the Lord saith, *All that they bid you observe, that observe and do;* <sup>Mat.23,</sup> 3.

PSALM  
C. XIX.  
1.

*but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not ; even they searched into the testimonies of the Lord, that they might have good things to say, though they did evil things. But let us leave these men, for we shall be justly answered, that they do not search into the testimonies of the Lord. For they do not seek them themselves, but they seek somewhat else through them, that is, that they may be glorified by men, or enriched. This is not to search into the testimonies of God, not to love what they shew, and to refuse to go where they lead, that is, unto God. Or if they themselves search the testimonies of God, yet if they do so not that they may seek and find Him, but something else, from these testimonies ; surely they do not seek Him with all their heart, which we thus see is added here not without a purpose. For the Spirit Who saith this, aware that many search His testimonies for the sake of some other object, not for that which is set before them, hath not only said, *Blessed are they that search His testimonies*, but hath added, *and seek Him with their whole heart*, as if teaching in what manner, or with what object, the testimonies of the Lord should be searched. Lastly, Wisdom itself speaking in the Book of Wisdom, saith, *The wicked seek Me, but they find Me not ; for they hate knowledge*. And what else is this, save, they hate Me ? They seek Me, He saith, and they who hate Me find Me not. In what sense then are they said to seek what they hate, save because they seek not this, but somewhat else there ? For they desire not to be wise for the glory of God, but they wish to seem wise for the glory of men. For how do they not hate wisdom, which teacheth that what they love ought to be despised ? Therefore, *Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart*. For by searching His testimonies thus, that they may seek Him with their whole heart, they walk undefiled in the law of the Lord. Did he then, who said, *Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life*, not search His testimonies, not seek Him ? But how did he seek Him with his whole heart, to Whose counsel he preferred his own wealth, on hearing Whose counsel he *went away very**

sorrowful? For the prophet Isaiah also saith, *Seek the Lord*; and when ye have found Him, *let the ungodly man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.* VER.  
2.  
Is. 55,  
6. 7.

3. Both the ungodly and the unrighteous, then, seek the Lord, that when He is found, they may not be wicked and ungodly. How then are men already blessed, when they are searching His testimonies, and seeking Him, since even the wicked and ungodly can do this? But that the wicked and ungodly are blessed, what wicked or ungodly man even can say? Through hope, then, are they blessed, as they are *blessed who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake*: not for what is present to them, as long as they suffer evils; but for what will be present, since *the kingdom of heaven is theirs*; and, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness*; not because they hunger and thirst, but for what followeth, *for they shall be filled*; and, *Blessed are they that weep*, not because they weep, but because *they shall laugh*. Therefore, *Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart*: not because they search and seek, but because they will find what they seek: for they seek with their whole heart, not negligently. If therefore they are blessed in hope, in hope perhaps also they are undefiled. For truly in this life, though we may walk in the law of the Lord, although we search His testimonies, and seek Him with our whole heart, yet, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*. But this must be more carefully enquired into. For the next words are, *For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways*. From which it may seem, that they who walk in the way of the Lord, that is, in the law of the Lord, by searching His testimonies, and seeking Him with their whole heart, may be already undefiled, that is, without sin, on account of the following words: *For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways*. But, *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law*, saith the blessed John; and he addeth, *for sin is the transgression of the law*. But this discourse must now be closed, nor ought so important a question to be contracted within a narrow space.

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## PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse II.*

1. Ver. 3. It is written, and is read, and is true, in this Psalm, that *They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways.* But we must endeavour, with the help of God, *in Whose hand are both we and our words*, that what is rightly said, by not being rightly understood, may not confuse the reader or hearer. For we must beware, lest all the Saints, whose words these are, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*; may either not be thought to walk in the ways of the Lord, since sin is wickedness, and *they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways*; or, because it is not doubtful that they walk in the ways of the Lord, may be thought to have no sin, which is beyond doubt false. For it is not said, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, merely for the sake of avoiding arrogance and pride. Otherwise it would not be added, *And the truth is not in us*; but it would be said, Humility is not in us: especially because the following words throw a clearer light on the meaning, and remove all the causes of doubt. For when the blessed John had said this, he added, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* What doth the damnable pride of ungodliness say here, what doth it say in answer? For if the Saints refuse to say that they have no sin, for the sake of avoiding arrogance, and not of confessing the truth; what is it that they confess, that they may gain remission and cleansing? Is this also done, that arrogance may be avoided? How then can a true cleansing of sins be entreated, when the confession of them is false? Let then this grass-like self-exaltation of the proud, that deceiveth itself, be silenced, and dry up, which in the ears of men with a feigned humility declareth that it hath sin, but in its heart with ungodly pride denieth that it hath sin. For they who say this, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. But when they say this in the ears of men, they deceive not only themselves, but others also, with the

Wisd. 7,  
16.1 John  
3, 4.1 John  
1, 8, 9.

perversity of their insane doctrine; but when they say <sup>VER.</sup> this in their heart, there they deceive themselves, there <sub>3.</sub> truth is not in them; and thereby they deceive themselves in their own hearts, and in their own heart lose the light of truth. But let the holy family of Christ exclaim, producing fruit and increasing in the whole world, humbly true and truly humble; let them exclaim, I say, *If we say, that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* As these words are spoken, so let them be felt. For then will humility be sincere, if it be not merely displayed upon the tongue; so that we may be, according to the Apostle, *Not minding high things, but consenting with men of lowliness:* he saith not, taking with them, but, consenting with them; which is not the part of the mouth, but of the heart. Hypocrite, if thou sayest that thou hast, though thou believest that thou hast not, sin: without, thou feignest humility; within, thou dost embrace vanity. Therefore both in thy mouth and in thy heart, thou hast not truth. What doth it profit thee that that seemeth to men to be humble, which thou sayest, if God seeth that thy thoughts are high? Surely, if the divine oracle thus sounded in thy ears, Speak not high words; even thus, thou wouldest not be condemned unjustly, if thou shouldest speak proudly with thy tongue before men, and proudly with thy heart before God. But when thou art told, *Be not high-minded, but fear;* (for he speaketh not of words, but of the mind;) why art thou not humble within, where thou mindest? Is the mind puffed up with lofty thoughts, that the tongue may feign a false humility? Thou readest, or hearest, *Be not high-minded, but fear:* and thou art so far high-minded, that thou thinkest thou hast not sin; and for this reason, because thou wilt not fear<sup>1</sup>, nothing remaineth for thee, save to be puffed with <sup>1</sup>timere pride<sup>2</sup>.

2. For why, thou askest, is it written, *For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways?* Do not then the Saints of the Lord walk in the paths of the Lord? If they walk, he saith, they do wickedness: if they do no wickedness, they have no sin: for sin is wickedness. Lord Jesus, rise to my

<sup>2</sup> tumere

- PSALM assistance, and aid me, through the Apostle confessing,  
CXIX. against the proud heretic. Behold, where is that man  
II. of Thine, who maketh himself empty, that he may be filled  
with Thee? Let us hear himself, my brethren; let us ask  
him concerning this question, if it pleaseth, nay, since it  
doth please you. Tell us, most blessed Paul, whether thou  
didst walk in the ways of the Lord, while thou wast still  
Phil. 3, living in the flesh? He answereth: Why did I say, *Whereto*  
16. *we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule?*  
2 Cor. Why did I say, *Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we*  
12, 18. *not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same footsteps?*  
2 Cor. 5, Why did I say, *Whilst we are at home in the body, we are*  
6, 7. *absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight.*  
What is a more certain way of the Lord, than that *faith*  
from which *the righteous liveth?* What other path was I  
Rom. 1, traversing towards the regions above, when I said, *This one*  
17. *thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and*  
Phil. 3, *reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press*  
13, 14. *toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God*  
*in Christ Jesus?* Lastly, in what other path had I run,  
2 Tim. when I said, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my*  
4, 7. *course?* Let these answers suffice, whereby we have learnt  
that the Apostle Paul walked in the ways of the Lord, but  
let us ask another question also of him. Tell us, I beseech  
thee, O Apostle, since whilst thou still wast living in the  
flesh thou didst walk in the ways of the Lord; hadst thou  
sin, or wast thou without sin? Let us hear whether he  
deceiveth himself, or whether he hath the same mind as the  
blessed John, his brother Apostle; since truth was in them.  
1 John 1, 8. And here therefore he answereth; Have ye not read where  
Rom. 7, I confess, saying, *For the good which I would, I do not;*  
19. *but the evil that I would not, that do I?* This also we have  
heard; we therefore now ask this, how didst thou walk in  
the ways of the Lord, if thou didst that evil, which thou  
didst hate; when the holy Psalm saith, *They who do wicked-*  
*ness, walk not in the ways of the Lord?* Hear him answering  
Rom. 7, in the next sentence: *If then I do that which I would not,*  
16, 17. *it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*  
Behold how they who walk in the ways of the Lord, do  
not commit sin, and nevertheless are not without sin;

because they no longer work it themselves, but the sin VER. 3. which dwelleth in them.

3. Here some one will say, How did he do that evil which he wished not to do: how was it not he that did it, but the sin that dwelt in him? Meanwhile this question hath been now answered, and it hath sufficiently appeared by the authority of canonical Scripture, that it may be that men walking in the ways of the Lord, though they be not without sin, may not nevertheless themselves commit it. For *they who do wickedness*, that is, sin, since sin is wickedness, *walk not in His ways*. Yet in what way we may understand, how he did this on account of the body of this death, in which the law of sin dwelleth, and how he did it not himself on account of the ways of the Lord in which he walketh; we must explain in another discourse, since this must be closed.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse III.*

1. Ver. 3. In the words of this Psalm, *For they who do* ALEPH. *wickedness, walk not in His ways*, since *sin is wickedness*, as the Apostle John saith, a difficult question arose, viz. 1 John 3, 4. How could the saints in this life both be not without sin; since this is true, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive our-* 1 John 1, 8. *selves, and the truth is not in us*; and nevertheless *walk in the ways of the Lord*, which *they who do wickedness do not walk in*; which was solved in the words of the Apostle Paul, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*. For how is he without sin, in whom sin dwelleth? Yet he walketh in the ways of the Lord, which they who do wickedness walk not in; because it is no longer he himself that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in him. But this question has been solved in such a way, that another more difficult arises. How can a man do what he himself doth not? For he saith both: *What I would, that I do not*; and, *It is no* Rom. 7, 17. 20. *more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*. Whence we 16.

PSALM ought to understand, that when the sin that dwelleth in us, CXIX. worketh in us, that then we do not act ourselves; when our III. will by no means consenteth unto it, and even commandeth the members of the body, so that they may not obey its desires. For what doth sin work without our will, save illicit desires only? And if the assent of the will be denied them; some passion indeed is excited, but no effect is yielded to it. This the same Apostle enjoined, when he Rom. 6, said, *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that 12. 13. ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.* There are therefore desires of sin, which he forbade us to obey. These desires therefore work sin; which if we obey, we also work sin: but if we obey the Apostle and do not obey them, it is not we who do the sin, but the sin that dwelleth in us. But if we had no unlawful desires, neither we, nor sin could work any evil in us. Moreover, we are said to be agents in the motion of an unlawful desire, by not obeying which we are not ourselves the authors of it, for this reason, that it is not the power of another's nature, but the weakness of our own; from which weakness we shall be altogether safe, when we shall have become immortal both in mind and body. Wherefore, on the one hand, because we walk in the ways of the Lord, we obey not the desires of sin; and, on the other hand, because we are not without sin, we have the desires of sin. And for this reason we no longer ourselves act in them, by not obeying them; but, the sin dwelleth in us, by stirring them up. *For they who do wickedness, that is, obey the desires of sin, walk not in the ways of the Lord.*

2. We have now to enquire what we pray to be forgiven us, when we say to God, *Forgive us our trespasses*: whether the sins we commit, when we obey the desires of sin; or whether we pray that the desires themselves may be forgiven us, which are not our own work, but that of the sin which dwelleth in us. As far indeed as I can understand, the whole guilt of that our sickness and weakness, whence Rom. 8, unlawful desires spring, which the Apostle calleth sin, is 7—25. washed away by the Sacrament of Baptism, together with all that we have done, said, thought, in obedience to it; nor

would that sickness be imputed to us again, though it were in us, if we never yielded any obedience to any of its unlawful suggestions, whether by deed, word, or silent consent; until even this itself were healed, when that should be fulfilled which we pray for, whether in the words, *Thy kingdom come*; or in these, *Deliver us from evil*; but, since *the life of man on earth is temptation*; although we be far from actual crimes, yet there is no want of occasions when we yield to the desires of sin, either in deed, word, or thought, since when we are watching against greater temptations, certain minute ones creep upon us while we are off our guard, which if they be gathered together against us, though they do not singly crush us with their own weight, yet all together overwhelm us in the heap. And for these reasons, even those who walk in the ways of the Lord, say, *Forgive us our debts*: since both prayer itself and confession pertain to the ways of the Lord; although sins pertain not to them.

3. In the ways of the Lord then, all of which our faith doth embrace, whereby we believe in Him, *Who justifieth the ungodly*, Who also said, *I am the way*; no man doth work sin, but confesseth it. He departs from the way then, when he sinneth; and therefore the sin which is committed by a deviation from the way, is not ascribed to the way; but in the way of faith they are held not to be sinners, unto whom sins are not imputed. Concerning whom the Apostle Paul, commending the righteousness of faith, hath shewn that it is written in the Psalms, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.* This the ways of the Lord give; and through this, since *the righteous liveth by faith*, that iniquity, which is unbelief, doth estrange from the way of the Lord. But in this path, that is, in pious faith, whosoever walketh, either doth no sin, or if any is committed by his deviating from the way, it is not imputed to him on account of the way, and he is accepted as if he had not committed sin. And therefore the words, *They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways*, are well understood to signify that wickedness, which departeth from faith, or which doth not advance to faith. For as the Lord saith of the Jews, *If I had not come, they had not had sin*; nor

V ER. 2.

Matt. 6, 10. 13. Job 7, 1.

Rom. 4, 5. John 14, 6.

Rom. 4, 7. Ps. 32, 1. 2.

Rom. 1, 17.

John 15, 22.

PSALM were they without any sin, before Christ came in the flesh,  
 CXIX. and, since He came, then began to have sin ; but He would  
 III. have some particular sin, that is, of unbelief, to be understood, since they did not believe in Him: thus *they who do wickedness*, not any wickedness in general, but that of  
 Ps. 25, unbelief in particular, *walk not in His ways*; for, *All the*  
 10. *the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth*; but both are in  
 Rom 15, Christ, and besides Christ they exist no where. *Now I say,*  
 8. 9. *that Christ*, saith the Apostle, *was a minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the*  
 Rom. 4, *fathers. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His*  
 5. *mercy. Mercy* in that He redeemed us; *truth* in this, that He fulfilled what He promised, and will fulfil what He promiseth. They then who do wickedness, that is, are unbelievers, walk not in His ways; because they have not believed in Christ. Let them therefore be converted, and piously believe in Him *Who justifieth the ungodly*, and let them find in Him mercy when their sins are pardoned, and truth when His promises are completed, that is, all the ways of the Lord, walking in which they will not do wickedness ;  
 Gal.5,6. because they will not hold to unbelief, but to faith which worketh by love, and to which sin is not imputed.

L.A.T.  
 CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse IV.*

ALEPH. 1. Ver. 4. Who is it, most beloved, who saith to the Lord, *Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much?* (Ver. 5.) *O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes.* (Ver. 6.) *So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.* Who is he Who saith this, save every member of Christ, or rather the whole body of Christ? And what meaneth, *Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much?* is it, *Thou hast charged too much?* or, to

*keep too much?* Whichever of these we understand, the sense seems contrary to that memorable and noble sentiment which the Greeks praise in their wise men, and which the Latins agree in praising. 'Do nothing too much!' For if it be true, that nothing be done too much; how is that true which is here said, *Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much?* since how could God either charge any thing too much, or wish any thing to be kept too much, if all that was too much was worthy of blame? We should therefore say, that we are not bound by any authority of the Greek writers, considering what is written, *Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* and should rather believe that sentiment to be false, whereby it is said, 'Do nothing too much?' than the divine words, where we read and sing, *Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much;* unless, not Greek vanity, but true reason recalled us. For that is said to be, *too much*, which is more than it ought to be. For too little and too much are contrary to one another. For too little is, what is less than it ought to be; and too much, more than it ought to be. There is a measure between these, which is called *enough*. As therefore it is useful in life and morals, that we should do nothing more than we ought; we ought indeed rather to confess the sentiment, 'Do nothing too much,' to be true, than to deny it. But the Latin language sometimes uses this word "*nimis*" in such a sense, that we find it in the holy Scripture, and employ it in our discourses, as signifying, very much. In this passage, *Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much*, we simply understand very much, if we understand rightly; and if we say to any very dear friend, I love you too much, we do not wish to be understood to mean more than is fitting, but very much. Lastly, this Greek sentiment does not contain a word answering to that which is here read: for there, *ἄγαν* is used, which is *nimis*; but here *σφόδρα*, which is equivalent to *valdè*, very much. But sometimes, as we have said, we find *nimis* used, and use it ourselves, for what means *valdè*, whence some Latin copies have not, *Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much*, but *very much*. Very much therefore

V ER.

4.

1 Ter.

Andria,

v. 34.

1 Cor. 1,

20.

PSALM CXIX.  
IV. hath God charged this: and very much ought the commandments of God to be kept.

2. Ver. 5. But listen to what pious humility or humble piety, and faith not unmindful of grace, addeth, *O that*, he saith, *my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes.* Thou indeed hast charged: O that I could realize what Thou hast charged. When thou hearest, *O that*, recognise the words of one wishing; and having recognised the expression of a wish, lay aside the pride of presumption. For who saith that he desireth what he hath in such a manner in his power, that without need of any help he can do it? Therefore if man desireth what God chargeth, God must be prayed to grant Himself what He enjoineth. For from whom must it be desired, save from Him, from that James 1, 17. *Father of lights, from Whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down*, by the testimony of holy Scripture? But on account of those who think that we are helped from heaven by this means alone to works of righteousness, because the commandments of God are brought to our knowledge, that these when known, without any grace of God, may be fulfilled solely by the strength of our own will; he doth not here wish his ways directed to keep the statutes of God, until he hath received His commandment from His own injunction. For what he said before pertaineth unto this, *Thou hast charged that we should diligently keep Thy commandments.* As if he should say, I have already received Thy law, I know it; for Thou hast charged that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments: and Thy commandments are holy, righteous, and good; but sin worketh Rom. 7, 12. 13. death to me by that which is good, unless Thy grace aid me. *O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes!*

3. Ver. 6. *So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.* We ought to look upon the commandments of God, whether when they are read, or when they are recalled to memory, as a looking James 1, 23—25. glass, as the Apostle James saith, *If any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man*

*he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.* VER.  
7. 8.  
This man wisheth himself to be such, that he may regard as in a looking glass the commandments of God, and may not be confounded; because he chooses not merely to be a hearer of them, but a doer. On this account he desireth that his ways may be made direct to keep the statutes of God. How to be made direct, save by the grace of God? Otherwise he will find in the law of God not a source of rejoicing, but of confusion, if he hath chosen to look into commandments, which he doth not.

4. Ver. 7. *I will confess unto Thee, he saith, O Lord, in the directing of my heart; in that I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.* This is not the confession of sins, but of praise; as He also saith in Whom there was no sin, *I will confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth;* and as it is written in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, *Thus shalt thou say in confession, of all the works of God, that they are very good. I will confess unto Thee, he saith, in the directing of my heart.* Mat. 11,  
25.  
Eccles.  
39, 20.  
21. Indeed, if my ways are made straight, I will confess unto Thee, since Thou hast done it, and this is Thy praise, and not mine. Then indeed *I will confess, when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness,* if I shall have a heart made straight, when my ways are made straight so that I may keep Thy statutes. For what will it profit me, if I shall have learnt them, if I in my wicked heart go away to evil ways? For I shall not rejoice in them, but I shall be accused by them.

5. Ver. 8. Next he addeth; *I will keep Thy ordinances.* All which things are connected with those words, *O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. And I will confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart, and I will keep Thy ordinances.* But what is it that followeth? *O forsake me not even exceedingly!* or, as some copies have it, *even too much,* instead of, *even exceedingly.* For the same Greek word is here too, namely,  $\sigma\phi\delta\delta\gamma\alpha$ : as though he wished himself to be forsaken of God, but not *even exceedingly.* Far be it!

PSALM CXIX.  
 IV. But since God had left the world to the desert of sins, He would have forsaken it *even exceedingly*, if so powerful a cure had not supported it, that is, the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; but now, according to this prayer of the body of Christ, He forsook it not *even exceedingly*; for, 2 Cor. 5, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself*. It may also be understood, as the words of him, who when he had said in his abundance, *I shall never be removed*, as if relying in his own might, that God might shew him that He had given *power to his excellency* not from merits of his own, but of His will, found the face of God turned from him, and was troubled. Finding therefore what he was, and no longer presuming in himself, he crieth, *O forsake me not even exceedingly*. For if Thou hast forsaken me, so that I am seen to be weak without Thy help, forsake me not *even exceedingly*, lest I perish. *Thou, then, hast charged, that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments*: I can no longer excuse myself on the ground of ignorance; but since I am weak, *O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments*. Then will I confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart; when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness; then will I keep Thy ordinances; and if Thou hast forsaken me, lest I should glory in myself, do not forsake me *even exceedingly*, and when justified by Thee, I will glory in Thee.

LXX.  
 CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse V.*

BETH. 1. Ver. 9. Let us, most beloved, consider these verses in this Psalm, and, as the Lord giveth, let us search into His sacred Book: *Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? even by keeping Thy words*. He questioneth himself, and answereth himself. *Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way?* So far it is a question: next cometh

the answer, *even by keeping Thy words*. But in this place the keeping of the words of God, must be understood as the obeying His commandments in deed: for they are kept in memory in vain, if they are not kept in life also. For some men in keeping the words of God are concerned only to avoid forgetting them, and not to correct themselves in life: but this man saith not, wherewithal shall the young man exercise his memory? but, *wherewithal shall a young man correct his ways?* and replieth thereto, *By keeping Thy words*. Nor can the way ever be called straight, as long as the life shall be crooked.

2. But what is meant by *young man* here? For he might have said, wherewithal shall any one (homo) correct his way? or, wherewithal shall a man (vir) correct his way? which is usually put by the Scriptures in such a way, that the whole human race, understood by the more honoured sex, by a mode of expression whereiu the whole is signified by a part. For we cannot but suppose that a woman is blessed, who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly; where nevertheless the words are, *Blessed is the man*. But in this passage he saith neither any one, nor a man, but, *a young man*. Is then an old man to be despaired of? or doth an old man correct his way by any other means than by ruling himself after God's word? Or is it perhaps an admonition at what age we ought chiefly to correct our way; according to what is elsewhere written, *My son, gather instruction from thy youth up: so shalt thou find wisdom till thy gray hairs*. There is another mode of interpreting it, by recognising in the expression the younger son in the Gospel, who having departed from his father to a distant region, spent his substance in riotous living with harlots; and after he had fed swine, suffering poverty and hunger, at length returned to himself, and said, *I will arise and go to my father*. Wherewithal did he correct his way, save by ruling himself after the words of God, which he desired as one longing for his father's bread. For his elder brother, who returned to his father, said, *Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time Thy commandment, corrected not his way*. The younger son then corrected his way, which he confessed that he had so depraved and per-

PSALM CXIX. V. *verted, that he said to his father, I am no longer worthy to be called thy son.* A third interpretation occurreth to me, which I indeed, according to the slight measure of my knowledge, prefer to the two former: by which the elder is understood to mean the old man; the young man, to mean the new man; the elder, who beareth the image of the earthly man; the younger, who beareth that of the heavenly: because *that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.* However decrepit therefore any man may be from old age of body, he will be young in the sight of God when converted by the newness of grace, which he hath received; and herein he correcteth his way, by keeping God's words, *that is, the word of faith which we preach, and this is the faith which worketh through love.*

3. Ver. 10. But this younger people, the child of grace, the new man, who singeth the new song, the heir of the new covenant, this younger people, not Cain, but Abel; not Ishmael, but Isaac; not Esau, but Israel; not Manasses, but Ephraim; not Heli, but Samuel; not Saul, but David; hear what it addeth, *With my whole heart, he saith, have I sought thee; O repel me not from Thy commandments.* Behold, he prayeth that he may be aided to keep the words of God, wherewith he had said that the young man corrected his way. For this is the meaning of the words, *O repel me not from Thy commandments:* for what is it to be repelled of God, save not to be aided? For human infirmity is not equal to obeying His righteous and exalted commandments, unless His love doth prevent and aid. But those whom He aideth not, these He is justly said to repel, as the unworthy are repelled by a flaming sword from stretching forth their hand to the tree of life. But who is worthy, since *sin entered into the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus passed into all men, since all have sinned?* But our deserved misery is healed by the undeserved mercy of God. For how could he who saith, *With my whole heart have I sought Thee,* do this, unless He unto whom it is said, *Wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us,* turned him unto Himself when he was turned away, and unless He who saith, *I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which*

was driven away, sought him when lost, and recalled him VER. 11. 12. when wandering?

4. Ver. 11, 12. Hence it is too that he correcteth his path by keeping the words of God, from Him ruling, Him working; for he could not do it by himself, since the prophet Jeremiah confesseth and saith, *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* Jerem. 10, 23. For the Psalmist also desired this of the Lord above, where he saith, *O that my ways were made so direct:* and here where he addeth, (ver. 11.) *Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee;* he at once sought the Divine aid, lest the words of God might be hidden without fruit in his heart, unless works of righteousness followed. For after saying this, he added, *Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy righteousnesses. Teach me,* he saith, as they learn who do them; not as they who merely remember them, that they may have somewhat to speak of. For he had already said, *Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee:* why then doth he still seek to learn those things which he already keepeth hidden within his heart? which he surely would not have done, had he not learnt them. Why then doth he add, and say, *Teach me Thy righteousnesses,* save because he wisheth to learn them by deeds, not by speaking or retaining them in his memory? Since then, as it is read in another Psalm, *He shall give blessing, Who gave the law;* therefore, Ps. 84, 6. *Blessed art Thou, O Lord,* he saith, *O teach me Thy righteousness.* [the rain also, &c.] For because I have hidden Thy words in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee, Thou hast given a law; give also the blessing of Thy grace, that by doing right I may learn what Thou by teaching hast commanded. Let this suffice, so that your minds may be nourished without being wearied. What followeth calls for another discourse.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse VI.*

BETH. 1. Ver. 13. This verse, *With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth*, is the commencement of our discourse in the Psalm on which we are commenting. What is this, most beloved? What is this? Who can tell all the judgments of God, since he cannot trace them? Do Rom. 11, we hesitate to exclaim with the Apostle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!* The Lord saith, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* And though He promised them at once *all truth* through the Holy Ghost; yet 1 Cor. 13, 9, 12. the blessed Paul crieth out, *we know in part*: so that we may understand that we are led unto all truth by the Holy Ghost, whence we have received a pledge: but we shall only know Him, when we have reached another life, after the looking glass and darkness of this life, and when we shall *see face to face*. How then doth he say, *With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth?* And it is he who saith this, who in a former verse a little ver. 12. before had said, *Teach me Thy righteousnesses*. How then could he, who still wisheth to learn His righteousness, tell of all the judgments of His mouth? Did he already know all His judgments, and did he yet long to know His righteousness? But this is still more wonderful, if he already knew the unsearchable things of God, and yet knew not what He enjoined upon men to do. For by His righteousness is meant not the words, but the deeds, of justice; the works, that is, of the righteous, which God commandeth. They are said to be God's deeds, although they are done by us, because they are not done, save by His gifts. Those also are God's judgments, whereby the world is judged by Him both now and at the end of the world. But since all, that is, both the righteousnesses and the judgments of God

are comprised in His works; why doth he who saith that VER. 13. he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, still seek to learn His righteousnesses? For he saith, *Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I should not sin against Thee*: and then goeth on to say, *Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy righteousnesses*; and next, *With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth*. These two things indeed do not seem opposed to each other, but rather kindred and connected; viz. that since he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, he may tell with his lips of His judgments; for, *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*: but how what is read between these two verses, *Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy righteousnesses*, suiteth a man in whose heart are the words of God, and who told with his lips all the judgments of God: how it agreeth with this, that he still wisheth to learn the righteousnesses of God, save that he may be understood to wish to learn them by acts, not by retaining them in his memory, and speaking of them; and he hath shewn that we ought to seek this of the Lord, without Whom we can do nothing. But this we have already treated of in another discourse: but we have undertaken, as far as the Lord alloweth, to treat the question, in what sense he hath said that he hath told all the judgments of God with his lips, though they have been styled unsearchable, and though it is elsewhere said of their depth, *Thy judgments are like the great deep*. Ps. 36, 6.

2. Consider now, what we ought to understand here. Doth not the Church know the judgments of God? Surely she knoweth them. For she knoweth unto what sort of persons the Judge of the quick and the dead will say, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom*: and unto what sort of persons He shall say, *Depart into everlasting fire*. She knoweth, I say, that *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor such and such whom the Apostle Paul here* 1 Cor. 6, 9, 10. *enumerateth, shall inherit the kingdom of God*: she knoweth Rom. 2, 9, 10. that *wrath and indignation, tribulation and distress, are in store for the soul of every man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to*

PSALM *the Gentile.* These and the like clearly revealed judgments  
 CXIX. of God the Church knoweth: but these are not all; since  
 VI. some are unsearchable, and, *like the great deep*, profound  
 and hidden. And are these also known to some of the more  
 excellent members of this man, who with the Saviour, the  
 Head, is the whole Christ? For they are perhaps said to be  
 unsearchable to man, because by his own strength he cannot  
 investigate them. But why can he not by the gift of the  
 Holy Spirit, he, that is, upon whom the Lord deigneth to  
 confer this gift? For thus it is said, *God dwelleth in the light*  
 1 Tim. *which no man can approach unto;* and yet we hear, *Come*  
 6, 16. *unto Him, and be enlightened.* This question is thus  
 Ps. 34, 5. answered, He is unapproachable to our strength, but we  
 may approach Him through His own gifts. Nevertheless,  
 Wisd. 9, although it is given to none of the Saints, as long as *the*  
 15. *corruptible body weigheth down the soul*, to know all the  
 judgments of God, since it is too much for man, because (to  
 give an illustration whereby the infinitude of God's judg-  
 ments may be conjectured) no man without the judgment of  
 God is slow in mind, or halt in body: yet the Church, that  
 is the purchased people, hath ground for saying, and truly  
 saying, *with my lips have I been telling of all the judg-*  
*ments of Thy mouth;* that is, I have kept silent nothing of  
 Thy judgments, which Thou didst will should become known  
 to me through Thy words, but I have been telling of all of  
 them without exception with my lips. This he seemeth to  
 me to signify, since he saith not, all Thy judgments, but, *all*  
*the judgments of Thy mouth;* that is, which Thou hast  
 revealed unto me: that by His mouth we may understand  
 His word, which He hath discovered unto us in many  
 revelations of the Saints, and in the two Testaments; all  
 which judgments the Church ceaseth not to declare at all  
 times with her lips.

3. Ver. 14. He then subjoineth, *I have had as great*  
*delight in the way of Thy testimonies, as in all manner of*  
*riches.* We understand that there is no more speedy, no  
 more sure, no shorter, no higher way of the testimonies of  
 Coloss. God than Christ, *in Whom are hid all the treasures of*  
 2, 3. *wisdom and knowledge.* Thence he saith that he hath had  
 as great delight in this way, as in all riches. Those are the

testimonies, by which He deigneth to prove unto us how <sup>VER.</sup> much He loveth us. But *God commendeth His love in us,* <sup>15. 16.</sup> *since while we yet were sinners, Christ died for us.* <sup>Rom. 5,</sup> Since <sup>8. 9.</sup> therefore He Himself saith, *I am the way,* and the humility <sup>John 14,</sup> of His carnal Birth and Passion are evident testimonies of <sup>6.</sup> the divine love towards us; beyond doubt Christ is the way of the testimonies of God. For through these testimonies, which we see fulfilled in Him, we expect and trust that the everlasting promises of the future will be fulfilled. *For He* <sup>Rom. 8,</sup> *Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for* <sup>32.</sup> *us all, how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things?*

4. Ver. 15, 16. *I will talk of Thy commandments, and have respect unto Thy ways.* The Greek word is, ἀδολεσχίσω, which the Latin translators have rendered sometimes by *talking*, sometimes by *being exercised in*: and these seem different from one another: but if the exercise of the understanding be understood, with a certain delight in uttering, they are connected with one another, and one thing, in a manner, is made up of both, so that talking is not foreign to this sort of exercise. And thus the Church doth exercise herself in the commandments of God, by speaking in the copious disputations of the learned against all the enemies of the Christian and Catholic faith; which are fruitful to those who compose them, if nothing but the ways of the Lord is regarded in them; but *All the ways of the Lord are,* as it is written, *mercy and truth;* the fulness of <sup>Ps. 26, 9.</sup> which both is found in Christ. Through this sweet exercise is gained also what he subjoineth: *My meditation shall be in Thy statutes, and I will not forget Thy word.*—*My meditation* shall be therein, that I may not forget them. Thus the blessed man in the first Psalm *shall meditate in* <sup>Ps. 25,</sup> *the law of the Lord day and night.* <sup>10.</sup>

5. In all that I have above said, as I could, let us remember, most beloved, that he who hideth in his heart the words of the Lord, and telleth with his lips all the judgments of His mouth, and in the way of His testimonies taketh as much delight as in all manner of riches, and talking or exercising himself in His commandments, bath respect unto His ways, and doth meditate on His statutes,

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VI. that he may not forget His words, through all which things he appeareth armed with the law and learning of God; yet prayeth and saith, *Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy statutes.* Where he is understood to ask nothing else, save the aid of grace, that he may learn in deeds what he already knoweth in words.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

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*Discourse VII.*

(JIMET.) 1. Ver. 17. If, most beloved, ye remember the former parts of this Psalm, they ought to help us to understand what followeth. For those which seemingly speak in the person of an individual, are the members of Christ, and pertain to one Head as one body. He had said above, *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? Even by keeping Thy words.* Behold he now more openly asketh aid that he may do this: *Reward, he saith, Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word.* If he asked that good might be rewarded him for good deeds, he had already kept God's words. But he said not, *Reward Thy servant, because I have kept Thy words: as if he were demanding a recompense of good for the good of obedience: but he said, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word.* And what is this, but to declare the dead incapable of keeping God's words? that is, the unbelieving of whom it is said, *Suffer the dead to bury their dead.* If therefore we understand the unbelieving by the dead, and believers by the living: since *the righteous liveth by faith, and the word of God cannot be kept without faith, which worketh by love; it is this that he asketh who saith, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word.* And since before faith nought save evil for evil is due unto man, and as God, through grace which is not due, rewardeth good for evil; it is this reward that he asketh, who saith, *Reward Thy*

Matt. 8,  
23.

Rom. 1,  
17.  
Gal. 5,  
6.

*servant: let me live, and keep Thy word.* For there are VER. 16. 17. four modes of reward: either evil for evil, as God will reward everlasting fire to the unrighteous: or good for good, as He will reward an everlasting kingdom to the righteous: or good for evil, as Christ by grace justifieth the ungodly; or evil for good, as Judas and the Jews through their wickedness persecuted Christ. Of these four modes of reward, the first two belong to justice, whereby evil is rewarded for evil, good for good; the third to mercy, whereby good is rewarded for evil: the fourth God knoweth not; for to none doth He reward evil for good. But that which I have placed third in order, is in the first instance necessary: for unless God rewarded good for evil, there would be none to whom He could reward good for good.

2. Consider that Saul, afterwards Paul: *Not by works of righteousness, he saith, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration.* And again: *I who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* And again: *Yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful: that is, to live; for the righteous liveth by faith.* He was therefore dead formerly owing to his own unrighteousness, before he lived through the grace of God. Moreover he thus confesseth his own death: *When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.* God therefore rewardeth unto him good for evil, that is, life for death; such a reward, in fact, as is here asked for, where it is said, *Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word.* He both lived, and kept His word, and began to belong to another reward, wherein good is rewarded for good: on account of which he saith, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.* Righteous truly, in rewarding good for good: for He was merciful in the former case, in rewarding good for evil. Although justice itself, whereby good things are rewarded for good, is not separate from

338 *Those who pray for faith and obedience have a beginning.*

PSALM mercy: for thus it is written, *Who crowneth thee with com-*  
CXIX. *passion and mercy.* For he who said, *I have fought a good*  
VII. *fight*, how could he conquer, save by the gift of Him of  
Ps. 103, *Whom he saith, Thanks be to God, which giveth us the*  
4. *victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* And he who  
1 Cor. 15, 57. *finished his course*, how could he run, how could he reach  
Rom. 9, the goal, save by the aid of Him of Whom he saith, *It is*  
16. *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God*  
*that sheweth mercy.* And he who *kept the faith*, how could  
1 Cor. 7, he do this, unless, as he himself saith, he had *obtained mercy*  
2. *that he might be faithful.*

3. No where then let human pride raise itself up: God giveth good rewards unto His own gifts. But this man who now prayeth, saying, *Reward Thy servant: let me live*; if he were entirely dead, would not pray: but from Him he received the beginning of a good desire, from Whom he  
Lukel7, asketh the life of obedience. For they who said, *Lord,*  
5. *increase our faith*, had some faith. But he who, when he  
Mark 9, was questioned whether he believed, said, *I believe, Lord,*  
24. *help Thou mine unbelief*: confessed his own want of faith, and yet did not deny his faith. He then, who when he believeth prayeth for obedience, now beginning to live prayeth for life: not for a reward for having preserved it, but for help that it may be preserved. For he who is  
2 Cor. 4, renewed day by day, is quickened with increasing life every  
16. day.

4. Ver. 18. But, knowing that the words of God cannot be kept through obedience, unless they be seen by understanding, this also he addeth to his prayer, and saith, *Open Thou mine eyes, and I will consider wondrous things of Thy law.* What he addeth, (ver. 19.) *I am a lodger upon earth*: or, as some copies read, *I am a sojourner upon earth, O hide not Thy commandments from me*, hath the same meaning; for what he said before, in, *open Thou mine eyes*; the same he said afterwards, in, *hide not from me*: Also what he said there, in, *wonderful things of Thy law*, the same he repeats in other words, *Thy commandments.* But there is nothing more wonderful in the commandments  
Matt. 5, of God, than, *Love your enemies*; that is, reward good for  
4. evil. But my discourse respecting this pilgrimage must not

*Those who have a heavenly Country, strangers on earth.* 339

be narrowed: and therefore we must not now treat of the <sup>VER</sup> subject, but hope to do so in another discourse, which we <sup>14.</sup> shall deliver to you with the Lord's help.

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*Discourse VIII.*

1. Ver. 19. I MUST now answer your expectations, beloved <sup>GIMEL.</sup> brethren, by discoursing on the sequel of this long Psalm, beginning with the verse, *I am a sojourner upon earth; O hide not Thy commandments from me!* or, as some copies read, *I am a lodger upon earth.* For the Greek word *πάροικος* is variously rendered by our translators, *incola*, *inquilinus*, or *advena*. Lodgers (*inquilini*) who have no house of their own, dwell in another man's; but sojourners (*incolæ*), or strangers (*advenæ*), are spoken of as foreigners (*adventitii*). Here an important question ariseth respecting the soul. For the words, *I am a sojourner, or lodger, or stranger upon earth*, cannot seem to have been said in reference to the body, since the body derives its origin from the earth. But in this most profound question I dare not define any thing. For if it might justly have been said in respect of the soul, (which God forbid we should suppose derived from the earth,) *I am a lodger, or stranger upon earth;* or in reference to the whole man, since he was at one time an inhabitant of Paradise, where he who spake these words was not; or, what is more free from all controversy, if it be not every man who could say this, but one to whom an everlasting country hath been promised in heaven: this I know, *that the life of man on earth is a temptation;* and that *Job 7, 1. there is a heavy yoke upon the sons of Adam.* But it <sup>Eccles.</sup> pleaseth me more to discuss the question in accordance with <sup>40, 1.</sup> this construction, that we say we are tenants or strangers upon earth, because we have found our country above, whence we have received a pledge, and where when we have arrived we shall never depart. For he also who in another

- PSALM C XIX. VIII. Psalm saith, *I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were*; saith not, as all men: but by Ps. 39, 12. saying, as all my fathers, beyond doubt intends the righteous to be understood, who preceded him in time, and in this pilgrimage sighed with pious groans for their country above.
- Heb. 11, 13—16. Concerning whom it is written to the Hebrews, *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.* And these 2 Cor. 5, 6. words, *Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*, may be understood here not to refer to all 2 Thess. 3, 2. men, but to the believing: *for all men have not faith*: and we see what the Apostle addeth to these words; for, after 2 Cor. 5, 6, 7. saying, *As long as we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord*; he saith, *for we walk by faith, not by sight*: that we might understand that this pilgrimage belongs to those, who walk by faith. But the unbelieving, Rom. 8, 29. whom God hath not foreknown, or *predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son*, cannot truly call themselves strangers upon earth, since they are there where they were born after the flesh: for they have not a city elsewhere; and for this reason they are not aliens on the earth, but natives of the earth. Whence another passage of Scripture saith of Prov. 2, 18. LX X. some one, *He hath made his home with death, and his chariot he hath set in hell with the earth-born.* But these very persons are aliens and sojourners, not in respect of this earth, but of the people of God, from which they are estranged. Whence the Apostle saith to them that believe, and are beginning to possess a holy city, which is not of Eph. 2, 19. this world: *Now therefore ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.* These then are citizens of the earth, who are strangers to the people of God; while they who

*How God's Commandments are hidden, though proclaimed.* 341

are citizens in the people of God, are strangers upon earth; because the whole of the same people, as long as it is in the body, is sojourning away from the Lord. Let it therefore say, *I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me.* VER.  
19.

2. But who are they from whom God hideth His commandments? Hath not God willed that they be every where preached? Would that they were dear to many, as they are clear to many! For what is clearer than this, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;* and, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour even as thyself?* Mat.22,  
37—40. On which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. And who is he from whom these commandments are hid? For they are known to all believers, and to many unbelievers. Why then doth the believer pray, that that may not be hidden from him which he seeth not to be hidden even from the unbeliever? Because it is difficult to know God, doth it follow then that it must be difficult to understand the words, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, lest one thing be loved in place of another? For it seemeth easier to know one's neighbour. For every man is every man's neighbour, nor is any distance of race to be thought of, where there is a common nature. Although he who said to the Lord, *And who is my neighbour?* Luke10,  
29. knew not even his neighbour. A certain man was then set before him, who while going from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: whose neighbour the very person who had asked judged no man to have been, save him who shewed him pity; and it was clearly shewn, that in doing an act of mercy, none should be held a stranger by him who loveth his neighbour. But many know not even themselves; because to know one's self, as a man ought to know himself, is not all men's lot. How then can he, who knoweth not himself, love his neighbour as himself? It was not, then, without reason that the younger son, who departed into a far country, and there squandered his substance by riotous living, in order that he might say, *I will arise and go to my father, first came to himself,* Luke15,  
13—18. but because he had wandered so far, that he had lost even himself. Yet he could not return to himself, if he were utterly ignorant of

PSALM  
CXIX.  
VIII. himself; nor could he say, *I will arise, and go to my father,* if he were utterly ignorant of God. Wherefore to some extent these things are known, and are not undeservedly the subject of petitions that they may be even better known. Wherefore in order that we may know how to love God, God must be known; and that a man may know how to love his neighbour as himself, he first ought through loving God to love himself: and how can he do this, if he knoweth not God, if he knoweth not even himself? Rightly then is it said unto God, *I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me!* For justly they are hidden unto those who are not strangers upon earth: for although they hear these commandments, they savour not of them; because they savour of earthly things. But those whose conversation is in heaven, as far as they converse here, are in truth strangers. Let them pray therefore that the commandments of God may not be hidden from them, whereby they may be freed from this temporary sojourn, by loving God, with Whom they will be for evermore; and by loving their neighbour, that he may be there where they also themselves will be.

Philipp.  
3, 19, 20.

3. Ver. 20. But what is loved by loving, if love itself be not loved? Whence by consequence that stranger upon earth, after praying that the commandments of God might not be hidden from him, wherein love is enjoined either solely or principally; declareth that he desireth to have a love for love itself, saying, *My soul hath coveted to have a desire always after Thy judgments.* This coveting is worthy of praise, not of condemnation. It is not of this that it is said, *Thou shalt not covet;* but of that whereby *the flesh lusteth against the spirit.* But seek where it is written of this good coveting whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and thou wilt find, *Therefore the coveting of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom;* and many other testimonies are found of a good coveting. But there is this difference, that the object of the coveting is mentioned when a good coveting is spoken of: but when the object of the coveting is not subjoined, but the coveting alone mentioned, none but an evil passion is meant. As in the passage just quoted, if he had not added the word wisdom, he could not say, Coveting

Exod.  
20, 17,  
Gal. 5,  
17.  
Wisd. 6,  
20.

bringeth to a kingdom. But the Apostle, in the words, *I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet*: added not the object of the lust, or what thou art not to covet; for it is certain that by this expression none save an evil coveting is understood. What then did this man's soul covet? *to have a desire*, he saith, *after Thy judgments alway*. I conclude he did not desire them as yet, when he coveted to desire them. But by judgments are meant righteous deeds, that is, works of righteousness. Since then he who already desireth them, hath them not as yet, how far from them was he who as yet coveted to desire them? and how much farther are they who do not even covet to desire them?

4. But it is wonderful how a desire can be coveted without that desire being in us, the coveting of which is in us. For it is not some beautiful substance, as gold, or a beautiful person, which a man may long for without having, because it is situate without, not in the man. Who knoweth not that coveting is, and that desire is, in a man? Why then is its possession coveted after, as though it were brought in from without? Or how can the coveting of it be felt without itself, since it is even itself nothing but a coveting? For to desire is beyond doubt to covet. What is this wonderful and inexplicable infirmity? Yet it doth exist. For the sick man who laboureth from loathing of food, and wisheth to escape this evil, coveteth to have a desire for food, while he coveteth not to have loathing; but this loathing is a disease of the body. Whereas that longing whereby he longeth to desire food, that is, to be free from his loathing, is in the mind, not in the body; and it is not the delight of the gullet and the palate that inspires it, for that is impeded by the loss of appetite: but the hope of recovering health, whereby it is foreseen that the loathing will be remedied. And in this case we need not wonder if the mind desire that the body may desire, since the mind desires here, without the body desiring. But when both acts belong to the mind, and when both are acts of coveting, why do I covet a desire of the judgments of God? How is it that in one and the same mind of mine I have the coveting of this desire, and have not the desire itself? or how is it that there are two acts

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VIII.

and not one? How is it that I long to desire these judgments, and that I do not rather covet the judgments themselves than the desire of them? or how can I covet a desire of these judgments, and yet not covet the judgments themselves; since I long for the desire of them, for this reason, that I desire to have them themselves? And if this be so, I already long for them. What need then that I should covet the desire of them, since I already have, and am aware that I have it? For I could not covet the desire of righteousness, save coveting righteousness? Is this what I said above, that the love itself whereby that is loved, which is a right object of love, should be loved? For we detest that coveting of ours whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit; and what is this coveting, save an evil love? And we love that coveting of ours, whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and what is that coveting, save a righteous love? And when it is said, it must be loved; what else is said than this, it should be coveted? Wherefore, since the judgments of God are rightly coveted, the coveting of the judgments of God is rightly longed for. For this may be otherwise expressed; if the judgments of God are rightly loved, the love of the judgments of God is rightly loved. Is it one thing to covet, another to desire? Not that coveting is not desire, but because not all coveting is desire<sup>1</sup>. For both things which are possessed, and things which are not possessed, are coveted; for by coveting them, a man enjoyeth the things that he hath; but by desiring them, he coveteth things absent. What then is desire, save the coveting things absent? But how can the judgments of God be absent, save when they are not known? And when they are known, and are not practised, are they to be regarded as absent? For what are judgments, save righteous deeds, not words? And for this reason they may through the weakness of the soul not be desired; and the desire of them may be coveted by the reason in the mind, when it is apparent how profitable and salutary they are. For we often see what ought to be done, and yet do it not; because it delighteth us not to do it, and we desire it may delight us. The intellect flieth in advance; and the weak affection of men followeth slowly, and sometimes followeth

<sup>1</sup> Desiderium

not at all. For this reason therefore he coveted to desire those things which he saw to be goods, wishing to take delight in those things the reason of which he could discern. VER.  
20.

5. But he saith not, *coveteth*, only; but, *My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments*. For perhaps this stranger upon earth was one who had already arrived at what he coveted, and was now desiring those judgments, the desire of which, he saith, he had at one time coveted. But if he already desired them, why had he not them? For there is no obstacle to possessing the judgments of God, save that they are not desired, while love hath no warmth toward winning them, though their light is so clear and shining. Did he possess them, and did he practise them? For a little after he saith; *For Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes*. But by what steps, so to speak, they are arrived at, he sheweth. For the first is, that it may appear how useful and honourable they are; next, that the desire of them be coveted; lastly, that with the increase of light and health the practice of those judgments may please, only the notion of which pleased before. But what followeth shall, with the Lord's help, be discussed in another discourse with more convenience, since this is already of considerable length. VER. 23.

## PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.*Discourse IX.*

1. Ver. 21. THE parts of this Psalm which remain to be treated of, warn us to remember the cause of our misery. For after he had said, *My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments, in all time*; that is, whether in prosperity or adversity, because righteousness ought to delight us both in toil and in sufferings, nor ought to be loved in peaceful times in such a sense as that it may be forsaken in stormy times, but it should be embraced in all time: he instantly added, (ver. 21.) *Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments*. For the GIMEL.  
VER. 20.

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IX.

proud err from the commandments of God. For it is one thing not to fulfil the commandments of God through infirmity or ignorance; another to err from them through pride; as they have done, who have begotten us in our mortal state unto these evils. For the words, *Ye shall be as gods*, pleased them; and thus through this pride they erred from the commandment of God, which they knew that He had enjoined upon them, and which they might have fulfilled with the greatest ease, without any weakness recalling, impeding, retarding them. And behold, the whole of this hard and unhappy anxiety of mortals, is in some respect an hereditary rebuke of the proud. For when God said, *Adam, where art thou?* He was not ignorant where he was, but He rebuked his pride. Where he then was, that is, what misery he had come to, He desired not to know, but in the question He admonishes him, and with rebuke. But consider now, after saying, *Thou hast rebuked the proud*, he saith not, *Cursed are they that have erred from Thy commandments*; so that only that sin of the first men should come into the mind; but he saith, *Cursed are they that do err*. For it was needful that all might be terrified by that example, that they might not err from the divine commandments, and by loving righteousness in all time, recover in the toil of this world, what we lost in the pleasure of Paradise.

2. Ver. 22. But since the proud even after such a rebuke lower not their necks, and when they are cast down by the punishment of toil and death, are yet exalted by the puffing up of pride, imitating the exaltation of the falling, mocking the humility of the rising; the body of Christ prayeth for them, saying, *O turn from me shame and rebuke; for I have sought out Thy testimonies*. Testimonies are called in Greek *μαρτύρια*, which word we now use for the Latin word: whence those who on account of their testimony to Christ have been brought low by various sufferings, and have contended unto death for the truth, are not called 'testes,' but by the Greek term Martyrs<sup>1</sup>. Since then ye hear in this term one more familiar and grateful, let us take these words as if it were said, *O turn from me shame and rebuke; because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms*. When the body of

<sup>1</sup> either word means 'witnesses.'

Christ speaketh thus, doth it consider it any punishment to hear rebuke and shame from the ungodly and the proud, since it rather reacheth the crown by this means? Why then doth it pray that it should be removed from it as something heavy and insupportable, save because, as I said, it prayeth for its very enemies, to whom it seeth it is destructive, to cast the holy name of Christ as a reproach to Christians, and, through the abiding and increase of the same pride, to despise that Cross which was mocked at by the Jews, and the whole medicine of Christian humility, whereby alone that pride is healed, which puffed us up to our fall, and yet worse puffed us up when fallen? Let therefore the body of Christ say; for it hath already begun to love its enemies; let it say to the Lord its God, *O take* <sup>V E R. 22.</sup> *Thou away from me shame and rebuke, because I have* <sup>Matt. 5, 44.</sup> *sought out Thy martyrdoms: that is, the rebuke which I hear, and the shame whereby I am despised, because I have sought out Thy testimonies—take them away from me. For my enemies, whom Thou enjoimest to be loved by me, who more and more die and are lost, when they despise Thy martyrdoms and accuse them in me, will indeed be recalled to life and be found, if they reverence Thy martyrdoms in me. Thus it hath happened: this we see. Behold, martyrdom in the name of Christ, both with men and in this world, is not only not a disgrace, but a great ornament: behold, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men, *precious is the death of His Saints*; behold, <sup>Ps. 116, 15.</sup> His martyrs are not only not despised, but honoured with great distinctions. Behold that younger son, who in place of the swine which he fed, that is, of the unclean devils he worshipped, once persecuted the part of him that went before in the few Christians, now most religiously proclaiming among many great Gentile nations those Martyrs, upon whom formerly he heaped rebukes, and exalting with the highest praises those whom he despised, had died and returned to life, had been lost and was found. In this so great gain of the chastening, the conversion, and redemption of their enemies, <sup>Luke 15, 12—24.</sup> the body of Christ said unto God, *O turn from me shame and rebuke: and as if it were asked, Shame in what, rebuke**

PSALM from what? he subjoins, *Because I have sought out Thy*  
 CXIX. *testimonies.*  
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3. Ver. 23, 24. Where is now that rebuke? where now that shame? They have departed and have passed away; and because they who had been lost have been found, they have been lost sight of. But while the Church prayed for such a result, she was suffering that shame and rebuke. For, (ver. 23.) *Princes did sit and speak against me*, he saith. Thence arose heavy persecution, because princes sitting, that is, raised on their judicial seats, decreed it. Apply this to the Head Himself: thou wilt find that the  
 Mat. 26, 3. 4. princes of the Jews sat, taking counsel how they might slay Christ. Apply this to His Body, that is, the Church; thou wilt find that the kings of the earth considered and gave commands by what means the Christians might cease to exist. For *princes also did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant is exercised in Thy statutes*. Thou who desirest to know what sort of exercise this was, understand what he hath added, *For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors*. Remember what I have above instructed you, that testimonies are acts of martyrdom. Remember that among the statutes of the  
 Matt. 5, 44. Lord there is none more difficult and more worthy of admiration, than that every man should love his enemies. Thus then the body of Christ was exercised, so that it meditated on the acts of martyrdom that testified of Him, and loved those from whom, while they rebuked and despised the Church for these very martyrdoms, she suffered persecutions. For it was not for herself, as I have already said, but for them rather that she prayed thus, *O take Thou from me shame and rebuke*. *Princes, therefore, did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant was exercised in Thy statutes*. In what manner? *For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors*. Counsel against counsel: the counsel of princes sitting on their judgment-seats was to destroy the Martyrs whom they found: the counsel of the suffering Martyrs was to recover their lost enemies. The former then were returning evil for good: the latter, good for evil. What wonder then if the former

failed in slaying them; the latter conquered by dying? VER. 24.  
What wonder, I ask, is it if the Martyrs, when the heathen raged, most patiently bore a temporal death, and the heathen at the prayer of the Martyrs could arrive at everlasting life; while the body of Christ is exercised in such a way that it doth meditate martyrdoms, and pray for blessings upon the wicked persecutors of the Martyrs?

PSALM CXIX.

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*Discourse X.*

1. Ver. 25. THESE words follow in this great Psalm, which DALETH it is our duty to consider, and to expound throughout, in so far as the Lord shall grant us. *My soul cleaveth to the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word.* What meaneth, *My soul cleaveth to the pavement?* For when he addeth, *O quicken Thou me according to Thy word,* he hath before stated the reason why he prayeth that he may be quickened, in these words, *My soul cleaveth to the pavement.* Since then he prayeth to be quickened, because his soul cleaveth to the pavement, it is wonderful if he wisheth any thing good to be understood by this. The whole sentence is as if he should say, I am dead: O quicken Thou me. What then meaneth the pavement? If we look upon the whole world as one great house, we see that the heavens represent its vaulting, the earth therefore will be its pavement. He wisheth therefore to be rescued from earthly things, and to say with the Apostle, *Our conversation is in heaven.* To cling therefore to earthly things is the soul's death; the contrary of which evil, life is prayed for, when he saith, *O quicken Thou me.* Philipp. 3, 20.

2. But we must see whether these words suit that man who had before spoken things which implied that he had clung rather to God than to the dust of the pavement, so that his conversation was held not in earthly things, but in heavenly. For how could he be understood to have clung to earthly things, who saith, *But Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes; for Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors?* For such are his fore-

350 *We desire to be freed, not by death, but by the Spirit.*

**PSALM** going words of which these are the sequel, *My soul cleaveth*  
**CXIX.** *to the pavement.* Ought we to understand from this, that  
**X.** however much any man may advance in the statutes of God,  
 he yet hath the affection of mortal flesh towards those  
**Job 7, 1.** earthly things, wherein *the life of man upon the earth is a*  
*temptation*, and if he perseveringly recovereth himself from  
 this death, that he every day returns to life, by the quicken-  
**2 Cor.** ing Spirit of Him, by Whose grace *our inner man is renewed*  
**4, 16.** *day by day?* For when the Apostle was saying these words,  
**ib. 5, 6.** *Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the*  
**Philipp.** *Lord, and desired to depart and to be with Christ;* his soul  
**1, 23.** had clung to the pavement. Whence the body itself also,  
 because it is of the earth, is reasonably understood by the  
**Wisd.** word pavement; since, because it is still corruptible and  
**9, 15.** weigheth down the soul, we justly groan while in it, and  
 say unto God, *My soul cleaveth to the dust of the pavement:*  
*O quicken Thou me according to Thy word.* For we shall  
**1 Thess.** not be without our bodies when we shall be for evermore  
**4, 17.** with the Lord; but then, because they will not be cor-  
 ruptible, nor will they weigh down our souls, if we view it  
 strictly, we shall not cleave unto them, but they rather unto  
 us, and we unto God. Wherefore these are the words of  
**Ps. 73,** another Psalm, *But it is good for me to hold me fast by*  
**28.** *God:* so that our bodies will live from us, by cleaving unto  
 us; but we draw our life from God: because it is good for  
 us to hold fast by God. For the expressioun, *My soul*  
*cleaveth to the pavement,* doth not seem to me to signify the  
 union of the flesh and the soul, although some have under-  
 stood this also; but rather the carnal affection of the soul,  
**Gal. 5,** whereby *the flesh lusteth against the spirit.* And if this be  
**17.** a right interpretation, he certainly who saith, *My soul*  
*cleaveth to the dust of the pavement:* *O quicken Thou me*  
*according to Thy word,* prayeth not that he may be released  
 from the body of this death, by the intervention of the death  
 of this body; which the last day of this life, which on  
 account of its brevity cannot last long, will at some time  
 bring about; but that the lust whereby we lust against the  
 Spirit, may be more and more diminished, and that the lust  
 whereby we lust against the flesh may more and more  
 increase, until this is brought to an end within us, and that

the lust of the spirit against the flesh is perfected through the Holy Spirit which is given us. VER.  
26—28.

3. Ver. 26. He justly saith not, *O quicken Thou me according to my merit*, but, *according to Thy word*: and what else is this, save according to Thy promise? He wisheth to be the son of promise, not the son of pride; so that the promise may be firm to all the seed according to grace. For *this is the word of promise: In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.* For what he was by himself, he confesseth in the following words: *I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me.* Some copies indeed read, *Thy ways*: but more, and the best Greek, read *my ways*, that is, evil ways. For he seemeth to me to say this; I have confessed my sins, and Thou hast heard me; that is, so that Thou wouldest remit them. *O teach me Thy statutes.* I have acknowledged my ways: Thou hast blotted them out: teach me Thine. So teach me, that I may act; not merely that I may know how I ought to act. For as it is said of the Lord, that He knew not sin, and it is understood, that He did no sin; so also he ought truly to be said to know righteousness, who doeth it. This is the prayer of one who is improving. For if indeed he utterly neglected acts of righteousness, he would not say those words above, *But Thy servant was occupied in Thy statutes.* He doth not then wish to learn from the Lord those wherein he was occupied; but he desireth to arrive from these at others, by edification, as it were by growth. Rom. 9,  
7, 8.  
2 Cor. 5,  
21.

4. Ver. 27, 28. Finally he addeth, *Intimate to me the way of Thy righteousnesses*; or, as some copies have it, *instruct me*; which is expressed more closely from the Greek, *Make me to understand the way of Thy righteousnesses*; so shall I be exercised in Thy wondrous things. These higher commandments, which he desireth to understand by edification, he calleth the wondrous things of God. There are then some righteousnesses of God so wondrous, that human weakness may be believed incapable of fulfilling them by those who have not tried. Whence the Psalmist, struggling and wearied with the difficulty of obeying them,

**PSALM CXIX. X.** saith, *My soul hath slumbered for very heaviness: O stablish Thou me with Thy word!* What meaneth, hath slumbered? save that he hath cooled in the hope which he had entertained of being able to reach them. But, he addeth, *Stablish Thou me with Thy word:* that I may not by slumbering, fall away from those duties which I feel that I have already attained: stablish Thou me therefore in those words of Thine that I already hold, that I may be able to reach unto others through edification.

5. Ver. 29. And what hindereth to walk in the commandments of God in such a manner, that a man may easily arrive at those wonderful things? What, do we suppose, save that which he prayeth in the next words may be removed from him: *Take Thou from me the way of iniquity?* And since the law of works hath entered in, that sin might abound; he addeth, *And pity me according to Thy law.* By what law, save by the law of faith? Hear the Apostle: Rom. 3, *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works. Nay: but by the law of faith.* This is the law of faith, whereby we believe and pray that it may be granted us through grace; that we may effect that which we cannot fulfil through ourselves; that we may not, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish our own, fail to submit ourselves unto the righteousness of God. In the law of works, therefore, is the righteousness of God Who commandeth; but in the law of faith, the mercy of Him Who aideth.

6. Ver. 30—32. But after he had said, *And pity me according to Thy law;* he mentioneth some of those blessings which he hath already obtained, that he may ask others that he hath not yet gained. For he saith, *I have chosen the way of truth: and Thy judgments I have not forgotten.* (Ver. 31.) *I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, confound me not—I have chosen the way of truth,* wherein to run: *Thy judgments I have not forgotten,* that I might run. *I have stuck unto Thy testimonies,* while I was running: *O Lord, confound me not:* may I persevere in striving toward the point whereunto I am running: may I arrive whither I am running! So then *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that*

*sheweth mercy.* He next saith, *I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart.* I could not run hadst Thou not widened my heart. The sense of the words, *I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgments I have not forgotten: I have stuck unto Thy testimonies,* is clearly explained in this verse. For this running is along the way of the commandments of God. And because he doth allege unto the Lord rather His blessings than his own deservings; as if it were said unto him, How hast thou run that way, by choosing, and by not forgetting the judgments of God, and by sticking to His testimonies? Coudest thou do these things by thyself? I could not, he replieth. What then? *I will run,* he saith, *the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart.* It is not therefore through my own will, as though it needed no aid of Thine; but because *Thou hast widened my heart.* The widening of the heart is the delight we take in righteousness. This is the gift of God, the effect of which is, that we are not straitened in His commandments through the fear of punishment, but widened through love, and the delight we have in righteousness. For He promiseth us His own breadth, when He saith, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* For how large is the place where the Lord walketh! in this breadth is *love shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us.* Whence also it is said, *and let rivers of waters be dispersed in thy streets;* for the word signifying streets in Latin (platea) is derived from the Greek πλατὺ, which meaneth, broad. These are the waters of which the Lord saith, *If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and, He shall flow rivers of living water:* and the Evangelist explaineth what He meant; *but this spake He of the Spirit, which they who believe on Him should receive.* Many things might be said of this breadth of heart, but ye already complain of the length of this discourse.

V E R.  
32.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

## PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XI.*

HE. 1. Ver. 93. In this great Psalm there cometh next in order that which, with the Lord's help, we must consider and treat of. *Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall seek it alway.* The Apostle saith, *The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient,* and the like characters, the mention whereof he concludeth with these words: *And if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.* Was he then who said, *Set a law for me, O Lord,* like in character to those for whom the blessed Paul declareth that the law was made? God forbid! For if he had been such, he would not have said above, *I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart.* Why then doth he pray that the law may be taught him by the Lord, if it be not taught the righteous? Is it given to the righteous not in the same sense as it was given to a stiffnecked people, on tables of stone, not in fleshly tables of the heart? according to the old covenant from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, not according to the new covenant, concerning which it is written through Jeremiah the Prophet, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they abode not in my covenant, and I forsook them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* Behold in what manner this man wisheth a law to be set him by the

Lord: not as it is laid down for the unholy and the disobedient, who belong to the old covenant, on tables of stone; but as it is given in the mind to the holy sons of the free, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem, the sons of promise, the sons of an everlasting heritage, by the Holy Spirit, as it were by the finger of God, and written in the heart: not one which they may hold in remembrance, and neglect in life; but which they may know by understanding, perform by loving, in the breadth of love, not in the narrowness of fear. For he who doth the work of the law through fear of punishment, not from love of righteousness, truly doth it against his will. But what he doth against his will, if it could be so, he would prefer should not be commanded at all: and thus he is not a friend, but a foe of the law, which he would wish should not exist; nor is he who is unclean in will, cleansed by his act. Such a man cannot say what this man said in the foregoing verses, *I did run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hadst widened my heart*: for that widening signifieth love, which according to the Apostle Rom. 13, 10.

2. Why then doth this man still pray for a law to be laid down for him; which, if it had not been laid down for him, he could not have run the way of God's commandments in the breadth of his heart? But since one speaketh who is growing in grace, and who knoweth that it is God's gift that he profiteth in grace; what else doth he pray, when he prayeth that a law may be laid down for him, save that he may profit more and more? As, if thou holdest a full cup, and givest it to a thirsty man; he both exhausts it by drinking it, and prayeth for it by still longing for it. But those unrighteous and disobedient men for whom the law is laid down on tablets of stone, are thereby made guilty of transgression, not the sons of promise. But he also who remembereth it, and yet loveth it not, is guilty in this way, because his memory is as it were a sort of written stone, not to adorn him, but to weigh him down; an onerous load, not a title of honour. This law he hath termed the way of the judgments of God; nor is the path of His commandments, which he had already stated he had run when his heart was expanded, different. He therefore both hath run and is

Psalm running, until he reach the palm of the heavenly calling of  
 C. XLIX.  
 XI. God. Lastly, after he had said, *Set a law for me, O Lord,  
 the way of Thy statutes*; he addeth, *and I shall seek it  
 evermore*. For why doth he seek for what he hath, save  
 because he both hath it by acting, and seeketh it by im-  
 proving?

3. But what meaneth, *Evermore*? Will there be no end  
 Ps. 34, 1. of seeking; as it is said, *His praise shall be ever in my  
 mouth*; because there will be no end of praising Him: for  
 we shall not cease to praise God, when we shall have reached

Ps. 44, 6. His everlasting kingdom, since we read, *Blessed are they  
 that dwell in Thy house: they will be always praising Thee?*  
 Doth *evermore* mean as long as we live here, because we  
 progress in grace so long; but after this life, he who was in a  
 good course of improvement here, is made perfect there?

2 Tim. Just as it is said of certain women, that they were *ever*  
 2, 7. *learning*: but these learnt ill, for he addeth, *and never able  
 to come to the knowledge of the truth*. But he who always  
 profiteth in growth unto edification here, arrives at the goal  
 which he striveth to attain by progress in grace, where he  
 will no longer progress, because he here resteth, made  
 perfect, without end. But the expression, *Ever learning* is  
 not used of those women to mean that even after death they  
 continue endeavouring to learn vain and fruitless things;  
 since everlasting punishments, not studies, succeed that  
 species of learning. Here therefore the law of God is  
 examined into, as long as we progress in it, both by knowing  
 it and by loving it: but there its fulness abideth for our  
 enjoyment, not for our examination. Thus also is this

Ps. 105, 4. spoken, *Seek His face evermore*. Where, evermore, save  
 here? For we shall not there also seek the face of God,

1 Cor. when *we shall see face to face*. Or if that which is loved  
 13, 12. without a change of affection is rightly said to be sought  
 after, and our only object is, that it be not lost, we shall  
 indeed evermore seek the law of God, that is, the truth o

ver. 142. God: for in this very Psalm it is said, *And Thy law is the  
 truth*. It is now sought, that it may be held fast; it will  
 then be held fast that it may not be lost: even as it is said  
 1 Cor. of the Spirit of God, that *It searcheth all things, yea, the*  
 2, 10. *deep things of God*; not indeed, that It may discover what

It knoweth not, but because It leaveth nothing that It VER. 34—36.  
knoweth not.

4. Ver. 34. The grace of God therefore is particularly commended unto us, when he who already knew the law according to its letter, prayeth that a law may be set for him by the Lord. But since *the letter killeth, while the Spirit giveth life*; he prayeth that he may be enabled through the Spirit to perform that which he knew through the letter; lest, on account of his knowledge of a commandment which he had not obeyed, the charge even of disobedience might come upon him. However no man, unless he hath received the comprehension thereof from the Lord, can comprehend how the law is to be known as it ought to be, that is, how its real meaning may be understood, why it was imposed upon those who were not to keep it, what profit even this hath in it, that *the law entered that sin might abound*: whence he addeth, (ver. 34.) *Give me understanding, and I shall search Thy law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart*. For when each man hath searched the law, and searched its deep things, in which its whole meaning doth consist; he ought indeed to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself. *For on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*. This he seemeth to have promised, when he said, *Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart*.

5. Ver. 35. But since he hath no power to do even this, save he be aided by Him Who commandeth him to do what He commandeth, *Make me*, he addeth, *to go in the path of Thy commandments, for therein is my desire*. My desire is powerless, unless Thou Thyself makest me to go where I desire. And this is surely the very path, that is, the path of God's commandments, which he had already said that he had run, when his heart was enlarged by the Lord. And this he calleth a *path*, because *the way is narrow which leadeth unto life*; and since it is narrow, we cannot run therein save with a heart enlarged.

6. Ver. 36. But since he still profiteth, he still runneth; and he therefore seeketh the Divine help whereby he may be conducted, since *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him*

**PSALM CXIX. XL.** *that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: for it is God that worketh in us even to will,* for the will is prepared by the Lord. He next saith, *Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.* This then he prayeth, that he may profit in the will itself. But what are the testimonies of God, save those wherein He beareth witness to Himself? For something is proved by testimonies; and on this account the judgments and commandments of God are proved by the testimonies of God: and whatever God willeth to persuade us, He persuadeth us by His own testimonies: towards which the Psalmist prayeth that his own heart may be inclined, and not to covetousness. For God enjoins us by His testimonies to worship Him for nought; which covetousness, the root of all evils, hindereth. He useth here a Greek expression, from which covetousness generally may be understood, whereby every man seeketh more than is enough: for the word *πλέον* meaneth more, and *ἔξις* signifieth having, being derived from the verb to have. It is therefore termed *πλεονεξία*, from having too much: a word which the Latin translators in this passage have variously rendered by emolument, utility, and avarice, which last is best. But the Apostle saith, *Avarice is the root of all evils.* But in the Greek, whence these words have been rendered into our tongue, the word used by the Apostle is not *πλεονεξία*, which occurs in this passage of the Psalms; but *φιλαργυρία*, by which is signified *love of money.* But the Apostle must be understood to have meant genus by species when he used this word, that is, to have meant avarice universally and generally by love of money, which is truly the root of all evils. For the first human beings would not have been deceived and cast down by means of the serpent, unless they had desired to have more than they had received, and to be more than they had been made. For **Gen. 3.** this was the tempter's promise, *Ye shall be as gods.* By **5.** this covetousness then (*πλεονεξία*) they were ruined. For by wishing to have more than they had received, they lost even what they had received. A trace of this truth, which hath been universally diffused, may be found in the civil law, which provides that he who claimeth more than his due shall be unsuited: that is, that he who hath demanded more

than was due to him, should lose even what was due to him. VER. 36.  
But all covetousness is cut away from about us, if God be worshipped for nought. This is the challenge given by the tempter to Job in his temptation, when he asketh respecting him, *Doth Job fear God for nought?* For the devil thought, Job 1, 9. that in fearing God the righteous man's heart was inclined to covetousness, and served Him, like a hireling, for his wages, for the sake of profit, or the advantage of his temporal fortunes wherewith God had enriched him; but when he was tempted, it appeared how that he served God for nought. If therefore our heart be not inclined to covetousness, we fear God only for God's sake, so that He is the only reward of our serving Him. Let us love Him in Himself, let us love Him in ourselves, Him in our neighbours whom we love as ourselves, whether they have Him, or in order that they may have Him. Since this is given to us by His own gift, it is therefore said to Him, *Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.* But what followeth, must be treated of in another discourse.

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LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse XII.*

• 1. Ver. 37. THE next words in the Psalm which we have HE. undertaken to expound are, *O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way.* Vanity and truth are directly contrary to one another. The desires of this world are vanity: but Christ, Who freeth us from the world, is truth. He is the way, too, wherein this man wisheth to be quickened, for He is also the life: *I am* John 14, *the way, the truth, and the life,* are His own words. But 6. what meaneth, *O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity?* While we are in this world, can we avoid seeing vanity? For every creature was made subject unto vanity, which is understood to be in man; and, *All is vanity; what* Eccles. 1, 2, 3. *profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under*

**PSALM** *the sun?* Doth he pray that his life may not be under the  
**CXIX.** sun, where all is vanity; but in Him, in Whom he prayeth  
**XII.** that he may be quickened? For He ascended not only  
**Ephes.** above the sun, but far *above all heavens, that He might fill*  
**4, 10.** *all things.* And they who do not fruitlessly hear what the  
**Coloss.** Apostle saith, live rather in Him than under the sun: *Set*  
**8, 1—3.** *your affection on things above, not on things on the earth;*  
*for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*  
 Therefore if our life be there where Truth is, our life is not  
 under the sun, where is vanity. But this so great blessing  
 we have rather in hope than possess in deed. And the  
 blessed Apostle spake those words according to our hope;  
**Rom. 8,** for after he had said, *The creature is made subject to*  
**20.** *vanity, he added, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who*  
*hath subjected the same in hope.* In hope therefore, wherein  
 we hope that we shall cling to the contemplation of the  
 Truth, we are meanwhile made subject unto vanity. For the  
 whole of this spiritual, animal, and bodily creation is in  
 man; yea, it is man. It willingly sinned, and became an  
 enemy to truth; but that it might justly be punished, it was  
 not willingly made subject unto vanity. Lastly, after a few  
**ib. 23.** words; *not only they,* (that is, the whole creation,) *but our-*  
**&c.** *selves also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit:* that is,  
 who not in our whole substance, but in that part of it  
 whereby we surpass cattle, are subject unto God, not unto  
 vanity, that is, through the first-fruits of the Spirit: *we*  
*also ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the*  
*adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.* For *we are*  
*saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what*  
*a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for*  
*that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* As  
 long therefore as we are here according to the flesh, whose  
 adoption and redemption we here wait for in patience of hope:  
 so long, in that respect in which we are under the sun, we  
 are made subject unto vanity. As long therefore as we are  
 in this state, how can we avoid seeing vanity, whereunto we  
 are even subject in hope? What then is the meaning of his  
 words, *O turn Thou mine eyes away, lest they behold vanity?*  
 Doth he pray this, that what we hold in hope may not indeed  
 in this life be fulfilled, but that its lot may be this, which

may be at some time fulfilled in Him, when it shall be V. R. R. delivered from the bondage of corruption, both in spirit, 37. soul, and body, *into the glorious liberty of the children of God*, where it shall no longer see vanity? Rom. 8, 20—25.

2. These words may indeed thus be understood, not beside the rule of faith; but there is here another sense, which I confess pleaseth me more. The Lord saith in the Gospel, *If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* Matt. 6, 22. 23. It is therefore of great consequence, when we do any thing good, what object we have in view in doing it. For our duty should be weighed, not by the act of duty, but by our end; so that we should consider not merely whether what we are doing be good, but especially if the object on account of which we do it be good. He prayeth that those eyes wherewith we consider on what account we do what we do, may be turned away that they behold not vanity; that is, that he may not look to vanity, as his motive, when he doeth any thing good. In this vanity the first place is held by the love of men's praise, on account of which many great deeds have been wrought by those who are styled great in this world, and who have been much praised in heathen states, seeking glory not with God, but among men, and on account of this living in appearance prudently, courageously, temperately, and righteously; and when they have reached this they have reached their reward: vain men, and vain reward. The Lord, anxious to turn away the eyes of His disciples from this vanity, saith, *Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven.* Matt. 6, 1. Presently, in detailing certain offices of righteousness, and giving precepts concerning alms, prayer, and fasting, He every where warnus us that none of these things be done for the sake of the glory of men, and He every where saith that they who do them for this reason have received their reward; that is, not the everlasting one, which is laid up for the Saints with the Father, but the temporal one, which they who regard vanity in their works seek for: not that the praise of men by itself

362 *Good works must be done for God, not for praise or gain.*

**PSALM** is to be blamed, (for what is so desirable for men, as that  
**CXIX.** those deeds which they ought to imitate should please them ?)  
**XII.**

but to do good for the sake of praise, this is to regard vanity in one's works. Since, however bountifully the praise of men may have been conferred on a righteous man, the end of his good deeds ought not to be placed in that praise, but this very praise should be referred to the praise of God, for Whose sake the truly good do good deeds; since they are not made good by themselves, but by Him. Lastly, in the  
**Matt. 5,** same discourse our Lord had said to them, *Let your light  
16.*

*so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* We ought to look thither, where He hath placed our end, when we do any thing good, if our eyes are turned away from vanity. Let not therefore the end of a good work be in the praises of men, but let us correct these very praises of men, and refer all things to the praises of God, by Whom every thing is given unto us which is praised without error on the part of him Who praiseth. Moreover, if it be a vain thing to do good works for the sake of men's praises, how much more vain for the sake of getting money, or increasing it, or retaining it, and any other temporal advantage, which cometh unto us

from without? Since *all things are vanity: what is man's  
Eccles. abundance, with all his toil, wherein he laboureth under the  
1, 2, 3.* sun?

For our temporal welfare itself finally we ought not to do our good works, but rather for the sake of that everlasting welfare which we hope for, where we may enjoy an unchangeable good, which we shall have from God, nay, what God Himself is unto us. For if God's Saints were to do good works for the sake of this temporal welfare, never would the martyrs of Christ achieve a good work of confession in the loss of this same welfare. But they received aid

in trouble, not beholding vanity, *for vain is the help of man; Ps. 60,*  
*and they desired not the day of man, for man is like a thing  
11.*  
*of nought, and his time passeth away as a shadow.*  
**Jer. 17,**  
**16.**

**Ps. 144,**  
**4.** 3. Ver. 38. But when God is prayed that those things which are seemingly in our own power, that is, the turning away of the eyes lest they behold vanity, may be granted us by Him, what else than His grace is praised? For some have not turned away their eyes from that vanity,

because they have imagined that they become righteous and good of themselves, and *have loved the praise of men more than the praise of God*; for they are themselves men, who have been too much pleased with themselves, and have presumed on the strength of their own will: but *this also is vanity and vexation of spirit*. After he had said, therefore, *O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity*: and *quicken Thou me in Thy way*: and this way is not vanity, but truth: he addeth, (ver. 38.) *O stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee*. And what else is this than, Grant unto me that I may do according to what Thou sayest? For the word of God is not stablished in those who remove it in themselves by acting contrary to it; but it is stablished in those in whom it is immoveable. God therefore stablisheth His word, that they may fear Him, in those unto whom He giveth the spirit of the fear of Him; not that fear of which the Apostle saith, *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*; for *perfect love casteth out this fear*, but that fear which the Prophet calleth *the spirit of the fear of the Lord*; that fear which *is pure, and endureth for ever*; that fear which feareth to offend Him Whom it loveth. For the adulteress hath a different fear of her husband from that of the chaste wife: the adulteress feareth him, lest he come: the chaste feareth, lest he forsake her.

4. Ver. 39. *Take away my reproach which I have suspected, for Thy judgments are sweet*. Who is he who suspected his own reproach, and who doth not know his own reproach better than that of his neighbour? For a man may rather suspect another's than his own; since he knoweth not that which he suspecteth; but in each one's own reproach there is not suspicion for him, but knowledge, wherein conscience speaketh. What then mean the words, *the rebuke which I have suspected*? The meaning of them must be derived from the former verse; since as long as a man doth not turn away his eyes lest they behold vanity, he suspecteth in others what is going on in himself; so that he believeth another to worship God, or do good works, from the same motive as himself. For men can see what we do, but with a view to what end we act, is hidden; and there

VER.  
38, 39.  
John 12,  
43.

Eccles.  
6, 9.

Rom. 8,  
15.  
1 John  
4, 18.

Is. 11, 2.  
Ps. 19, 9.

**PSALM CXIX.**  
**XII.** is thus room allowed for suspicions, so that one man dareth to judge of the hidden secrets of another, and generally falsely, and to suspect at random things that are unknown to him, even if they be true. On this account the Lord, when He was speaking of the end, on account of which we ought to act righteously, in order that He might turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, warned us not to do good works for the sake of the praise of men, in these words:

**Matt. 6.** *Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them.* He warned them against doing them for the sake of money, thus: *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;* and, *Ye cannot serve God and mammon.* He warned them against doing so for the sake even of their necessary food and raiment: *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.* And after He had given all these warnings, since we may suspect that they whom we see living righteously, though we see not with what object they do so, do good works from some such motive as those mentioned, He added, *Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

**Matt. 7.** For this reason, after the Psalmist had said, *Take away my reproach that I have suspected;* he added, *for Thy judgments are sweet;* that is, Thy judgments are true. For a lover of truth declareth that to be sweet which is true. But the judgments of men concerning the hidden secrets of men are not sweet, but rash. And therefore he called that his reproach, which he had suspected of others; for this too the Apostle saith, *Comparing themselves with themselves they understand not:* for a man the more readily suspecteth in another what he is conscious of in himself. This reproach of his therefore he prayed might be taken away, viz. what he had felt in himself, and had suspected in others; that he might not be like the devil, who had suspected concerning the hidden things of the holy Job, that he did not worship God for nought. Job, whom he demanded to be allowed to tempt, that he might discover some charge to impute against him.

**2 Cor.**  
**10, 12.**

**Job 1,**  
**9—11.**

5. Ver. 40. But since nothing save envy suspecteth another's reproach, while a good work cannot be censured, because that which is open speaketh for itself; and since

it is censured on the score of the motive from which it is done; and thus any man who pleaseth may suspect him of evil, because he seeth not what is hidden, and envieth what is above himself; against this fault truly, under the influence of which each man suspecteth of a man evil which he discerneth not, charity must be held fast, which *envieth not*; <sup>1 Cor. 13, 4.</sup> which our Lord especially commendeth, where He saith, *A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another*; and, *By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another*; and, speaking of the love of God and of our neighbour, *On these two commandments*, he saith, *hang all the Law and the Prophets*.<sup>40.</sup> Whence the Psalmist also, against the reproach of his suspicion which he longeth to be cut off, saith, (ver. 40.) *Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness*. Behold, I have coveted to love Thee with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind, and my neighbour as myself, but, *O quicken Thou me not in my own, but in Thy righteousness*, that is, fill me with that love which I have longed for. Aid me that I may do that which Thou chargest me: Thyself give what Thou dost command. *O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness*: for in myself I had that which would cause my death: but I find not save in Thee whence I may live. Christ is Thy righteousness, *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*. *That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*. And in Him I find Thy commandments, which I have coveted, that in Thy righteousness, that is, in Him, Thou mayest quicken me. For the Word Himself is God; and *the Word was made flesh*, that He Himself also might be my neighbour.<sup>John 1, 14.</sup>

LAT.  
CXVIII.

## PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XIII.*

VAU. 1. Ver. 41. With the foregoing exposition on this Psalm, the longest of all, we must connect this, on the words which follow in it. *And let Thy loving mercy come also unto us, O Lord.* This sentence seems annexed to the foregoing: for he doth not say, Let it come unto me, but, *And let it come unto me.* Now the foregoing verse is this, *Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken me in Thy righteousness;* next to which come the words, *and let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord.* What then doth he here pray for, save that through His loving mercy Who commanded, he may perform the commandments which he hath coveted? For he explaineth in some degree what he meant by the words, *Quicken me in Thy righteousness;* by adding, *And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord: even Thy salvation, according to Thy word:* that is, according to Thy promise. Whence the Apostle desireth us to be

Rom. 9, understood as the children of promise: that we may not  
8. imagine that what we are is our own work, but refer the

1 Cor. 1, whole to the grace of God. For *Christ is of God made*  
30. 31. *unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* In the words then, *Quicken me in Thy righteousness;* he prayeth to be quickened in Christ, and this is the very loving mercy which he prayeth may come upon him. Christ Himself is *the salvation of God;* the expression by which he hath explained what loving mercy he was speaking of when he said, *And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord.* If therefore we ask, what is that loving mercy, let us hear what followeth: *Thy salvation, according unto Thy word.* For this was promised by Him,

Rom. 4, *Who calleth those things which be not as if they were.* For  
17. those unto whom the promises were made were not as yet in existence, that no man might glory in his deservings. And

*The Word is the answer to those who reproach the Manhood.* 367

those unto whom it was promised, were themselves also promised; so that the whole body of Christ may say, *By the grace of God I am what I am.* VER. 42. I Cor. 15, 10.

2. Ver. 42. *And so shall I make answer, he saith, to them that reproach me with the word.* It is doubtful whether it be 'reproach me with a word;' or, 'I will answer with a word;' but either signifieth Christ. They to whom Christ crucified is a stumblingblock or foolishness, reproach us with Him; ignorant that *the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us; the Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God.* 1 Cor. 1, 23. John 1, 14. ib. 1. But although they may not reproach us with the Word Which is unknown unto them, because His Divinity is not known unto those by whom His weakness on the Cross is despised; let us nevertheless make answer of the Word, and let us not be terrified or confounded by their reproaches. For *if they had known the Word, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* 1 Cor. 2, 8. But he, unto whom hath come the loving mercy of God, answereth those who blaspheme the Word; that is, His salvation cometh to protect, not to crush. For He will come upon some and crush them, who, while they scorn His humility, are shaken by stumbling against Him. For thus He saith in the Gospel; *Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* Luke 20, 18. They therefore who make Him a reproach unto us, stumble and fall over Him. But let us not fear their reproaches, that we may not stumble and fall, but let us answer unto them the Word. *This is the word of faith which we preach.* That if, he saith, *thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* Rom. 10, 8-10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* It is not enough, therefore, to have Christ in the heart, and to have no will to confess Him when reproach is feared; but the Word must be answered to them that blaspheme Him. Now that the martyrs might be able to do this, it was promised them, *For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* Mat. 10, 20. Therefore, when the Psalmist had said, *I will make answer*

368 *The word of Truth not utterly taken from such as recover.*

**PSALM CXIX. XIII.** *unto them that reproach me with the word: he at once addeth, For my trust is in Thy words, which meaneth exactly, in Thy promises.*

3. Ver. 43. But since very many, although members of Christ's very Body, Whose words these are, when the heavy weight of persecution pressed upon them, had not courage to endure the reproach, and through fainting denied Christ, he addeth, *O take not the word of Thy truth away out of my mouth even exceedingly.* He saith, out of my mouth, because the unity of the body is speaking, among whose members those also are counted who failed at the hour by denying, but by penitence afterwards came again to life, or even, by renewing their confession, received the palm of martyrdom, which they had lost. The word of truth, therefore, was not *even exceedingly*, or, as some copies have it, even every way, that is not altogether taken from the mouth of Peter, in whom was the type of the Church; because although he denied for the hour, being disturbed with fear, yet by weeping he was restored, and by confessing was afterwards crowned. The whole body of Christ therefore speaketh, that is; the whole of the holy Church; in which body either because, while very many denied, there remained brave men who contended for the truth even unto death, or because out of those who had denied many were restored, the Word of truth was not taken away from her mouth, *even exceedingly.* In the words, *O take not*, we must understand, *Suffer not to be taken*; on which account we say in praying, *Lead us not into temptation.* And the Lord Himself saith unto Peter, *I have prayed, that thy faith fail not*; that is, that the word of truth be not taken out of thy mouth *even exceedingly.* Next followeth, *for I have hoped in Thy judgments.* Or, as some have more strictly rendered it from the Greek, *I have hoped more*<sup>a</sup>; a word which, although compounded in a somewhat unusual way, yet answers the necessary purpose of conveying the truth in a translation. We must more attentively search into the meaning of these words, *I have hoped in Thy word*, and, *I have hoped more in Thy judgments.* *I will make answer*, he saith, *of the word to them that reproach me,*

Mat. 26,  
70—76.

Mat. 6,  
13.  
Luke 22,  
32.

<sup>a</sup> *supersperavi.* Gr. ἐσῆλπισα; literally, as he takes it, 'over-hoped.'

for I have hoped in Thy words: that is, since Thou Thyself hast promised me this. *O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Thy judgments:* that is, since Thy judgments, by which Thou chastenest and scourgest me, do not only not destroy my hope, but even increase it: for *the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.* <sup>VER. 44.</sup> <sup>Heb.12, 6.</sup> Behold the saints and the humble in heart when they have trusted in Thee, have not failed in persecutions: behold also those who from trusting in themselves have failed, and nevertheless have belonged to the Very Body, have wept when they became known unto themselves, and have found Thy grace a more solid support, because they have lost their own pride. Therefore, *O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in Thy judgments.*

4. Ver. 44. *So shall I always keep Thy law:* that is, if Thou wilt not take the word of Thy truth out of my mouth, *I will always keep Thy law. Yea, unto age, and age of age:* he sheweth what he meant by *always*. For sometimes by *always* is meant, as long as we live here; but this is not, *unto age, and age of age*<sup>b</sup>. For it is better thus translated than as some copies have, *to eternity, and to age of age*, since they could not say, and to eternity of eternity. That law therefore should be understood, of which the Apostle saith, *Love is the fulfilling of the law.* For this will be kept by the saints, from whose mouth the word of truth is <sup>Rom.13, 10</sup> not taken, that is, by the Church of Christ Herself, not only during this world, that is, until this world is ended; but for another also which is styled, *world without end*<sup>1</sup>. For we shall not there receive the commandments of the Law, as <sup>lit. 'age of age.'</sup> here, to keep them, but we shall keep the fulness of the Law itself, as I have said, without any fear of sinning; for we shall love God the more fully when we shall have seen Him; and our neighbour too; for *God will be all in all;* nor will there be room for any false suspicion concerning our neighbour, where no man will be hidden to any. <sup>1 Cor. 15, 28.</sup>

<sup>b</sup> The phrase 'in sæculum sæculi' is that which we usually render 'world without end,' or 'for ever and ever.'

L.A.T.  
CXVIII.

## PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XIV.*

V.A.U. 1. Ver. 45—48. THE former verses of this long Psalm contain a prayer; but these following, the subject of our present exposition, a narration. For the man of God in the above lines was praying for the aid of God's grace, when he v.40.41. said, *Quicken me in Thy righteousness: and let Thy loving mercies come also upon me, O Lord!* and other passages of the same kind both above and after this. But he now saith, *And I walked at liberty: for I sought Thy precepts.* (Ver. 46.) *And I spoke of Thy testimonies also before kings, and was not ashamed.* (Ver. 47.) *And I meditated on Thy commandments, which I have loved.* (Ver. 48.) *My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; and I was exercised in Thy statutes.* Where these are the words of one narrating, not of one praying; as if, after he had received what he had prayed for, he were confessing in the praises of God what the loving mercy of God had made him, which he had prayed might come upon him. For he hath not connected these lines with the preceding, as if he had written thus, "And take not from my mouth the word of truth even utterly, for I have hoped more in Thy judgments, and I will keep Thy law continually for ever and ever, and I will walk at liberty, for I have sought out Thy precepts, and I will talk of Thy statutes in the sight of kings, and will not be ashamed;" and the rest in this way: for this would seem to have been the mode in which what follows should have been connected with the foregoing verses; but he says, *And I walked at liberty.* Here the copulative conjunction, *and*, is not used as a connecting particle; for he doth not say, and I will walk, as he had said, *and I will keep Thy commandments for ever and ever*: or if this latter verse be in the optative mood, and may I keep Thy law; he doth not add, And may I walk at liberty, as if he had desired and prayed for both of these things; but he saith, *And I walked at liberty.* If this conjunction were not used here, and if the sentence were introduced free from any such

connection with what preceded, *I walked at liberty*, the reader would never be induced by any thing unusual in the mode of speech to think he should seek for some hidden sense. Doubtless, then, he wished what he hath not said to be understood, that is, that his prayers had been heard; and he then added what he had become: as if he were to say, When I prayed for these things, Thou heardest me, *And I walked at liberty*; and so with the remaining expressions which he hath added to the same purpose.

2. What then mean the words, *And I walked at liberty*, save, I walked in love, *which is shed abroad in our hearts* <sup>Rom. 5, 5.</sup> *by the Holy Spirit which is given us*. In this liberty he walked who said, *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you: our heart is enlarged*. Now the whole of this love is comprised in those two commandments, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, on which all the Law and the Prophets hang. Whence after he had said, *And I walked at liberty*, he subjoined the reason, *For I sought out Thy commandments*. Some copies have not *commandments* but *testimonies*: but we find *commandments* in most, and especially in the Greek; and who would hesitate rather to believe this tongue, as prior to our own, and that from which these Psalms have been rendered into Latin? If then we wish to know how he sought out these commandments, or how they ought to be sought out, let us consider what our good Master, Who both taught and gave them, saith: *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*. And a little lower, *If ye then, He saith, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?* Where He evidently sheweth, that the words He had spoken, seek, ask, knock, belong only to earnestness in asking, that is, in praying. Moreover, another Evangelist saith not, He will give good things to them that ask Him; which may be understood in many ways, either as earthly or spiritual blessings; but has excluded other interpretations, and very carefully expressed what our Lord wished us to pray earnestly and instantly for, in these words: *How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to* <sup>Luk 11, 13.</sup>

- PSALM *them that ask Him.* This is that Spirit by which love is shed abroad in our hearts, so that by loving God and our neighbour we may execute the divine commandments. That is that Spirit in which we cry, *Abba, Father!* And on this account it is He Himself Whom we desire to receive Who causeth us to ask: Himself causeth us to seek, Whom we wish to find: Himself causeth us to knock, unto Whom we strive to come. This the Apostle teacheth; for while in one passage he saith that we cry out in the Holy Spirit, *Abba, Father,* in another passage again he saith, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* How do we cry, if He Himself crieth in us, save because He caused us to cry, when He began to dwell in us? Also, He so acteth when He is received, that He is desired by asking, by seeking, by knocking, to be more fully received. For whether He leadeth them to seek a good life, or to live well; as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Therefore he saith, *I walked at liberty, for I sought out Thy commandments.* He had sought and found, since He had sought and received the good Spirit, whereby having been made good he might do good works well, by *faith which worketh by love.*
3. Ver. 40. *I spoke of Thy testimonies also, he saith, before kings, and I was not ashamed:* as one who had sought and had received grace to answer those who reproached him with the word, and the promise that the word of truth should not be taken from his mouth. Struggling for this truth even unto death, not even before kings was he ashamed to speak of it. For testimonies, whereof he doth avow that he was speaking, are in Greek styled *μαρτύρια*, a word which we now employ instead of the Latin. The name of *Martyrs*, unto whom Jesus foretold, that they should confess Him even before kings, is derived hence.
4. Ver. 47. *And I meditated,* he saith, *on Thy commandments, which I have loved.* (Ver. 48.) *My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved;* or, as some copies read, *which I have loved exceedingly,* or *too much,* or *vehemently,* as they have chosen to render the Greek work *σφόδρα*. He then loved the commandments of God because he walked at liberty; that is, through the Holy

Spirit, through Whom love itself is shed abroad, and enlargeth the hearts of the faithful. But he loved, both in thought and in acts. With a view to thought, he saith, <sup>V RR.</sup> <sup>48.</sup> <sup>Rom. 5,</sup> <sup>5.</sup> *And I meditated on Thy commandments*: as to action, *My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments*. But to both sentences he hath annexed the words, *which I have loved*: for the end of the commandment is love out of a pure <sup>1 Tim.</sup> <sup>1, 5.</sup> heart. When the commandment of God is obeyed with this end, then a really good work is done; and then our hands are lifted up, because that towards which they are lifted is above. On this account, when the Apostle was about to speak of charity, he saith, *I shew unto you a higher way*<sup>1</sup>; <sup>1 Cor.</sup> <sup>12, 31.</sup> and in another passage, *To know the love of Christ, which is exceeding high, above knowledge*; <sup>1</sup> <sup>super-</sup> <sup>eminen-</sup> <sup>tem</sup> <sup>viam</sup> <sup>Ephes.</sup> <sup>3, 19.</sup> For if the reward of earthly happiness be sought for from the performance of God's commandments, the hands are rather lowered than lifted up; since earthly rewards, which are not above but below, are sought for by that obedience. The following words, *And my study was in Thy statutes*, relate to both. This expression most of the translators have preferred to this, *I rejoiced in*, or *I talked of*, a version which some have given from the Greek *ἠδολέσχουν*. For he who keepeth the commandments of God, which he loveth, both in thought and in works taking delight in them, is exercised with joy, and with a certain abundance of speech, in the judgments of God.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

Discourse XV.

1. Ver. 49. LET us consider, as far as the Lord alloweth, <sup>ZAIN.</sup> and let us thoroughly treat of these verses of this great Psalm: *O remember Thy word unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope*. Is forgetfulness incident to God, as it is to man? Why then is it said unto Him, *O remember?* Although in other passages of holy Scripture this very word is used, as, *Why hast Thou forgotten me?* and, <sup>Ps. 42,</sup> <sup>9.</sup>

PSALM CXIX. XV. *Wherefore forgettest Thou our misery?* and God Himself, through His Prophet, says, *I will forget all his transgressions*: and in other passages this is read again and again frequently. But these things are not understood of God in the same way as they happen among men. For as it is said that God repenteth, when He changeth things contrary to men's expectation, without His counsel being changed, for Ps. 44, 24. Ezek. 18, 29. *The Lord's counsel endureth for ever*; He is said to forget, when He seemeth to delay His aid or His promise, or not to recompense sinners as they deserve, or any thing of this sort, as if what is either hoped or feared had slipped from His memory, and so doth not take place. These expressions are borrowed from moral discourses on human affections; although God doth these things according to a fixed dispensation, with no failing memory, nor with an understanding obscured, nor with a will changed. When therefore it is said unto Him, *O remember*, the desire of him who prayeth is displayed, because he asketh for what was promised; God is not admonished, as if the promise had escaped from His mind. *O remember*, he saith, *Thy word unto Thy servant*: that is, fulfil Thy promise to Thy servant. *Wherein Thou hast given me hope*: that is, in Thy Word, since Thou hast promised, Thou hast caused me to hope.

2. Ver. 50. *The same is my comfort in my humiliation.*

Namely, that hope which is given to the humble, as the

JAMES 4. 6. and 1 Pet. 5. Scripture saith: *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.* Whence also our Lord Himself saith with

Luke 14. 11. and 18, 14. His own lips, *For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abused; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

We well understand here that humiliation also, not whereby each man humbleth himself by confessing his sins, and by not arrogating righteousness to himself; but when each man is humbled by some tribulation or mortification which his pride deserved; or when he is exercised and proved by

Eccles. 2, 4. 5. endurance; whence a little after this Psalm saith, *Before I was troubled, I went wrong.* And this passage in the

ver. 67. Book of Wisdom; *In grief, hold up, and have patience in thy humiliation. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.* In the expression, *acceptable*, he hath inspired a hope which may console

us in our humiliation. And the Lord Jesus, when He foretold <sup>V ER.</sup> that this humiliation would be brought upon His disciples <sup>50. 51.</sup> by their persecutors, did not leave them without a hope; but gave them one, whereby they might find comfort, in these words: *In your patience shall ye possess your souls*; and <sup>Luke 21,</sup> declared even of their very bodies, which might be put to <sup>17. 18.</sup> death by their enemies, and seemingly be utterly annihilated, that not a hair of their heads should perish. This hope was given to Christ's Body, that is, to the Church, that it might be a comfort to Her in her humiliation. On account of which hope saith also the Apostle Paul: *But if we hope for* <sup>Rom. 7,</sup> *that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* <sup>25.</sup> But this is the hope of everlasting rewards: there is also another hope, which in the low estate of tribulation comforteth very much, a hope that is given to the Saints in the Word of God, Who promiseth the aid of His grace, that no man may faint. Of this hope the Apostle saith, *God is faithful,* <sup>1 Cor.</sup> *Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are* <sup>10, 13.</sup> *able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* This hope our Saviour gave also with His own lips, when He said, *This* <sup>Luke 22,</sup> *night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you* <sup>31. 32.</sup> *as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not.* This hope He gave in the prayer which He taught us, where He enjoined us to say, *Lead us not into* <sup>Matt. 6,</sup> *temptation*: for He in a manner implicitly promised that <sup>13.</sup> He would give to His disciples in their danger that which He taught them to ask for in their prayers. And indeed this Psalm is rather to be understood to speak of this hope: (ver. 50.) *The same is my comfort in my humiliation, for Thy word hath quickened me.* Which they have rendered more closely who have put not *word*, but *utterance*. For the Greek has *λόγιον*, which is *utterance*; not *λόγος*, which is *word*.

3. Ver. 51. The next verse is, *The proud dealt exceedingly wickedly: yet have I not shrinked from Thy law.* By the proud he wished to be understood the persecutors of the pious; and he therefore added, *yet have I not shrinked from Thy laws*, because the persecution of the proud attempted to force him to do this. He saith that they dealt *exceedingly wickedly*, because they were not only wicked themselves,

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XV.

but even tried to make the godly wicked. In this humiliation, that is, in this tribulation, that hope comforted him which was given in the word of God, Who promised aid, that the faith of the Martyrs might not faint; and Who by the Presence of His Spirit gave strength to them in their toils, that they might escape from the snare of the fowlers, and say, *If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, perchance they had swallowed us up quick.*

Ps. 124.  
2.

4. When he saith, *The same is my comfort in my humiliation*, doth he mean that humiliation whereby man was thrown down and delivered unto death, in consequence of that sin which was most unhappily committed in the bliss of Paradise? For in this humiliation, wherein man is *made like unto vanity*, and *his days pass away as a shadow*, all are sons of wrath, but that they are reconciled unto God through the Mediator, who were predestined to everlasting salvation before the foundation of the world; that Mediator in Whom the righteous of old had hope, when they foresaw His coming by the spirit of prophecy. That word then which came to them concerning Him is well understood as the word here spoken of, if we understand the passage of these men; that word of which it is said, (ver. 49.) *O remember Thy word unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope.* (Ver. 50.) *The same is my comfort in my humiliation*: that is, in this my mortal state: *for Thy word hath quickened me*; so that when cast out unto death, I had hopes of life. *The proud dealt very wickedly*: since indeed not even the low estate of mortality tamed their pride. *Yet have I not shrunked from Thy law*: which the proud were attempting to make me do.

Ps. 144.  
4.

Eph. 1.  
4. 5.

5. Ver. 52. *For I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, and received comfort*; or, as other copies have it, *and I was exhorted*, that is, I received exhortation. For either might be rendered for the Greek *παρελάβην*. *From the beginning of the world*, that is, from the birth of the human race, *I was mindful of Thy judgments* upon the vessels of wrath, which are fitted unto perdition: *and I received comfort*, since through these also hast Thou shewn the riches of Thy glory on the vessels of Thy mercy.

Rom. 9.  
22. 23.

*Thoughts of God, in weariness and the night of humiliation. 377*

6. Ver. 53. *Weariness hath held me; for the ungodly that forsake Thy law.* (Ver. 54.) *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.* This is the low estate, in the house of mortality, of the man who sojourneth away from Paradise and the Jerusalem above, whence one going down to Jericho fell among robbers; but, in consequence of the deed of mercy which was done him by that Samaritan, the statutes of God became his song in the house of his pilgrimage; although he was weary for the ungodly that forsook the law of God, since he was compelled to converse with them for a season in this life, until the floor be threshed. But these two verses may be adapted to the two clauses of the preceding verse, respectively: so that the words, *I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord,* be referred to these, *Weariness hath seized me, for the ungodly who forsake Thy law:* and the words, *I received comfort,* may be referred to these, *Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*

7. Ver. 55. *I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law.* Night is that low estate, wherein is the trouble of mortality: night is in the proud who deal exceeding wickedly: night is the fear for the ungodly who forsake the law of the Lord; night is, lastly, the house of this pilgrimage, *until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.* In this night, therefore, man ought to remember the Name of the Lord; *So that he who glorieth, may glory in the Lord;* on which account this also is written, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory.* For thus every man keepeth the law of God, not in his own glory, but in the glory of the Lord; because he doth it not in his own righteousness, but in that of God, that is, in the righteousness given him of God; even as this man saith, *I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept Thy law.* But he would not have kept it, if trusting in his own strength, he had not thought upon the Name of the Lord: for *our help standeth in the Name of the Lord.*

VER.  
53—55.

Luke 10,  
30. 37.

1 Cor.  
4, 5.

ib. 1, 31.

Ps. 115,

1-

Ps. 124,  
8.

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XV.

8. Ver. 56. Considering this, he addeth, *This was made unto me, because I sought out Thy righteousnesses. Thy righteousnesses, whereby Thou dost justify the ungodly; not mine, which never make me godly, but proud. For this* man was not one of those who, *ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* Others have better interpreted these righteousnesses, as those whereby men are justified for nought through God's grace, though by themselves they cannot be righteous, *justifications*; since the Greek hath not *δικαιοσύνας*, that is, acts of righteousness; but *δικαιώματα*, acts of justification. But what meaneth, *This was made unto me*? What is *This*? It is perhaps the law? as he had said, *and I have kept Thy law*; to which he subjoins, *This was made unto me*, meaning, *This was made my law.* But we need not delay by expounding in what manner the law of God was made his law. For the Greek words whence these Latin words have been translated, sufficiently declare that it could not have been said of the law, for the word law is in Greek of the masculine gender, and the feminine pronoun is used in the Greek text as well. We must therefore enquire first what was thus made unto him, next in what manner, whatever it may have been, was made unto him. *This*, he saith, *was made unto me*: not, *This law*, for the Greek, as I have said, refuseth this sense. Perhaps then, *This night*: since the whole of the preceding sentence stands thus: *I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season: and have kept Thy law*; and the next words are, *This was made unto me*: since then it is not the law, it must truly be the night which is thus spoken of. What then meaneth, *I had the night-season: for I have sought out Thy righteousnesses*? Rather light had come unto him than night, since he sought out the righteousnesses of God. And it is thus rightly understood, *It was made unto me*, as if it were said, *It became night for my sake, that is, that it might profit me.* For if that low estate of mortality is not absurdly understood as night, where the hearts of mortals are hid to one another, so that from such darkness innumerable and heavy temptations

Ps. 104, arise, so that in the same night *wild beasts of the forest pass*

through, the young of the lions roaring, seeking their meat <sup>VER.</sup> from God; whence of that lion who roareth and seeketh <sup>56.</sup> whom he may devour, our Lord saith what I have mentioned <sup>Rom.10,</sup> 3.

above, *This night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you like wheat*; that is, in this night, wherein the beasts of the forest roam about, that great lion sought you from God as his prey: indeed this very low estate in the house of this pilgrimage, which is rightly understood as night, profiteth those who are healthfully exercised in it, that they may learn not to be proud; since that is the sin on account of which man was banished into this night. For *the beginning of pride is when one departeth from God.* <sup>Eccles.</sup> But let him who hath been justified for nought, and who <sup>10, 12.</sup> hath encountered various temptations of this night that he may profit in this low estate, when he now understandeth, say, what is said some verses below in this Psalm, *It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low, that I may learn Thy righteousnesses.* For what else meaneth, *It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low*, save that this low estate which is called night, was made for me, that is, was made that it might profit me? But wherefore this? *Because I have sought out Thy righteousnesses*, not mine own.

9. We may also so understand what is here said, *This was made for me*, so that neither the law, nor night be understood, but the pronoun *this* be taken as it is found in another Psalm, where it is said, *One thing have I desired of* <sup>Ps.37,4.</sup> *the Lord, this I will require.* He saith not what is this one thing, or what one, of which he said, *This I will require*; but the feminine gender (*hanc requiram*) is seemingly put for the neuter. For it is an unusual expression, *Unam petii, hanc requiram*; where it is not understood what that one is: the more common construction would be, "*Unum petii a Domino, hoc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini.*" For in these neuters we do not usually look for any *neuter* which is to be understood, as, for instance, one good thing, or one gift, or any thing of this sort; but whatever it is, though it have its name of the masculine or feminine gender, or without any gender be set forth in any form of expression, according to a well-known rule it is understood in the neuter gender. In this way therefore the words,

**PSALM CXIX.** *Hæc facta est mihi*, may have been used, as if it had been said, *Hoc factum est mihi*. But if we enquire what this be, what he had said above occurs, *I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law. This hath been done for me*; that is, my having kept Thy law, was not done through myself, but was done for me, by Thee: *because I sought out*, not my but *Thy righteousness*. For, *it is God*, saith the Apostle, *that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*. For God saith this through the Prophet: *And I will cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them*. Wherefore since God saith, *I will cause you to keep My judgments and do them*; he very rightly saith, *This hath been made for me*: so that when thou askest what that is, he answereth what he had said above, *that I might keep the law of God*. But since this exposition hath already reached a great length, what followeth will, with the Lord's help, be better treated with in a fresh beginning.

Philipp.  
9, 13.  
Ezek.  
30, 27.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XVI.*

**CHAP. I.** Ver. 57. WE will now attempt to treat of these verses of this great Psalm, with the will of God; *The Lord is my portion*; for which some read, *My portion, O Lord*. Whether this be said, because each one who clingeth unto Him shareth in Him, as it is written, *But it is good for me to hold me fast by God*; for it is not by themselves being so that men become gods, but by sharing in that one God Who is the true God: or because men choose themselves parts in this world, or take by lot, one man one thing, another another, whence each may live; in a certain sense God is the portion of the pious whereby they may alway live: either sense is not absurd. But let us hear what followeth: *I have promised to keep Thy law*. What meaneth, *My portion, O Lord*: *I have promised to keep Thy law*; save because the Lord will be each man's portion then, when he hath kept His law?

Ps. 73,  
28.

2. Ver. 58. But how doth he keep it, unless the life-giving <sup>VER.</sup> Spirit grant this, and aid him unto this; that the letter may <sup>58—61.</sup> not kill, and that sin, taking occasion by the commandment, <sup>2 Cor. 3,</sup> may not work in man all manner of concupiscence. He <sup>Rom. 7,</sup> must therefore be called upon: for thus doth faith gain from <sup>8.</sup> Him what the law commandeth: for *whosoever shall call* <sup>Joel 2,</sup> *upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved.* Consider <sup>32.</sup> therefore what he subjoineth: *I entreated Thy face with* <sup>Rom. 10,</sup> *my whole heart:* and saying in what manner he prayed: *O be merciful, he saith, unto me, according to Thy word.* And as if he had been heard and aided by Him Whom he prayed unto, *I thought,* he saith, *on mine own ways, and turned away my feet unto Thy testimonies.* That is, I turned them away from mine own ways, which displeased me, that they might follow Thy testimonies, and there might find a path. For most of the copies have not, *Because I thought,* as is read in some; but only, *I thought.* But what is here written, *and I turned away my feet:* some read, *Because I thought, Thou also hast turned away my feet:* that this may rather be ascribed to the grace of God, according to the Apostle's words, *For it is God Who worketh* <sup>Philip.</sup> *in us;* unto Whom also it is said, *O turn away mine eyes,* <sup>2, 13.</sup> *lest they behold vanity.* If the eyes, lest they behold vanity, why not the feet also, lest they follow error? On which account this also was written: *Mine eyes are ever looking* <sup>Ps. 25,</sup> *unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.* <sup>15.</sup> But whether, *Thou hast turned my feet,* or, *I have turned,* be read, we do this by His means, Whose Presence he prayed for with his whole heart, and unto Whom he said, *O be merciful unto me, according to Thy word,* that is, according to the word of Thy promise. For the children <sup>Rom. 9,</sup> of the promise are counted for the seed of Abraham. <sup>8. 9.</sup>

3. Ver. 60. Lastly, when he had received this blessing of grace, he saith, *I was ready, and was not disturbed, that I may keep Thy commandments.* Which some have rendered, *to keeping Thy commandments, some that I should keep,* others *to keep,* the Greek being τοῦ φυλάξασθαι.

4. Ver. 61. But in what manner he was ready to keep the divine commandments, he hath added, in these words: *The bands of the ungodly have surrounded me: but I have not*

PSALM CXIX. XVI. *forgotten Thy law. The bands of the ungodly are the hindrances of our enemies, whether spiritual, as the devil and his angels, or carnal, the children of disobedience, in whom the devil worketh. For this word peccatorum is not from 'peccata,' 'sins,' but from 'peccatores,' 'sinners.' Therefore when they threaten evils, with which to alarm the righteous, that they may not suffer for the law of God, they, so to speak, entangle them with bands, with a strong and tough cord of their own. For they draw iniquity like a long rope, and thus endeavour to entangle the holy, and sometimes are allowed so to do. But if they entangle the body, they do not entangle the mind, when it hath not forgotten the law of God; because the word of God is not bound.*

Ephes. 2, 2.  
1a. 5, 18.  
2 Tim. 2, 9.

5. Ver. 62. *At midnight, he saith, I rise to give thanks unto Thee: because of Thy righteous judgments.* This very fact, that the bands of the ungodly surround the righteous, is one of the righteous judgments of God. On which account the Apostle Peter saith, *The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of the Lord: and if it first begin at us, he addeth, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* For he saith this of the persecutions which the Church suffered, when the bands of the ungodly surrounded them. I suppose, therefore, that by *midnight* we should understand the heavier seasons of tribulation. In which he said, *I arose:* since He did not so afflict him, as to cast him down; but tried him, so that he arose, that is, that through this very tribulation he might advance unto a bolder confession.

1 Pet. 4, 17, 18.

6. Ver. 63, 64. But, since these things are brought about by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Saviour Himself addeth the voice of His own Person to His Body through the medium of this prophecy. For I imagine that what followeth, *I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments,* doth relate to the Head Himself, as it is in the Epistle which is inscribed to the Hebrews: *Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.* And a little lower, *Forasmuch as the*

Heb. 2, 11, 14.

*children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same.* And what else meaneth this than, He became their companion? For we should not be made sharers in His Divinity, unless He were made a sharer in our mortal nature. For in the Gospel it is said in these words, that we have been made sharers in His Divine nature: *To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* But that this might be so, since He also hath become a sharer in our mortal nature, it is also said, *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Through this sharing of His in our flesh, grace is ministered unto us, that we may have a chaste fear of God, and may keep His commandments. Therefore Jesus Himself speaketh in this prophecy: some things in His Members and in the Unity of His Body, as if in one man diffused over the whole world, and growing up in succession throughout the roll of ages: and some things in Himself our Head. Whence are these words: *I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments.* And on this account, that since He became the companion of His brethren, God of men, the Immortal of the mortal, for this reason the seed fell upon the earth, that by its death it might produce much fruit; he next addeth concerning this very fruit, *The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy.* And whence this, save when the ungodly is justified? That we may make progress in the knowledge of this grace, he addeth, *O teach me Thy righteousnesses!*

VER.  
64.

John 1,  
12—14.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse XVII.*

1. Ver. 65. THESE verses of this Psalm, on which by the TETH. will of God we are about to speak, commence thus: *O Lord, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: according unto Thy word; or rather, according unto Thine utterance.*

**PSALM CXIX. XVII.** The Greek word *χρηστότης* hath been variously rendered by our translators by the words *sweetness* and *goodness*. But since sweetness may exist also in evil, since all unlawful and unclean things afford pleasure, and it may also exist in that carnal pleasure which is permitted; we ought to understand the word *sweetness*, which the Greeks termed *χρηστότης*, of spiritual blessings: for on this account our translators have preferred to render it by *goodness*. I think therefore that nothing else is meant by the words, *Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant*, than this, Thou hast made me feel delight in that which is good. For when that which is good delighteth, it is a great gift of God. But when the good work which the law commandeth is done from a fear of punishment, not from a delight in righteousness, when God is dreaded, not loved; it is the act of a slave, not of a freeman. Now *the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever*: for *perfect love casteth out fear*. Thou hast, therefore, *dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, O Lord*: by making him a son, who was a slave: according unto *Thine utterance*, that is, according unto Thy promise; *that the promise might be sure to all the seed through faith*.

John 8,  
36.  
1 John  
4, 18.

Rom. 4,  
16.

2. Ver. 66. *O learn me sweetness, and understanding, and knowledge*, he saith, *for I have believed Thy commandments*. He prayeth these things may be increased and perfected; for how could he who had just said, *Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant*, say, *O learn me sweetness*, save in this sense, that the grace of God may become more and more known unto him through the sweetness of

Luke 17,  
5.

goodness? For they who said, *Lord, increase our faith*, had faith. And as long as we live in this world, these are the words of those who are making progress. But he addeth, *understanding*, or, as most copies read, *discipline*. Now the word discipline, for which the Greeks use *παιδεία*, is employed in Scripture, where instruction through tribulation

Heb. 12,  
6.

is to be understood: according to the words, *Whom the Lord loveth He disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth*. In the literature of the Church this is usually called discipline, translated from the Greek *παιδεία*. For this word is used in the Greek in the Epistle to the Hebrews,

where the Latin translator saith, "No discipline for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that have been exercised thereby." He therefore toward whom the Lord dealeth in sweetness, that is, he in whom He mercifully inspires delight in that which is good; to speak more plainly, he unto whom is given by God the love of God, and the love of our neighbour on account of God; he indeed ought to pray instantly, that this gift may be so increased unto him, that he may not only despise all other delights in comparison with it, but also that he may endure any amount of sufferings for its sake. Thus is discipline healthfully added to sweetness. This discipline ought not to be desired, and prayed for, for a small measure of grace and goodness, that is, holy love; but for so great, as may not be extinguished by the weight of the chastening; but, like a great conflagration under the impulse of the wind, in proportion as it is withstood, may rekindle with redoubled ardour. For this reason it was not enough to say, *Thou hast dealt in sweetness toward Thy servant*: without again praying that He would teach him sweetness, so much in fact as to enable him to endure with the utmost patience the discipline. In the third place is mentioned knowledge; since, if knowledge in its greatness outstrips the increase of love, it doth not edify, but *puffeth up*. When therefore love in the sweetness of goodness shall be so strong, as that it cannot be extinguished by the tribulations which discipline useth; then will knowledge be useful, whereby a man learneth what he hath himself deserved, and what hath been given him of God, through which he discovereth that he can do what he knew not that he could do, and what he could not do by any means by himself.

3. But in that he saith, not, Give unto me; but, *O learn me*; how is the sweetness taught, if it be not given? Since many know what doth not delight them, and find no sweetness in things of which they have knowledge. For sweetness cannot be learnt, unless it please. Also discipline, which signifieth the tribulation which chasteneth, is learnt by receiving; that is, not by hearing, or reading, or thinking, but by feeling. But knowledge, which he hath placed third of the things of

PSALM  
CXIX.  
XVII. which he says, *Teach me*, is given by teaching. For what is to teach, save to give knowledge? and these two things are so mutually connected, that the one cannot exist without the other. For no one is taught except he learn, and no one learneth save he be taught. And therefore if a pupil be not able to understand what is said by the teacher, the teacher cannot say, I *taught* him, but he did not learn: though he may say, I told him what was to be said, but he did not learn; because he had no perception, no comprehension, no understanding. For, in truth, he too would have learnt, if the teacher had taught. And therefore God, when He would teach, first giveth understanding, without which a man cannot learn those things which pertain to the divine doctrine: whence also the Psalmist a little below

ver. 78. saith, *O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.* A man may then, when he wisheth to teach any one, say those words which our Lord said to His disciples, after He rose from the dead: but he cannot do what

Luke 24.  
45. 46. He did. For the Gospel saith, *Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them.* But what He said unto them, is read there: but they understood what He said, because He opened unto them the means of understanding it. God therefore teacheth sweetness by inspiring delight, He teacheth discipline by tempering tribulation, he teacheth knowledge by insinuating perception. Since then there are some things which we learn merely that we may know them, others that we may also do them; when God teacheth them, He so teacheth that we may know what ought to be known, by opening the truth; so teacheth that we may do what we ought to do, by inspiring sweetness. For it is no idle

Ps. 143.  
10. prayer to Him: *Teach me that I may do Thy will.* He saith, Teach me that I may do, not merely that I may know. For the righteous deeds we work, are the fruits which we

Ps. 85,  
12. render unto our Landlord; but Scripture saith, *The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her increase.* But what is that land, save that concerning which it is said

Ps. 143.  
6. to Him Who giveth sweetness, *My soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land.*

4. After saying, *O learn me sweetness, discipline, and*

knowledge, he addeth, *for I have believed Thy commandments*: and herein we may justly enquire, why he said not, I obeyed, rather than, I believed. For commandments are one thing, promises another. We undertake to obey commandments, that we may deserve to receive promises. We therefore believe promises, obey commandments. What then meaneth, *I have believed Thy commandments*, save this, I believe that Thou didst command them; Thou, not some human being, although they have been ministered unto men through men? Since therefore I believed that they were Thy commandments, let that faith of mine whereby I believed this, gain from Thee grace whereby I may do what Thou hast commanded. For if a man were to command me this outwardly, would he assist me inwardly to do what he ordered? Teach me therefore sweetness by inspiring charity, teach me discipline by giving patience, teach me knowledge by enlightening my understanding: *for I have believed Thy commandments*. I have believed that Thou Who art God, and Who givest unto man whence Thou mayest cause him to do what Thou commandest, hast commanded these things.

5. Ver. 67. *Before I was humbled, I went wrong; wherefore I have kept Thy word*; or, as some have it more closely, *Thy utterance*, that is, lest I should be humbled again. This is better referred to that humiliation which took place in Adam, in whom the whole human creature, as it were, being corrupted at the root, as it refused to be subject to truth, *was made subject to vanity*. Which it was profitable to the vessels of mercy to feel, that by throwing down pride, obedience might be loved, and misery perish never again to return.

6. Ver. 68. *Sweet art Thou, O Lord*; or, as many have it, *Sweet art Thou, even Thou, O Lord*. Some also, *Sweet art Thou*, or, *Good art Thou*: as we have before treated of this word: *and in Thy sweetness teach me Thy statutes*. He truly desireth to do the righteousnesses of God, since he desireth to learn them in His sweetness from Him unto Whom he hath said, *Sweet art Thou, O Lord*.

7. Ver. 69. Next he saith, *The iniquity of the proud hath been multiplied upon me*: of those, that is, whom it pro-

368 *The humble learn more and more to love obedience.*

Psalm 119, st. 1. fitted not that human nature was humbled after it went  
 (XIX, wrong. *But I will search Thy commandments with my*  
 XVII. *whole heart.* Howsoever, he saith, iniquity shall abound,  
 Mat. 24, love shall not grow cold in me. He, as it were, saith this, who  
 12. in His sweetness learneth the righteousnesses of God. For  
 in proportion as the commandments of Him Who aideth us  
 are the more sweet, so much the more doth he who loveth  
 Him search after them, that he may perform them when  
 known, and may learn them by doing them; because they  
 are more perfectly understood when they are performed.

8. Ver. 70. *Their heart is curdled as milk.* Whose, save  
 the proud, whose iniquity he hath said hath been multiplied  
 upon him? But he wisheth it to be understood by this  
 word, and in this passage, that their heart hath become hard.

Ps. 66, It is used also in a good sense, as in the 67th Psalm, *A hill*  
 16. *that is cheesed, a rich hill;* and is understood to mean, full  
 of grace: for this word, some have also interpreted *curdled*.  
 But see what he contrasts on his own part with their hard-  
 ness of heart: *But I, he saith, delight in Thy law.* What  
 law? One that is most just, and most merciful; whence it  
 is said unto Him, *And have mercy upon me according to*  
 James 4, *Thy law.* *He resisteth the proud,* that they may become  
 6. and hardened; but *giveth grace to the humble,* that they may  
 1 Pet. 5, love obedience, and receive excellence. For by delight in  
 6. this law voluntary humiliation is preserved, so that penal  
 humiliation be escaped, of which he presently speaketh.

9. Ver. 71. *It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me:*  
*that I might learn Thy righteousnesses.* He hath said  
 something kindred to this above: *Before I was troubled, I*  
*went wrong: therefore have I kept Thy word.* For by the  
 fruit itself he sheweth that it was a good thing for him to be  
 humbled; but in the former passage he hath stated the  
 cause also, in that he had felt beforehand that humiliation  
 which resulted from his punishment, when he went wrong.  
 But in these words, *Wherefore have I kept Thy word:* and  
 again in these, *That I might learn Thy righteousnesses:* he  
 seemeth to me to have signified, that to know these is the  
 same thing as to keep them, to keep them the same thing as  
 to know them. For Christ knew what He reprov'd; and

2 Cor. 5, yet he reprov'd sin, though it is said of Him that *He knew*  
 21.

*not sin.* He knew therefore by a kind of knowledge, and again he knew not by a kind of ignorance. Thus also many <sup>V ER.</sup> learn the righteousnesses of God, and learn them not. For <sup>72.</sup> they know them in a certain way; and again do not know them from a kind of ignorance, since they do them not. In this sense the Psalmist therefore is to be understood to have said, *That I might learn Thy righteousnesses*, meaning that kind of knowledge whereby they are performed.

10. Ver. 72. But that this is not gained, save through love, wherein he who doeth them hath delight, on which account it is said, *In Thy sweetness teach me Thy righteousnesses*: the following verse sheweth, wherein he saith, *The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver*: so that love loveth the law of God more than avarice loveth thousands of gold and silver.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

Discourse XVIII.

1. Ver. 73. WHEN God made man out of dust, and gave him life with His breath, it is not there mentioned that He made him with His hands. Why therefore some should have thought that God created every thing else by His word, but man, as if the chief part of His creation, with His hands, I do not see: save perhaps, because the human body is said to have been formed *out of dust*, they imagine it could not have been created except by hands; nor do they <sup>Gen. 2,</sup> heed that as it is written in the Gospel concerning the word of God, *All things were made by Him*, this cannot be consistent, unless the human body also was made by the Word. <sup>John 1,</sup> But they adduce testimony from this Psalm, saying, Behold where a man so clearly crieth out, (ver. 73.) *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me.* As if it were not also openly said, *I will consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers*: <sup>Ps. 8, 3,</sup> nor less openly, *And the heavens are the work of Thy hands*; <sup>Ps. 102,</sup> and even more openly, *and His hands formed the dry land.* <sup>Ps. 93, 5.</sup> The hands of God are therefore the power of God. Or if the plural number moveth them, since it is not said, Thy hand, but, *Thy hands*; let them understand by the hands of

390 *The 'arm' of God. His 'making,' and 'forming.'*

PSALM CXIX. God the power and wisdom of God, both of which titles are  
 XVIII. given to one Christ; Who is also understood under the  
 1 Cor. 1, figure, Arm of the Lord, where it is read, *And unto whom*  
 24. *hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Or let them  
 Isa. 53, understand by the hands of God, the Son and the Holy  
 1. Spirit; since the Holy Spirit worketh conjointly with the  
 1 Cor. Father and the Son: whence saith the Apostle, *But all these*  
 12, 11. *worketh that one and the self-same Spirit:* he said, *one*  
*and the self-same;* lest as many spirits as works might  
 be imagined, not that the Spirit worketh without the Father  
 and the Son. It is easy therefore to see how the hands of  
 God are to be understood: provided, at the same time, that  
 He be not denied to do those things through His Word  
 which he doth by His hands: nor be considered not to do  
 those things with His hands, which He doth through His  
 word; nor on account of the expression, hands, a bodily  
 form, one left and another right hand; nor on account of the  
 term, word, any oral sound, or passing emotion of the mind,  
 be supposed to exist in God Who worketh.

2. And there have been some who thus distinguished  
 these two words, *made and fashioned me*, as to say that  
 God made the soul, and fashioned the body; because God  
 Isa. 57, saith of the soul, *I have made every soul;* while it is said  
 16. of the body, *And God formed man of the dust of the*  
 Gen. 2, *ground;* as if every thing that was formed were made,  
 7. although every thing that is made is not also formed. Thus  
 they assert, that the soul was rather made than formed  
 because it is not body, but spirit; as if it were not written,  
 Zech. *He who formed the spirit of man within him.* Nevertheless,  
 12, 1. when each of these words is used of man in the same  
 passage, and since each element of man, that is, both soul  
 and body, are not denied to be divinely created: special  
 epithets are with some elegance applied to each, respectively;  
 so that the soul is understood to be made, but the body to  
 be formed, or fashioned, or shaped. (For some translators  
 have not chosen to put *finxerunt me*, but *plasmaverunt*;  
 being better pleased to derive an indifferent Latin word  
 from the Greek, than to say *finxerunt*, which is sometimes  
 used also for making a counterfeit.)

3. But is this said in respect of Adam? from whom since

all men were propagated, what man, since Adam was made, may not say that he himself also was made by reason of procreation and generation from Adam? Or may it rightly be said, in this sense, *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me*, namely, that every man is born even of his parents not without the work of God, God creating, they generating? Since, if the creative<sup>1</sup> power of God be withdrawn from things, they perish: nor is any thing at all, either of the world's elements, or of parents, or of seeds, produced, if God doth not create it. On which account He saith to the prophet Jeremiah, *Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee*. But did God make man without understanding, either the first man, or each man born, so that he now saith unto Him, *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me: O give me understanding?* Was not understanding given to human nature itself, that it might thus be distinguished from the herd? Hath it been so deformed by sinning, that even this must needs be formed again in it? On which account also the Apostle saith unto all who belong to the regeneration, *Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind*: and the understanding is, of course, in the mind. Hence again he saith, *Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*; and of those who were not partakers of this regeneration, *This I say, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart*. On account therefore of these inward eyes, whose blindness it is not to understand, that they may be opened, and may be made more and more clear, hearts are purified by faith. For although, he understand somewhat, no man can believe in God; nevertheless, by the very faith whereby he believeth, he is helped, that he may understand greater things. For there are some things which we do not believe, save we understand them; and there are other things which we do not understand, save we believe them. For since *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ*; how can one believe him who preacheth the faith, if he (to say nothing of other points) understandeth not the very tongue which he

VER.  
73.

<sup>1</sup> opera-  
toria.

Jer. 1, 5.

Rom. 12,

<sup>2</sup>.

Eph. 4,

<sup>23</sup>.

ib. 17, 18.

Acts 15,

<sup>9</sup>.

Rom. 10,

<sup>17</sup>

PSALM CXIX. speaketh? But unless, on the other hand, there were some  
 CXIX. things which we cannot understand, unless we believe them  
 XVIII. first, the prophet would not say, *if ye will not believe, ye*  
 Is 7, 9. *shall not understand.* Our understanding therefore profiteth  
 LX X.

to the understanding of that which it believeth, and faith profiteth to the believing of that which it understandeth; and the mind itself, in proportion as these things are more and more understood, in the very comprehension of them profiteth. But this doth not take place of its own or natural strength: but by the aid and gift of God; as it happeneth by medicine, not through nature, that the diseased eye recovereth its power of sight. He therefore who saith unto God, *O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments*, is not altogether devoid of it, as if a beast; nor in such a state, though a man, as to be reputed among the number of those who *walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God.* For if he were such, he would not even say this. For the understanding which knoweth from whom understanding should be sought, is not of slight value; and we must reflect in how much deeper a sense the Divine commandments should be understood; since he, who already to such a degree understandeth them, and hath already declared that he hath kept the words of God, still prayeth that understanding may be given him to learn them.

Eph. 4,  
17.

4. The Greek version hath a more concise expression for our, *Give me understanding*, *συνέρισόν μου*, expressing 'give understanding' by the single word *συνέρισον*, which the Latin cannot do; as if one could not say, *Heal me*; and it were necessary to say, *Give me health*, as it is here said, *Give me understanding*; or, *make me whole*, as here it may be said, *make me intelligent.* This indeed an Angel could do: for he said to Daniel, *I am come to give thee understanding*; and this word is in the Greek, as it is here also, *συνέρισον σε*; as if the Latin translator were to render *θεραπεύσει σε* by *sanitatem dare tibi*. For the Latin interpreter would not make a circumlocution by saying, *to give thee understanding*, if, as we say from health, "to heal thee," so one could say from intellect, "to intellectuate thee." But if an Angel could do this, what reason is there that this man

Dan. 10,  
14.

should pray that this be done for him by God? Is it because VER. 73. God had commanded the Angel to do it? Just so: for Christ is understood to have given this command to the Angel, in the passage where the Prophet saith, *And it came* DAN. 8, *to pass, when I Daniel had seen the vision, and sought for* 15. 16. *the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me the appearance of a man, and I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Make this man to understand the vision:* and in the Greek the same word *συνίσιον* is used as here. God therefore, of Himself, because He is light, enlighteneth pious minds, so that they may understand the divine truths which are declared or exhibited. But if He employeth an Angel for His minister towards this object, an Angel may work something in a man's mind, towards his taking in the light of God, and understanding through it; but he is said to give a man understanding, and as it were, so to speak, to intellectuate him; as any one is said to give light to a house, or to illuminate a house, for which he maketh a window; when he doth not penetrate and light it by a light of his own, but merely open an entrance whereby it may be penetrated and enlightened. But neither the sun who lighteneth a house through a window, hath himself created the same house, or the man who made the window in the house; nor hath he commanded him to make it, nor hath he aided the man in making it, or done any thing to open an entrance for the infusion of his beams: whereas God hath created man's mind rational and intellectual, whereby he may take in His light; and He made an Angel such as might work something whereby the human mind might be assisted to take in the light of God; and He so aideth the mind, as to fit it for the reception of angelic working; and He so enlighteneth it of Himself, that not only those things which are displayed by the truth, but even truth itself may be perceived by the mind's eye. But as we have treated with prolixity of these subjects; necessary however to be treated of, in my opinion; let us, putting off our discourse on the remaining verses of this Psalm, close this discourse here.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

## PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XIX.*

**JOB.** 1. Ver. 73. OUR Lord Jesus in this Psalm hath through His prophet sought that understanding be given by God to His Body, which is the Church, as if to Himself, to learn the commandments of God. For with Him the life of His Body, that is, of His people, is hid in God, and He Himself, **Coloss.** 3, 3. in this very Body of His, suffereth want, and prayeth for that which is needful for His members. *Thy hands, he saith, have made me and fashioned me; O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.* Since Thou, saith he, hast formed me, do Thou new form me; that that may **Rom. 12.** be done in Christ's Body, which the Apostle speaks of, *Be 2. transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

2. Ver. 74. *They that fear Thee, he saith, will see me, and be glad:* or, as other copies have it, *will be joyful: because I have hoped in Thy word:* that is, in the things which Thou hast promised, that they may be the sons of promise, **Gen. 12.** the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are blessed. 3. and 26, 4. Who are they who fear God, and whom will they see and be glad, because he hath put his trust in the word of God? Whether it be the body of Christ, that is, the Church, whose words these are through Christ, or within it, and concerning it, these are as it were the words of Christ concerning Himself; are not they themselves among those who fear God? Who then is he whom they see, and are glad? Doth the people see itself, and rejoice; and is it thus written, *They who fear Thee shall see me, and be glad, because I have hoped in Thy word;* or, as others have more carefully rendered it, *I have more hoped:* as if he should say, *They who fear Thee, shall see Thy Church, and be glad, because I have more hoped in Thy words;* since the same persons, who see the Church and are glad, are the Church? But why said he not, *They who fear Thee see me, and are glad:* whereas he hath written, *fear Thee,* in the present tense; while the verbs *shall see,* and *shall be glad,* are futures? Is it because in the present state there is fear, as long as *mun's*

is a temptation upon earth; but the gladness which he sired to be understood, will be then, when the righteous all shine in the kingdom of their Father like the sun. VER. 75. 76. Job 7, 1.  
 or on this account we read thus in another Psalm also: Mat. 13, 43.  
*how plentiful is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee!* Now, therefore, as long as they are, they do not as yet see; but *they will see, and will be glad*: because it there also followeth, *and that Thou hast prepared for them that hope in Thee*; and here, *because I have hoped, or have more hoped in Thy words*: so that we may understand by the word so compounded<sup>1</sup>, the full sense of 1 super-speravi, Gr. ἐπέρω. rich is thus given by the care of a very diligent translator, is, that *God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*; so that, because they are above all ἡλπίσα. Ephes. 3, 20. at we ask or think, it is not enough to hope these things, if we are bound to hope more.

3. Ver. 75, 76. Since then the Church who is in this life will feareth, and doth not as yet behold herself in that kingdom, where her gladness will be free from care, but will toileth among perilous temptations in this world, where she heareth the words, *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*; considering the misery of this mortal state, during which *a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb, till the day that they return in burial to the mother of all things*; so that on account of the flesh lusting against the spirit, even regenerate are compelled to groan beneath its heaviness; 1 Cor. 10, 12. considering this then, (ver. 75.) *I know, she saith, O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in Thy truth Thou hast humbled me. O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.* Mercy and truth are so spoken of in the Divine Word, that while they are found in many passages, especially in the psalms, it is also so read in one place, *All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.* And here indeed he hath placed Pa. 25, 10. truth first, whereby we are humbled unto death, by the judgment of Him Whose judgments are righteousness: next mercy, whereby we are renewed unto life, by the promise of Him Whose blessing is His grace. For this reason he saith, *according to Thy word unto Thy servant*: that is, according

**PSALM** to that which Thou hast promised unto Thy servant.  
**CXIX.** Whether therefore it be regeneration whereby we are here  
**XIX.** adopted among the sons of God, or faith and hope and  
 charity, which three are built up in us, although they come  
 from the mercy of God; nevertheless, in this stormy and  
 troublesome life they are the consolations of the miserable,  
 not the joys of the blessed: for this reason is it said, *O let  
 Thy merciful kindness be my comfort.*

4. Ver. 77. But since those things are destined to happen  
 after and through these, he next saith, *O let Thy loving  
 mercies come upon me, and I shall live.* For then indeed  
 I shall truly live, when I shall not be able to fear lest I die.  
 This is styled life absolutely and without any addition; nor  
 is any life save that which is everlasting and blessed under-  
 stood, as though it alone were to be called life, compared  
 with which that which we now lead ought rather to be called  
 death than life: according to those words in the Gospel,  
**Mat. 19,** *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Did  
 17. He add life eternal, or blessed? Again, when speaking of  
 the resurrection of the flesh, He saith, *They that have done*  
**John 5,** *good, unto the resurrection of life:* nor doth He here add  
 29. everlasting or blessed. So also here: *O let Thy loving  
 mercies come upon me, and I shall live:* nor doth he here  
 say, I shall live for ever, or, I shall live blissfully, as if it  
 were no other thing to live than to live without any end and  
 without any misery. But what is this a reward for? *For  
 Thy law,* he saith, *is my meditation.* Unless this meditation  
**Gal. 5, 6.** were in *faith, which worketh by love,* no man could arrive at  
 that life on account of it. This I have thought it necessary  
 to state, that no man when he hath committed to memory  
 the whole law, and hath repeated it over and over again in  
 constant recollection of it, not silent as to what it enjoineth,  
 yet not living as it enjoineth, may imagine that he hath  
 done what he readeth, *Thy law is my meditation;* and hence  
 imagine that he shall gain, what in the words above the  
 Psalmist hath prayed for on account of this merit, which he  
 here mentioneth in these words; *O let Thy loving mercies  
 come upon me, and I shall live.* This meditation is the  
 thought of one who loveth, and who loveth so fervently, that  
**Mat. 25,** the love of this meditation of his groweth not cold, by how-

soever great abundance of others' wickedness it be thronged  
around.

VER.  
78—80.  
Mat. 25,  
12.

5. Ver. 78. He then goeth on as follows; *Let the proud be confounded, for they have unrighteously practised iniquity against me: but I will be occupied in Thy commandments.* Behold, what he saith, the meditation of the law of God, or rather, his meditation the law of God.

6. Ver. 79. *Let such as fear Thee*, he saith, *and have known Thy testimonies, be turned unto me.* In some copies, both Greek and Latin, we have found *convertantur mihi*, which I consider to mean just the same as if it were, *ad me*. But who is he who saith this? For no mortal will venture to say this, or if he say it, should be listened to. Indeed, it is He who above also hath interposed His own words, saying, *I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee.* Because He was made sharer in our mortal state, that we might also become partakers in His Divine Nature, we became sharers in One unto life, He a sharer in many unto death. He it is unto Whom they that fear God turn, and who know the testimonies of God, so long before predicted of Him through the Prophets, a little before displayed in His presence through miracles.

7. Ver. 80. *O let my heart*, he saith, *be unspotted in Thy righteousnesses, that I be not ashamed.* He returneth to the words of His body, that is, His holy people, and now prayeth that his heart may be made unspotted, that is, the heart of His members; *in the righteousnesses of God*, not in their own strength: for He hath prayed for this, not presumed upon it. In the words he hath added, *that I be not ashamed*, there is a resemblance to some of the earlier verses of this Psalm, where he saith, *O that my ways were made so v. 5. 6. direct, that I might keep Thy righteousnesses! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.* Whereas there, in the words, *O that*, he signifieth a wish, he hath here expressed himself in the more open words of one praying: *O let my heart be sound*: so that in neither of these two sentences, each of which is one and the same, there is found the boldness of one who trusteth in his own free will against grace. While he saith there, *so shall I not be confounded*: he saith here, *that I be not ashamed.*

398 *The heart made unspotted. A good sense of failing.*

PSALM CXIX. XIX. The heart then of the members and the body of Christ is made unspotted, through the grace of God, by means of the very Head of that Body, that is, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the *laver of regeneration*, wherein all our past sins have been blotted out; through the aid of the Spirit, whereby we lust against the flesh, that we be not overcome in our fight; through the efficacy of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we say, *Forgive us our trespasses*. Thus regeneration having been given to us, our conflict having been aided, prayer having been poured forth, our heart is made unspotted, so that we be not ashamed: since this also relateth to the statutes of God, it being enjoined among the rest of His commandments, *Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you.*

Titus 3, 5.  
Gal. 5, 17.  
Matt. 6, 12.  
Luke 6, 37, 38.

LAT. CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XX.*

CAPH. 1. Ver. 81. WITH the Lord's help, we have undertaken to consider and expound this part of this great Psalm, where it is said, *My soul hath failed for Thy salvation: and I have hoped because of Thy word*. It is not every failing that should be supposed to be blameable or deserving punishment: there is also a failing that is laudable or desirable. For as these two things, to advance (*proficere*), and to fail (*deficere*), are contrary to one another; succeeding is generally taken in a good sense, failing in a bad, when it is not added or understood wherein there is advance or failure: but when it is added, it may be at once a bad thing to advance, and a good thing to fail. For the Apostle saith openly, *Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will advance unto more ungodliness*: he saith also of some: *They shall wax worse*. So also failing from a good state towards a bad one, is bad, from a bad state towards a good one, is good. For it is said of a good failing: *My soul hath a desire and failing to enter into the courts of the Lord*. So also here he saith not, *faileth away from Thy salvation*, but *faileth for Thy salvation*, that is, towards Thy salvation. This losing ground is therefore good: for it doth indicate a

2 Tim. 2, 16.  
ib. 3, 13.  
Ps. 84, 2.

longing after good, not as yet indeed gained, but most eagerly and earnestly desired. But who saith this, save the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, longing for Christ from 'the origin of the human race even unto the end of this world, in the persons of those who, each in his own time, have lived, are living, or are to live here? Witness the most holy old man Simeon, who when he had taken Him up, an infant, in his arms, said, *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.* For he had received a divine oracle, *that he should not taste of death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.* Now we must believe that there was such a longing in all the saints of former times, as there was in this old man. Whence also our Lord Himself saith to His disciples, *Many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them;* so that their own words also are recognised in this passage, *My soul hath failed for Thy salvation.* Neither at that time, then, had this longing of the Saints found rest, nor is it now at rest in the body of Christ, which is the Church, until the end of the world, until *the Desire of all nations* come, as is promised through the Prophet. Wherefore the Apostle saith, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love His appearing.* This desire then of which we are now speaking, ariseth from the love of His appearing; of which he also saith, *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.* The first seasons of the Church, therefore, had Saints, before the Virgin's delivery, who desired the advent of His Incarnation: but these times, since He hath ascended into heaven, have Saints who desire His manifestation to judge the quick and the dead. Nor hath this desire of the Church had any rest from the beginning unto the end of the world, save during the short season when He was here in the flesh with His disciples, so that the voice of the whole Body of Christ groaning in this life may be conveniently understood, *My soul hath failed for thy salvation, and I have*

VER.  
81.

1 Pet. 2,  
9.

Luke 2,  
29. 30.  
26.

Mat. 13,  
17.

Haggai  
2, 7.

2 Tim.  
4, 8.

Coloss.  
3, 4.

Rom. 8,  
25.

PSALM CXIX.  
XX.  
*hoped because of Thy word:* that is, of Thy promise; a hope which causeth us to await with patience that which is not seen by those who believe. Here also the Greek hath the word *ἐπέλπισα*, which some of our translators have preferred rendering by, *hoped-more*; since beyond doubt it will be greater than can be described.

2. Ver. 82. *Mine eyes*, he saith, *have failed for Thy word, saying, O when will Thou comfort me?* Behold that praiseworthy and blessed failing, in the eyes again, but his inner eyes, not arising from infirmity of mind, but from the strength of his longing for the promise of God: for this he saith, *for Thy word*. But in what sense can such eyes say, *When will Thou comfort me?* save when we pray and groan with such earnestness and ardent expectation. For the tongue, not the eyes, is wont to speak: but in some sense the voice of the eyes is the longing of prayer. But in the words, *When will thou comfort me?* he sheweth that he  
Pa. 6, 3. endureth as it were delay. Whence is this also, *How long, Lord, will Thou punish me?* And this is done either that the happiness may be the sweeter when deferred, or this is the sentiment of those who long, since the space of time, which may be short to Him Who cometh to their aid, is tedious to the loving. But God knoweth what he doth and when, for He *hath ordered all things in measure and number and weight*.  
Wind. 11, 18.

3. Ver. 83. But when spiritual desires burn, carnal desires without doubt cool: on this account followeth, *Since I am become like a bottle in the frost, I do not forget Thy righteousnesses*. Truly he desireth this mortal flesh to be understood by the bottle, the heavenly blessing by the frost, whereby the lusts of the flesh as it were by the biuding of the frost become sluggish; and hence it ariseth that the righteousnesses of God do not slip from the memory, as long as we do not meditate apart from them; since what the Apostle saith is brought to pass: *Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*. Therefore when he had said, *For I have become like a bottle in the frost*, he added, *and I do not forget Thy righteousnesses*: that is, I forget them not, because I have become such. For the fervour of lust hath cooled, that the memory of love might glow.  
Rom. 13, 14.

4. Ver. 84. *How many are the days of Thy servant? when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me?* VER. 48—86. Rev. 6, 10. 11. In the Apocalypse, these are the words of the Martyrs, and long-suffering is enjoined them until the number of their brethren be fulfilled. The body of Christ then is asking concerning its days, what they are to be in this world, and that no man might suppose that the Church would cease to exist here before the end of the world came, and that some time would elapse in this world, while the Church was now no more on earth; therefore, when he had enquired concerning the days, he added also respecting the judgment, shewing indeed that the Church would exist on earth until the judgment, when vengeance shall fall upon Her persecutors. But if any one wonder why he should ask that question, to which when asked by the disciples, their Master replied, *It is not for you* Acts 1, 7. *to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power; why should we not believe that in this passage of the Psalm it was prophesied that they should ask this very question, and that the words of the Church, which were so long before uttered here, were fulfilled in their question?*

5. Ver. 85. In what followeth: *The wicked have told me pleasant tales: but not like Thy law, O Lord:* the Latin translators have endeavoured to render the Greek *ἄδολοσχίας*, which cannot be expressed in one Latin word, so that some have rendered it 'delights,' and others 'fablings,' so that we must understand to be meant some kind of compositions, but in discourse of a nature to give pleasure. Both secular literature, and the Jewish book entitled Deuterosis\*, containing besides the canon of divine Scripture thousands of tales, comprise these in their different sects and professions; the vain and wandering loquacity of heretics holds them also. All these he wished to be considered as wicked, by whom he saith that *ἄδολοσχίας* were related to him, that is, compositions which gave pleasure solely in their style: *But not, he addeth, as Thy law, O Lord; because truth, not words, pleases me therein.*

6. Ver. 86. Lastly, he addeth, *All Thy commandments*

\* The Mishna. *δευτέρωσις* is used, in Catal. on Papias and elsewhere. of however, by St. Jerome for tradition Ecclus. xlii. 1. LXX. in general. See on Isaiah lix. 12—15.

**PSALM** *are truth: they have persecuted me unjustly; O be Thou*  
**CXIX.** *my help.* And the whole sense dependeth upon the fore-  
**XX.**  
**ver. 84.** *going: How many are the days of Thy servant: when wilt*  
*Thou be avenged of them that persecute me?* For that they  
 may persecute me, they have related to me these pleasant  
 tales; but I have preferred Thy law to them, which on that  
 account hath pleased me more, because all Thy command-  
 ments are true; not as in their discourses, where vanity  
 aboundeth. And for this reason *they have persecuted me*  
*falsely*, because in me they have persecuted nothing save  
 the truth. Therefore help Thou me, that I may struggle  
 for the truth even unto death; because this is at once Thy  
 commandment, and therefore it is also the truth.

7. Ver. 87. When the Church acted thus, She suffered  
 what he hath added, *They had almost made an end of me*  
*upon earth:* a great slaughter of martyrs having been made,  
 while they confess and preach the truth. But since it is not  
 in vain said, *O help Thou me;* he addeth, *But I forsook not*  
*Thy commandments.*

8. Ver. 88. And that She might persevere unto the end,  
*O quicken me,* he saith, *after Thy loving mercy: and so*  
*shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth;* where the Greek  
 hath *Magrúgia*. This was not to be passed over in silence,  
 on account of that sweetest name of Martyrs, who beyond  
 doubt when so great cruelty of the persecutors was raging,  
 that the Church was almost made an end of upon earth,  
 would never have kept the testimonies of God, unless that  
 had been vouchsafed them which is here spoken of, *O*  
*quicken me after Thy loving-kindness.* For they were  
 quickened, lest by loving life, they should deny the life, and  
 by denying it, should lose it: and thus they who for life  
 refused to forsake the truth, lived by dying for the truth.

**LAT.**  
**CXVIII.**

**PSALM CXIX.**

*Discourse XXI.*

1. Ver. 89. **THE** man who speaketh in this Psalm, as if he  
 were tired of human mutability, whence this life is full of  
 temptations, among his tribulations, on account of which he  
**ver. 86.** had above said, *The wicked have persecuted me;* and, *They*  
**ver. 87.** *have almost made an end of me upon earth;* burning with

longings for the heavenly Jerusalem; looked up to the realms above, and said, *O Lord, Thy word endureth for ever in heaven*: that is, among Thy Angels who serve everlastingly in Thine armies, without desertion. VER.  
90.

2. Ver. 90. But the next verse, after heaven, pertaineth consequently to earth. For this is one verse of the eight which relate to this letter. For eight verses are appended to each of these Hebrew letters, (apices,) until this long Psalm be ended. *Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to the other: Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.* Beholding therefore the earth next after heaven with the gaze of a faithful mind, he findeth in it generations which are not in heaven, and saith, *Thy truth remaineth from one generation to the other*: signifying all generations by this expression, from which the Truth of God was never absent in His saints, at one time fewer, at one time more in number, according as the times happened or shall happen to vary; or wishing two particular generations to be understood, one pertaining to the Law and the Prophets, another to the Gospel. And as if opening the reason why truth is never wanting to these generations even, he addeth, *Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth*: meaning by the earth those that are on the earth. *But other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* For no other than Christ was also the foundation of that generation which belonged to the Law and the Prophets, *being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.* Or are Moses and the Prophets to be counted as the sons of the bondwoman who bore sons unto slavery, not of the freewoman, who is the mother of us all; to whom a man shall say, *Mother Sion; and He was born in her, and the Most High shall stablish her?* For He is Himself Most High with His Father, and for our sake was born most humble of His mother; since He Who was God above her, became a man in her. On this foundation then, *O Lord, hast Thou founded the earth, and it abideth*, since, firmly grounded on such a foundation, *it shall not move at any time*; abiding most truly among them unto whom Thou wilt give eternal life. But those whom the bondwoman brought forth, belonging to the Old Testament, in the figures

LAMED.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 3, 11.

Rom. 8, 21.

Gal. 4, 24, 26.  
Ps. 87, 5.

Ps. 104, 5.

PSALM of which, nevertheless, the New lay hid, because they  
 CXIX. savoured of nothing save earthly promises, do not abide.  
 XXI. *For the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the*  
 JOHN 8, 35. *Son abideth for ever.*

3. Ver. 91. *Day continueth according to Thy ordinance.*

Ps. 118, 24. *For all these things are day: and this is the day which the*  
 ROM. 13, 13. *Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it: and let*  
 13. *us walk honestly as in the day. For all things serve Thee.*

He said all things of some: *all* which belong to this day,  
 HOSEA 4, 5. LXX. *serve Thee. For the ungodly of whom it is said, I have*  
 5. LXX. *compared thy mother unto the night, do not serve Thee.*

4. Ver. 92. He then looketh back towards the source of this  
 earth's deliverance, which caused it to abide when founded;  
 and addeth, *If my delight had not been in Thy law, I should*  
*perchance have perished in my humiliation.* This is the  
 GAL. 5, 6. law of faith, not a vain faith, but that which worketh through  
 love. Through this grace is gained, which maketh men  
 courageous in temporal tribulation, that they may not perish  
 in the humiliation of mortality.

5. Ver. 93. *I will never forget, he saith, Thy righteous-*  
*nesses, for with them Thou hast quickened me.* Behold how  
 it was that he did not perish in his humiliation. For, save  
 God quickeneth, what is man, who can indeed kill, but  
 cannot quicken himself?

6. Ver. 94. He next addeth: *I am Thine: O save me, for*  
*I have sought Thy righteousnesses.* We must not understand  
 lightly the words, *I am Thine.* For what is not His?  
 Because God is in heaven, are we to suppose that there is  
 any thing on earth which is not His; when another Psalm  
 PS. 24, 1. saith, *The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is: the*  
*compass of the world, and they that dwell therein.* Why  
 then is it that the Psalmist hath commended himself unto  
 God somewhat in a more familiar sense, in these words,  
*I am Thine: O save me; save because he wished it to be*  
*understood that he had desired to be his own only to his harm,*  
*which is the first and the greatest evil of disobedience? and*  
*as if he should say, I wished to be my own, and I lost*  
*myself: I am Thine, he saith, O save me, for I have sought*  
*Thy righteousnesses; not my own inclinations, whereby I was*  
*my own, but Thy righteousnesses, that I might now be Thine.*

7. Ver. 95. *The ungodly, he saith, have awaited me that they might destroy me; but I have understood Thy testimonies.* <sup>VER. 95, 96.</sup> What meaneth, *have awaited me that they might destroy me?* does it mean that they beset the road with an ambush, waiting that they might slay him when he passed? Did he then fear that he should perish altogether at the death of his body? God forbid! and what meaneth, *have awaited me*, save that he should consent with them unto iniquity? For then they would destroy him. And he hath said why he hath not perished: *I understood Thy testimonies.* The Greek word, *Μαγρώσια*, soundeth more familiarly to the ears of the Church. For though they should slay me not consenting unto them, yet while I confessed Thy testimonies (martyria) I should not perish; but they who, that they might destroy me, were waiting till I should consent unto them, tortured me even when I did confess them. Yet he did not leave that which he had understood, looking on it and seeing an end without end, if only he should persevere unto the end.

8. Ver. 96. Lastly, he next saith, *I have seen an end of all consummation: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.* For he had entered into the sanctuary of God, and had understood the end. Now *all consummation* appeareth to me in this place to signify, the striving even unto death for the truth, and the endurance of every evil for the true and chief good: the end of which consummation is to excel in the kingdom of Christ, which hath no end; and there to have without death, without pain, and with great honour, life, acquired by the death of this life, and by sorrows and reproaches. But in what he hath added, *Thy commandment is exceeding broad*; I understand only love. For what would it have profited him, whatever death impended over him, in the midst of whatsoever torment, to confess those testimonies, if love were not in the confessor? Let us hear the Apostle: *though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* <sup>1Cor. 13, 3.</sup> Now the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us. In this shedding abroad there is breadth, in which we walk even in a strait path without straitness, by the gift of Him unto Whom it is said, *Thou shalt make room enough* <sup>1Cor. 13, 5.</sup>

**PSALM CXIX.** *under me for me to go, and my footsteps shall not slide.*  
**XXI.** Broad therefore is the commandment of charity, that twofold  
**Ps. 18,** commandment, whereby we are enjoined to love God and  
**86.** our neighbour. But what is broader than that, *on* which  
**Mat. 22,**  
**37—40.** *hang all the Law and the Prophets?*

**LAT.**  
**CXVIII.**

**PSALM CXIX.**

*Discourse XXII.*

**MEM.** 1. Ver. 97. WE have frequently admonished you, that love was to be understood by that praiseworthy breadth, by means of which, while we do the commandments of God, we feel no straitness. On this account also after saying above  
**ver. 96.** in this great Psalm, *Thy commandment is exceeding broad:* in the following verse he sheweth wherefore it is broad: *what love have I unto Thy law, O Lord!* Love is therefore the breadth of the commandment. For how can it be that what God commandeth to be loved, be loved, and yet the commandment itself be not loved? For this itself is the law; *in all the day,* he saith, *is my study in it.* Behold how I have loved it, that in the whole day my study is in it; or rather, as the Greek hath it, *all the day long,* which more fully expresses the continuance of meditation. Now that, is to be understood through all time; which is, for ever. By such love lust is driven out: lust, which repeatedly opposeth our performing the commandments of the law, when *the flesh Gal. 5,* *lusteth against the spirit:* against which the spirit lusting,  
**17.** ought so to love the law of God, that it be its study during  
**Rom. 3,** the whole day. But the Apostle saith, *Where is boasting*  
**27.** *then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay:* *Gal. 5, 6. but by the law of faith.* This is the *faith which worketh by*  
**Luke 11,** *love;* since it prayeth for the good Spirit by seeking, asking,  
**10. 13.** knocking, through Whom love itself is shed abroad in our  
**Rom. 5,** hearts. For all who are *led by this Spirit of God, are the*  
**5.** *sons of God;* who are received that they may *sit down with*  
**Rom. 8,** *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,* the  
**14.** servant being driven out, who doth not remain in the house  
**Mat. 8,** *for ever; that is, Israel according to the flesh, unto whom it*  
**11.** *is said, When ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob,*  
**John 8,** *and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God, and you*  
**35.**  
**Luke 31,**  
**23—30.**

*The Church understands the Commandment above the Jews.* 407

*yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. But the Gentiles, saith the Vessel of Election, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. Thus they became the enemies of Him who here speaketh in the prophecy.*

2. Ver. 98. And he then addeth: *Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies; for it is ever with me. For they have indeed a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness, not being subject to the righteousness of God.* But the Psalmist, who understandeth the commandment of God above these his enemies, wishes to be found with the Apostle, *not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, which is of God;* not that the Law which his enemies read is not of God, but because they do not understand it, like him who understandeth it above his enemies, by clinging to the Stone upon which they stumbled. For *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that they may be justified freely through His grace;* not like those who imagine that they obey the law of their own strength, and are therefore, though by God's law, yet still endeavouring to set up their own righteousness; but as the son of promise, who hungering and athirst after it, by seeking, by asking, by knocking, as it were begs it of the Father, that being adopted he may receive it through His only-begotten Son. But when would he thus have understood the commandment of God, unless He Himself had caused him to understand it, unto Whom he saith, *Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies?* For those his enemies, born, as it were, of Agar, unto bondage, sought from the same

VER.  
98.

ROM. 9,  
30. 32.

ROM. 10,  
2. 3.

PHIL. 3,  
9.

ROM. 10,  
4.

MATT. 5,  
6.  
ID. 7, 7.

GAL. 4,  
24.

**PSALM CXIX. XXII.** mandment temporal rewards; and therefore it was not unto them for ever, as it was unto this man. For they who have translated *for ever* have rendered better than they who have written *for an age*, since at the end of time there can be no longer a commandment of the law. In this sense indeed there will be none, none written in visible tablets and books; but in the tablets of the heart, the love of God and of our neighbour will abide for ever; on which twofold commandment the whole Law and the Prophets hang; and He Who gave the commandment will Himself be the reward of the keeping of this commandment, and He Who is loved will be the reward of love, when *God shall be all in all*.

**Mat. 23, 37—40.** 3. Ver. 99. But what meaneth the following verse, *I have more understanding than my teachers?* Who is he who had more understanding than all his teachers? Who, I ask, is he, who dareth to prefer himself in understanding above all the Prophets, who not only by speaking taught with so excellent authority those who lived with them, but also their posterity by writing? On Solomon indeed such wisdom was conferred, that he seemeth to have been preferred to all those who were before him; but it is not to be believed that he could here have been prophesied of by his father David; chiefly because what is here said, *I have refrained my feet from every evil way*, could not have been spoken in Solomon's person. Moreover if, and this is more probable, this prophet foretels Christ, at one time in the Head which is the Saviour Himself, at another in the Body which is the Church, uttering the words of prophecy, and making it seem as though one spake, on account of that great mystery, where it is said, *And they two shall be one flesh*; I recognise plainly Him Who had more understanding than His teachers, since when He was a boy of twelve years of age, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and was found by His parents after three days' space, *sitting in the temple among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions*; when all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And justly, since He had already said through this prophecy, *I have more understanding than my teachers*. For He meaneth all men, not God the Father, to be understood; of Whom the Son Himself hath said, *As My Father*

**1 Cor. 15, 28.**

**1 Kings 3, 12.**

**ver. 101.**

**Eph. 5, 31. 32.**

**Luke 2, 42—47.**

**John 8,**

*hath taught Me, I speak these things.* It is very difficult to understand this of the Person of the Word; unless we can comprehend that it is the same thing for the Son to be taught as to be begotten of the Father. For to another it is one thing to be, another to have been taught, but to Him it is the same thing to be, and to have been taught; indeed from Whom He hath His Being, from the Same hath He therewith His teaching. But He is more easily understood to have learnt from the Father what He spoke, in the character of man, when *He took upon Himself the form of a servant*; for when He had assumed this form, men of more advanced age might think Him fit to be taught as a boy; but He Whom the Father taught, had more understanding than all His teachers. *For Thy testimonies, He saith, are my study.* For this reason He had more understanding than all His teachers, because He studied the testimonies of God, which, as concerning Himself, He knew better than they, when He spoke these words: *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in His light. But I have greater witness than that of John.* Such testimonies He studied, when He had more understanding than all His teachers.

VER.  
100.

Philipp.  
2, 7.

John 5,  
33—36.

4. Ver. 100. But these teachers may be understood very reasonably to be those aged men, of whom he presently saith, *I am wiser than mine elders.* And this seemeth to me to be repeated here thus, that that age of His which is well known to us in the Gospel might be called to our remembrance; the age of boyhood, during which He was sitting among the aged, understanding more than all His teachers. For the smaller and the greater in age are wont to be termed younger and elder, although neither of them hath arrived at or approached old age; although if we are concerned to seek in the Gospel the express term, elders, more than whom He understood, we find it when the Scribes and Pharisees said unto Him, *Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.* Behold the transgression of the

Mat. 15.

2.

PSALM CXIX. XXII. tradition of the elders is objected to Him. But He who was wiser than His elders, let us hear what answer He made

Mat. 15. 3. them. *Why do ye also, He asked, transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?* Then a little after, that not only Himself Who is the Head of the Body, but also the Body itself and its members might be wiser than the elders, whose tradition was held concerning the washing of hands, calling the crowd together He said unto them, *Hear and understand.* As much as to say, Do ye also understand more than those elders, so that it may be clear that the prophecy was declared concerning yourselves also, in these words, *I am wiser than mine elders:* and that it might be adapted not to the Head alone, but to the Body also, and

Mat. 15. 11. thus to the whole Christ. *Not what entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but those things which proceed out of the mouth defile a man.* This those elders who had handed down their commandments as if they were of great consequence, concerning the washing of hands, understood not. The very members also of that Head Who understood more than the elders, understood not as yet what He had said. Lastly, Peter, after a few sentences, answering, said unto Him, *Declare unto us this parable.* He still imagined that what the Lord had spoken without any figures, was a

Mat. 15. 15-18. parable. But He replied: *Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man.* Are ye yet without understanding, and are ye not wiser than those elders? But, certainly, when we have heard such a Master, our Head, each one of us may say, *I am wiser than the elders.* For what he proceedeth to add, suiteth the Body also: *Because I have sought out Thy commandments. Thy commandments, not the commandments of men: Thy commandments, not the commandments of the elders, who wish-*

1 Tim. 1, 7. ing to be teachers of the law, *understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.* It is justly replied to those who preferred the authority of their commandments to the Truth, by a reference to those commandments, which must be carefully sought out, in order that they may be under-

stood better than they were by those elders: *Why do ye* VRR.  
*also transgress the commandments of God to establish your* 101-3.  
*tradition?*

5. Ver. 101. But what cometh next, doth not seem to apply to the Head, but to the Body: *I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Thy words.* For that Head of ours, the Saviour of the Body Himself, could not be borne by carnal lust into any evil way, so that it should be needful for Him to refrain His feet, as though they would go thither of their own accord; which we do, when we refrain our evil desires, which He had not, that they may not follow evil ways. For thus we are able to keep the word of God, if we *go not after our evil lusts*, so Eccles. that they attain unto the evils desired; but rather curb them 18, 30. with the spirit which lusteth against the flesh, that they may Gal. 5, not drag us away, seduced and overthrown, through evil 17. ways.

6. Ver. 102. *I have not shrunk*, he saith, *from Thy judgments: for Thou hast laid down a law for me.* He hath stated what made him fear, so that he refrained his feet from every evil way. For what meaneth, *I have not shrunk from* v. 100. *Thy judgments*; save what he saith in another place, *I have been afraid of Thy judgments?* I have believed them perseveringly: *for Thou hast laid down a law for me.* Thou, more inward than my inmost self, Thou hast laid down a law within my heart by Thy Spirit, as it were by Thy fingers, that I might not fear it as a slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love.

7. Ver. 103. Consider then what followeth: *O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat!* or, as it is more literally rendered from the Greek, *Thy utterances, above honey and the honeycomb unto my mouth.* This is that sweetness which the Lord giveth, *So that the earth yield her increase:* Ps. 85, that we do good truly in a good spirit, that is, not from the dread of carnal evil, but from the gladness of spiritual good. 12. Some copies indeed do not read *honeycomb*: but the majority do. Now the open teaching of wisdom is like unto honey; but that is like the comb which is squeezed from the more recondite mysteries, as if from cells of wax, by the mouth of

412 *Wisdom attained through keeping God's commandments.*

**PSALM** the teacher, as if he were chewing it: but it is sweet to the  
**CXIX.** mouth of the heart, not to the mouth of the flesh.  
**XXII.**

8. Ver. 104. But what mean the words, *Through Thy commandments I get understanding?* For the expressions, I have understood Thy commandments: and, *I get understanding through Thy commandments*, are different. Something else then he signifieth that he hath understood from the commandments of God: that is, as far as I can see, he saith, that by obeying God's commandments he hath arrived at the comprehension of those things which he had longed to know. On which account it is written, *If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee*: lest any one, inverting the natural order of things, before he hath the humility of obedience, may wish to arrive at the height of wisdom, which he cannot reach, save he hath approached it in regular order. Let him therefore hear these words: *Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength, but what the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon ever*. Thus man reacheth the wisdom of hidden things through obedience to the commandments. But when he had said, *What the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon*; he added, *ever*, because obedience must both be kept, that wisdom may be received, and when wisdom hath been received, obedience must not be given up. These then are the words of the spiritual members of Christ, *Through Thy commandments I get understanding*. For the body of Christ rightly saith these words in those, to whom, while they keep the commandments, a richer knowledge of wisdom is given on account of this very keeping of the commandments. *Therefore*, he addeth, *I hate all evil ways*. For it is needful that the love of righteousness should hate all iniquity: that love, which is so much the stronger, in proportion as the sweetness of a higher wisdom doth inspire it, a wisdom given unto him who obeyeth God, and getteth understanding from His commandments.

Eccles.  
1, 26.

id. 3,  
21. 22.

## PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

## Discourse XXIII.

1. Ver. 105. WE undertake, according to the strength which NUM. the Lord giveth, to examine and treat of these verses of this Psalm, the first of which is, *Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* The word *lantern* appears in the word *light*; *my feet* are also repeated in *my paths*. What then meaneth *Thy Word*? Is it He who was John 1, in the beginning God with God, that is, the Word by <sup>1.</sup> Whom all things were made? It is not thus. For that Word is a light, but is not a lantern. For a lantern is a creature, not a creator; and it is lighted by participation of an unchangeable light. This was John, of whom God the Word saith, *He was a burning and a shining lantern.* But John 5, he is both light and lantern; nevertheless compared with <sup>35.</sup> the Word, of Whom it is said, *The Word was God*, he was not the light; but was sent to give witness of the light. For *that was the true light*, which was not lighted as a man, but John 1, *which lighteth every man.* But unless a lantern also were a <sup>8. 9.</sup> light, He would not say to His Apostles, *Ye are the light of* Matt. 5, *the world*, when they had heard that they might not imagine <sup>14.</sup> themselves to be that, which He was Who had said this; for of Himself also He in a certain passage saith, *I am the light* John 8, *of the world*; He saith unto them of themselves, *A city that* <sup>12.</sup> Matt. 5, *is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle,* <sup>14—16.</sup> *and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it* <sup>1. lucer-</sup> *giveth light unto all that are in the house.* <sup>nam</sup> *Let your light so shine before men*; that they might know that they were, as it were, lanterns lit by that light which shineth without change. For no creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted by itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth: although sometimes day is spoken of, not meaning the Lord, but that *day which the Lord hath made*, Ps. 118, and on account of which it is said, *Come unto Him, and be* <sup>24.</sup> Ps. 34, 5, *lightened.* On account of which participation, inasmuch as the Mediator Himself became Man, He is styled lantern in the Apocalypse. But this sense is a solitary one; for it Rev. 21, cannot be divinely spoken of any of the saints, nor in any <sup>23.</sup>

414 *The Scriptures a Lantern. A Godly purpose.*

FRAN. wise lawfully said of any, *The Word was made flesh, save*  
CXIX. of the *one Mediator between God and men.* Since there-  
XXIII. fore the only-begotten Word, coequal with the Father, is  
John 1, styled a light; and man when enlightened by the Word is  
14. also called a light, who is styled also a lantern, as John, as  
1Tim. 2, the Apostles; and since no man of these is the Word, and  
6. that Word by Whom they were enlightened is not a lantern;  
 what is this word, which is thus called a light and a lantern  
 at the same time, (for he saith, *Thy word is a lantern unto*  
*my feet, and a light unto my paths,*) save we understand  
 the word which was sent unto the Prophets, or which was  
 preached through the Apostles; not Christ the Word, but  
Rom. 10, the word of Christ, of which it is written, *Faith cometh by*  
17. *hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* For the Apostle  
 Peter also, comparing the prophetic word to a lantern,  
2 Pet. 1, saith, *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto*  
19. *ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lantern, that shineth*  
*in a dark place.* What, therefore, he here saith, *Thy word*  
*is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths,* is the  
 word which is contained in all the holy Scriptures.

2. Ver. 106. *I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to*  
*keep Thy righteous judgments:* as one who walked aright  
 in the light of that lantern, and kept to straight paths. In the  
 following word the preceding one is explained. For as if  
 we asked what *I have sworn,* meant, he hath added, *I am*  
*stedfastly purposed.* For he calleth what he hath deter-  
 mined by a sacrament, an oath; because the mind ought to  
 be so fixed in keeping the righteous judgments of God, that  
 its determination should be in the place of an oath.

3. Now the righteous judgments of God are kept by faith;  
 when, under the righteous judgment of God, neither any  
 good work is believed to be fruitless, nor any sin unpunished;  
 but, because the body of Christ hath suffered many most  
 grievous evils for this faith, he saith, *I was humbled above*  
*measure.* He doth not say, *I have humbled myself,* so that  
 we must needs understand that humiliation which is com-  
 manded; but he saith, *I was humbled above measure;*  
 that is, suffered a very heavy persecution, because he  
 swore and was stedfastly purposed to keep the righteous  
 judgments of God. And, lest in such trouble faith herself

might faint, he addeth, *Quicken me, O Lord, according to Thy word*: that is, according to Thy promise. For the word of the promises of God is a lantern to the feet, and a light to the paths. Thus also above, in the humiliation of persecution, he prayed that God would quicken him: *They had almost made an end of me upon earth: but I forsook not Thy commandments. O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness: and so shall I keep the testimonies*, that is the martyrdoms, *of Thy mouth*. Where it is meant, that if He quickened not by giving patience, on account of which it is written, *In your patience shall ye possess your souls*; and of which it was said, *my patience is from Him*; it is not the body which is done to death in persecution, but the soul, because it keepeth not the testimonies and righteous judgments of God.

4. Ver. 108. *Make the freewill offerings of my mouth well pleasing, O Lord*: that is, let them please Thee; do not reject, but approve them. By the freewill offerings of the mouth are well understood the sacrifices of praise, offered up in the confession of love, not from the fear of necessity; whence it is said, *a freewill offering will I offer Thee*. But what doth he add? *and teach me Thy judgments?* Had he not himself said above, *From Thy judgments I have not swerved?* How could he have done thus, if he knew them not? Moreover, if he knew them, in what sense doth he here say, *and teach me Thy judgments?* Is it as in a former passage, *Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant*: presently after which we find, *teach me sweetness?* This passage we explained as the words of one who was gaining in grace, and praying that he might receive in addition to what he had received.

5. Ver. 109. *My soul is always in Thy hand*. Some copies read, *in my hand*: but most, *in Thy hand*; and this latter is indeed easy. For *the souls of the righteous are in God's hand: in Whose hand are both we and our words*. And *I do not forget Thy law*: as if his memory were aided to remember God's law by the hands of Him in Whose hands is his soul. But how the words, *My soul is in my hands*, can be understood, I know not. For these are the words of the righteous, not of the ungodly; of one who is returning to

PSALM the Father, not departing from the Father. For that  
 CXIX. younger son may well seem to have wished to have had  
 XXIII. his soul in his own hands, when he said to his father, Give  
 Luke 15, 12. 24. *me my substance*: but it is on this account that he *was dead*,  
 that he *was lost*. Is it perhaps said, *My soul is in my hands*,  
 in this sense, as if he offered it to God to be quickened?  
 Ps. 25, 1. Whence in another passage it is said, *Unto Thee, O Lord,*  
*have I lifted up my soul*. Since here too he had said above,  
*Quicken Thou me*.

6. Ver. 110. *The ungodly*, he saith, *have laid a snare for me: but yet I swerved not from Thy commandments*. Whence this, unless because his soul is in the hands of God, or in his own hands is offered to God to be quickened?

7. Ver. 111. *Thy testimonies have I gained in heritage for ever*. Some wishing to express in one word what is put in one word in the Greek, have translated it *hereditari*. Which although it might be Latin, yet would rather signify one who gave an inheritance than one who received it, 'hereditavi' being like 'ditavi.' Better, therefore, the whole sense is conveyed in two words, whether we say, *I have possessed in heritage*, or, *I have gotten in heritage*: not gotten heritage, but *gotten in heritage*. If it be asked, what he gained in heritage, he replieth, *Thy testimonies*. What doth he wish to be understood, save that he might become a witness of God, and confess His testimonies, that is, that he might become a Martyr of God, and might declare His testimonies, as the Martyrs do, was a gift bestowed upon him by the Father, of Whom he is heir? For many have wished, yet have not been able: yet none have been able, save they who have wished; because they would not have been able, if they had wished to deny the testimonies of God. But even their wish was prepared by the Lord. For this reason he saith he hath gained them in heritage, and this *for ever*; because they have not in them the temporal glory of men who seek vain things, but the eternal glory of those who suffer for a short season, and who reign without end. Whence the next words, *Because they are the very joy of my heart*: although the affliction of the body, yet the very joy of the heart.

8. Ver. 112. He then addeth: *I have applied my heart to fulfil Thy righteousness for ever, for my reward*. He who

*Hatred of ungodliness. Hindrance in searching God's Law.* 417

saith, *I have applied my heart*, had before said, *Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies*: so that we may understand that it is at once a divine gift, and an act of free will. But are we to fulfil the righteousnesses of God for ever? Those works which we perform in regard to the need of our neighbours, cannot be everlasting, any more than their need; but if we do not do them from love, there is no righteousness; if we do them from love, that love is everlasting, and an everlasting reward is in store for it; for the sake of which reward he saith he hath applied his heart to fulfil the righteousnesses of God, that by loving for ever, he may deserve to have for ever that which he loveth.

VER.  
112.  
ver. 36.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse XXIV.*

1. Ver. 113. The passage of this Psalm, of which by the will of God we are about to treat, thus beginneth; *I have hated the unrighteous; and Thy law have I loved*. He saith not, I hate the wicked, and love the righteous; or, I hate iniquity, and love Thy law; but, after saying, *I have hated the unrighteous*, he explains why, by adding, *and Thy law have I loved*; to shew, that he did not hate human nature in unrighteous men, but their unrighteousness, whereby they are foes to the law, which he loveth.

2. Ver. 114. He next addeth: *Thou art my helper and my taker up: my helper*, to do good works: *my taker up*, to escape evil ones. In the next words, *I have hoped more on Thy word*, he speaketh as a son of promise.

3. Ver. 115. But what is the meaning of the following verse: *Away from me, ye wicked, and I will search the commandments of my God?* For he saith not, I will perform; but, *I will search*. In order, therefore, that he may diligently and perfectly learn that law, he bids the wicked depart from him, and even forcibly driveth them away from his company. For the wicked exercise us in the fulfilment of the commandments, but lead us away from searching into them; not only when they persecute, or wish to litigate with us; but even when they court us, and honour us, and yet expect us to occupy ourselves in aiding their own vicious

PSALM and busy desire, and to bestow our time upon them ; or at  
 CXIX. least harass the weak, and compel them to bring their causes  
 XXIV. before us : to whom we dare not say, *Man, who made me a*  
 Luke 22, 14. *judge or a divider over you?* For the Apostle instituted  
 I Cor. 6, 1-6. ecclesiastical judges of such causes, forbidding Christians to  
 contend in the forum. Not even to those who do not carry off  
 others' property, but avariciously reclaim their own, do we  
 say, beware of all covetousness, placing before their eyes the  
 Luke 12, 20. man unto whom it was said, *Thou fool! this night shall thy*  
*soul be required of thee; then whose shall be those things*  
*which thou hast provided!* because even when we do say this,  
 they do not leave us ; but press upon us with urgency, en-  
 treaty, tumult, exigence, rather to occupy ourselves with their  
 interests, than in revealing the commandments of God. O  
 with what weariness of turbulent crowds, and what ardent  
 longing after the divine word, is it said, *Away from me, ye*  
*wicked! I will search the commandments of my God!*  
 I ask the pardon of those obedient faithful ones, who rarely  
 apply to us in behalf of their secular affairs, and most readily  
 acquiesce in our judgments ; and do not wear us out with  
 litigation, but rather console us by their obedience. Certainly,  
 on account of those who carry on law suits pertinaciously  
 with one another, and, when they harass the good, scorn our  
 judgments, and cause us to lose the time that should be  
 employed upon things divine ; surely, I say, on account of  
 these men we also may exclaim in these words of the Body of  
 Christ, *Away from me, ye wicked! and I will search the*  
*commandments of my God.*

4. Ver. 116. Then, after he had driven away the flies which  
 poured upon him, as it were, from the eyes of his heart, he  
 returneth unto Him unto Whom he was saying, *Thou art my*  
*helper, and my taker up : I have hoped in Thy word;* and,  
 continuing his prayer, saith, *O stablish me according to Thy*  
*word, and I shall live : and let me not be disappointed of my*  
*hope.* He who had before said, *Thou art my taker up,*  
 prayeth that he may be more and more borne up, and be led  
 unto that, for the sake of which he endureth so many  
 troubles ; trusting that he may there live in a truer sense,  
 than in these dreams of human affairs. For it is said of the  
 future, *and I shall live,* as if we did not live in this dead

body. *For the body is dead because of sin: and, while we* <sup>V ER.</sup>  
*await the redemption of our body, we are saved by hope, and* <sup>117-19.</sup>  
*hoping for that we see not, we await with patience. But* <sup>Rom. 8,</sup>  
*hope disappointeth not, if the love of God be spread abroad* <sup>10. 23—</sup>  
*in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us?* <sup>25.</sup>  
*To receive this in a more ample measure, he crieth unto the* <sup>Rom. 5,</sup>  
*Father, And let me not be disappointed of my hope.* <sup>5.</sup>

5. Ver. 117. And, as though it were answered him in silence, Thou dost not wish to be disappointed of thy hope? Cease not to meditate upon My righteousnesses: and, feeling that this meditation is usually hindered by the weaknesses of the soul, (ver. 117.) *Help me, he saith, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always.*

6. Ver. 118. *Thou hast scorned all, or, as it seems more closely translated from the Greek, Thou hast brought to nought all them that depart from Thy righteousnesses: for their thought is unrighteous.* For this reason he exclaimed, *Help Thou me, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always:* because God bringeth to nought all those who depart from His righteousnesses. But why do they depart? Because *their thought is, he saith, unrighteous.* They advance in that direction, while they depart from God. All deeds, good or bad, proceed from the thoughts: in his thoughts every man is innocent, in his thoughts every man is guilty. On this account it is written, *Holy thoughts shall preserve thee:* and <sup>Prov. 2,</sup> elsewhere it is read, *Inquisition shall be made into the* <sup>11.</sup> *thoughts of the ungodly;* and the Apostle saith, *Their* <sup>Wisd. 1,</sup> *thoughts excusing or accusing one another.* But how is he <sup>Rom. 2,</sup> happy who is miserable in his thoughts? or how is he other- <sup>15.</sup> wise than wretched there, who hath been brought to nought? For iniquity is a mighty desolation. Justly is it said, <sup>Ps. 25, 3.</sup> *founded be the unrighteous who do vainly:* that is, emptily, as they that are brought to nought.

7. Ver. 119. The next words in the Psalm are, *I have counted, or thought, or esteemed, all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors.* In the Latin version many different renderings are given of the Greek *ἰλογισάμην*; but this passage hath a deep meaning, which we must endeavour to penetrate at greater length, if the Lord will aid us, in another discourse. For the following words, Therefore have

420 *How sinners, even without law, are transgressors.*

PSALM CXIX. *I ever loved Thy testimonies*: make it far more profound.  
XXIV. For the Apostle saith, *The law worketh wrath*; and, ex-  
Rom. 4, plaining these words, he addeth, *For where no law is, there*  
15. *is no transgression*: thereby shewing that not all are trans-  
gressors. For all have not the law. That all have not the  
Rom. 2, law, he declareth more explicitly in another passage, *as*  
12. *many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without*  
*law*. What then meaneth, *I have held all the ungodly of*  
*the earth as transgressors*? But let it suffice here to have  
proposed the question, to be discussed in another exposition,  
if God grant, lest the length of this force it to be expounded  
in too narrow a space to admit of the explanation being  
clearly understood.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XXV.*

1. Ver. 119. We are seeking, if by the bounty of God we  
may discover, in what sense the words of this great Psalm are  
to be understood; *I have held all the sinners of the earth*  
*as transgressors*; or rather *transgressing*, for the Greek saith,  
*παραβαλοντας*, not *παραβάτας*. We ask therefore how we are  
to understand, *I have held all the sinners of the earth to be*  
*transgressing*, because the Apostle saith, *Where no law is,*  
*there is no transgression*. This he said, while he was dis-  
tinguishing the promise from the law. For that the sense  
may be more fully gathered from what goes before, we will  
Rom. 4, cite the preceding sentence: *The promise, that he should*  
13—16. *be the heir of the world*, he saith, *was not to Abraham, or to*  
*his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of*  
*faith*. *For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is*  
*made void, and the promise made of none effect*. *Because*  
*the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no*  
*transgression*. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by*  
*grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;*  
*not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which*  
*is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all*.  
Why doth the Apostle say this, save to shew that the law  
without the grace of the promise doth not only fail to re-  
move sin, but actually increaseth it? Whence also he saith,

*The law entered that sin might abound.* But since all sins VER. 119. are remitted through grace, not only those which are com- Rom. 5, mitted without the law, but those also which are committed 20. in the law; he addeth, *But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* The Apostle therefore doth not hold all sinners as transgressing: but those only who transgress the law. For *where law is not*, he saith, *there is no transgression.* Thus, then, according to the Apostle, every transgressor indeed is a sinner, because he sinneth in the law: but not every sinner is a transgressor, because some sin without the law; and where no law is, there is no transgression. Moreover, if no man could sin without the law, the same Apostle would not say, *As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law.* But according to this Psalm, if all the sinners of the earth are transgressors, there is no sin without transgression; but there is no transgression without the law; there is therefore no sin, save in the law. He therefore who saith, *I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing*, wishes it to be understood that there are altogether no sinners, save they who have transgressed the law; and herein is opposed to him who hath said, *As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law.* For according to the Apostle there are some sinners, although they be not transgressors, that is, men who have sinned without law; for where no law is, there is no transgression; but according to the former, there is no sinner without transgression; because he holdeth all the sinners of the earth as transgressing. No man, therefore, according to him hath sinned without the law; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Shall we say, that it is indeed true that there is no transgression where there is no law, but that it is not true that any have sinned without the law; or, that it is true indeed that some have sinned without the law, but that it is not true that transgression cannot exist, where there is no law? But both of these things the Apostle hath affirmed; both therefore are true; because Truth hath spoken both through the Apostle. How then can it be true that in this Psalm the same Truth hath spoken without doubt, *I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing?* For they answer us: Who then are

**PSALM CXXV.** they who according to the Apostle have sinned without law? For each of these is not to be held as transgressing, since, according to the same Apostle, transgression cannot exist where there is no law.

2. But, indeed, when the Apostle said, *As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law*, he was speaking of that law which God gave to His people Israel through Moses His servant. The context shews this. For he was speaking of the Jews, and of the Greeks, that is, the Gentiles, who belong not to circumcision, but to uncircumcision; speaking of them as without the law, because they had not received the law which the Jews gloried in having received: whence he saith to them, *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God*. We must now consider how he came to pronounce this sentence: *As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law*.— *Indignation and wrath, he saith, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God*. To these words he addeth those which are the source of the present question: *For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law*. Wishing by the latter the Jews, by the former the Greeks, to be understood, since he was speaking of these; proving that both were subject unto sin, that each might confess themselves in need of grace: on which account he saith, *For there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*. Who are they then, all of whom he declareth to have sinned, save the Jews and the Greeks, of whom he had said, *For there is no difference?*

ib. 9. For of these he had a little before said, *For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are under sin*. And therefore, *all who have sinned without law*, that law, to wit, in which the Jews gloried, *shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law*, that is, the Jews themselves, *shall be judged by the law*. But we are

Rom. 3, 22. 23. 24.

not on this account to conclude that they will not perish, V ER.  
unless they believe in Him Who *came to seek that which* 119.  
*was lost.* Luke 19,  
10.

3. For some even Catholic expositors, from a want of sufficient heedfulness, have pronounced contrary to the truth, that those who have sinned without the law perish; and that those who have sinned in the law, are only judged, and do not perish, as if they should be considered destined to be cleansed by means of transitory punishments, as he of whom it is said, *he himself shall be saved, yet so as by* 1 Cor. 3,  
*fire.* This is well understood to be owing to the merits of 10—15.  
the Foundation, of Whom the Apostle was speaking above in these terms: *As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus:* and so on to the verse where he stated, that he who had *built upon this foundation, not gold, silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, and stubble, should be saved so as by fire;* yet such a man doth not refuse to receive, nor when received, doth he forsake, the foundation; and he preferreth it to all his carnal delights, wherein he is captivated and used to yield, when the alternative is set before him, either to choose these or Christ; in which case if Christ be not preferred, he hath not the foundation. For the foundation is preferred to all the subsequent parts of the building. Nor do I suppose that they who have thought that those of whom it is said, *They shall be judged by the law, do not perish,* have had any notion of their not having Christ for their foundation. They therefore have not sufficiently attended to what we have proved; and Scripture itself declareth that the Apostle saith this of the Jews, who have not the foundation of Christ. But what Christian would assert that a Jew perishes not, if he believeth not in Christ, but that he is only judged: when Christ Himself testifieth that He was sent to the same nation, for the sake of the sheep which had Mat. 15,  
been lost therein; and declares that it shall be more tolerable 24.  
for the men of Sodom in the day of judgment which perished without law, than for the Jewish state which did not believe

PSALM in Him when He performed miracles with such mighty  
CXIX. power?  
XXV.

Mat. 11, 4. If therefore the Apostle asserted that the other nations  
23. 24. were without the law, in the sense of that law which God gave to the people of Israel through Moses, but gave not to the rest of the nations; what are we to understand to be meant in this Psalm, *I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing*, unless we understand some law not given by Moses, in respect of which the sinners of other nations were transgressing? For *where the law is not, there is no transgression*. What law is this, save that of which the Rom. 2, same Apostle saith, *When the Gentiles, having not the law, 14. do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves*? According then to these words, *having not the law*; they have sinned without the law, and will perish without the law; but according to these words, *They are unto themselves a law*; all the sinners of the earth are justly esteemed transgressors. For there is no man who doeth another wrong, but who is unwilling the wrong should be done to himself: and herein he transgresseth the law of nature, which he is not allowed to be ignorant of, while he does that which he is unwilling to suffer. But had not the people of Israel this natural law? They had, surely, since they were themselves men: but they would have been without the law of nature, if they could have been beside the nature of the human race. In a much wider sense, then, were they transgressors by the divine law, whereby that natural law was either restored, or enlarged, or confirmed.

5. Now if infants even, on account of the chains of original sin, are not unfitly enumerated among all the Rom. 5, sinners of the earth; even they *in the similitude of Adam's 14. transgression*, are shewn to belong to that transgression, Gen. 3, 6. which, when the law had been given in Paradise, was the first ever committed; and on this account all the sinners of the earth, without a single exception, are held as transgressors. *For all have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God*. The Saviour's grace, therefore, found all transgressors, some more, some less. For in proportion as

the knowledge of the law was greater in each, so much less was the excuse for sin; in proportion as the excuse for sin was less, so much clearer was the transgression. It remained, therefore, that not their own righteousness, but that of God, by which I mean that given them of God, should be their resource. Whence the Apostle saith, *By the law is the knowledge of sin*, not the taking away, but the knowledge. *But now, he saith, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.* <sup>Rom. 3, 20—23.</sup> For this reason the Psalmist also hath subjoined: *Therefore I loved Thy testimonies.* As if he should say: Since the law, whether given in paradise, or implanted by nature, or promulgated in writing, hath made all the sinners of the earth transgressors; *Therefore I loved Thy testimonies*, which are in Thy law, of Thy grace; so that not my but Thy righteousness is in me. For the law profiteth unto this end, that it send us forward unto grace. For not only because it testifieth towards the manifestation of the righteousness of God, which is without the law; but also in this very point that it rendereth men transgressors, so that the letter even slayeth, it driveth us to fly unto the quickening Spirit, <sup>2 Cor. 3, 6.</sup> through Whom the whole of our sins may be blotted out, and the love of righteous deeds be inspired: *Therefore*, he saith, *have I loved Thy testimonies.* Some copies read, *always*, some do not. If it be correct, it must be understood to mean, during our present life on earth. For here testimonies are necessary, from the Law and the Prophets, attesting the righteousness of God, whereby we are freely justified: here even our testimonies are necessary, for which the Martyrs laid down that life which is here spent.

6. Ver. 120. The grace of God, then, being known, which alone freeth from transgression, which is committed through knowledge of the law, he saith, in prayer, *Fix with nails my flesh in thy fear.* For thus some Latin interpreters have literally rendered the Greek *καθήλωσον*, which that language has expressed in one word. Some have preferred to render this by the word *confige*, without adding *clavis*; and while they thus desire to construe one Latin by one Greek word, have failed to express the full meaning of the Greek *καθήλωσον*, because in *confige* nails are not mentioned, but *καθήλωσον* cannot be

PSALM taken but of nails, nor can 'fix with nails' be expressed  
 CXIX.  
 XXV. without using two words in Latin. What is here meant, save  
 Gal. 6, what the Apostle saith, *God forbid that I should glory, save*  
 14. *in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is*  
 id. 2, 19. *crucified unto me, and I unto the world?* And again: *I am*  
 20. *crucified*, he saith, *with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not*  
*I, but Christ liveth in me.* And what else is this than, My  
 righteousness is not in me, which is from the law, whereby I  
 Phil. 3, was made a transgressor; but the righteousness of God, that  
 9. is, which is of God unto me, not from me? Thus in me liveth,  
 1 Cor. 1, not I myself, but Christ, *Who of God is made unto us wisdom,*  
 30. 31. *and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that,*  
*according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in*  
 Gal. 5, *the Lord.* He also saith, *They that are Christ's, have cruci-*  
 24. *fied the flesh with its affections and lusts.* Since it is here  
 said that they have themselves crucified their own flesh, in  
 this Psalm God is entreated to do this, in these words, *Fix*  
*my flesh with nails in Thy fear;* that we may understand  
 that even what we do well should be ascribed to God's grace,  
 Phil. 2, *Who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good*  
 15. *pleasure.*

7. But why, after saying, *Fix my flesh with nails in Thy*  
*fear*, hath he added, *For I have feared Thy judgments?*  
 What meaneth, *Fix me in Thy fear: for I have feared?* If  
 he had already feared, or if he was now fearing, why did he  
 still pray God to crucify his flesh in His fear? Did he wish  
 so much additional fear imparted to him as would suffice for  
 crucifying his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts and affections;  
 as though he should say, Perfect in me the fear of Thee; for  
 I have feared Thy judgments? But there is here even a  
 higher sense, which must, as far as God alloweth, be derived  
 from searching the recesses of this Scripture. *Fix*, he saith,  
*my flesh with nails in the fear of Thee: for I have feared*  
 Pa. 18, *Thy judgments:* that is, in the chaste fear of Thee, which  
 10. abideth from age to age, let my carnal desires be quenched;  
*For I have feared Thy judgments*, when the law, which could  
 not give me righteousness, threatened me punishment. But  
 1 John 4, *perfect love driveth away this fear*, whereby punishment is  
 18. dreaded; love, which freeth us not by fear of punishment,  
*but by delight in righteousness.* For that fear, whereby

righteousness is not loved, but punishment dreaded, is servile, because it is carnal; and for this reason doth not crucify the flesh. For the inclination to sin liveth, and it then appeareth in deed, when impunity may be hoped for. But when punishment is considered sure to follow, it liveth latently: nevertheless it liveth. For it would rather it were lawful to sin, and it grieveth that what the law forbiddeth, is not lawful; because it is not spiritually delighted with the blessing of the law, but carnally feareth the evil which it threateneth. But that love, which casteth out this fear, feareth with a chaste fear to sin, although no punishment follow; because it doth not even judge that impunity will follow, since from love of righteousness it considereth the very sin itself a punishment. With such a fear the flesh is crucified; since carnal delights, which are forbidden rather than avoided by the letter of the law, are overcome by the delight in spiritual blessings, and also when the victory is perfected are destroyed. *Fix*, therefore, he saith, *my flesh with nails in Thy fear, for I have feared Thy judgments*: that is, give me a chaste fear, to seek which the fear of the law hath conducted me like a schoolmaster, that fear whereby *I have feared Thy judgments*.

VER.  
120.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse XXVI.*

1. Ver. 121. WE have now undertaken to consider and to treat of these verses of this great Psalm; *I have dealt judgment and righteousness; O give me not over unto mine oppressors*. It is not wonderful that he should have dealt judgment and righteousness, since he had above prayed for a chaste fear from God, whereby to fix with nails his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts, which are wont to hinder our judgment from being right. But although in our customary speech judgment is either right or wrong, whence it is said unto men in the Gospel, *Judge not according to the persons, but judge righteous judgment*: nevertheless in this passage judgment is used as though, if it were not righteous, it ought not to be called judgment; otherwise it would not be enough to say, *I have dealt judgment*, but it would be said, *I have dealt*

A1N.

John 7,  
24.

PSALM righteous judgment. In this sense our Lord Jesus hath  
 CXLIX. spoken: *Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the law,*  
 XXVI. *judgment, mercy, and faith.* And here judgment is used in  
 Mat. 23. 23. such a sense, as if it were not judgment, if it be perverse.

And in many passages of the holy Scriptures it is so put,  
 Ps. 101, such as is this: *My song shall be of mercy and judgment:*  
 l. *unto Thee, O Lord;* and that in Isaiah, *I looked that he*  
 Isa. 5, 7. *should deal judgment, but he dealt iniquity.* He saith not,

I looked that he should deal righteous judgment, but he dealt unrighteous; but as if, because an act was judgment, it must be righteous; and what was unrighteous, could not be judgment. Now righteousness is not wont to be called good righteousness or evil righteousness, as judgment is occasionally called good or evil judgment; but it is already good from the very fact of its being righteousness. The common way of speaking then, which allows of the terms good and bad judgment, is like that which allows the words good and bad to be applied to a judge: but righteousness is not styled good or bad in the same sense, even as we do not speak of a good righteous man, or an evil righteous man, because a man must be good, if he be righteous. Righteousness therefore is a virtue of the mind, a great and most praiseworthy virtue, concerning which there is now no need of a more copious discussion. But judgment, since the more definite way of speaking useth it only of the righteous, is the operation of this virtue. For he who hath righteousness, judgeth rightly: yea, according to this way of speech, he who hath righteousness, judgeth; because he doth not judge at all, if he do not judge rightly. Under the name of righteousness in this passage, not the virtue itself, but its work, is signified. For who maketh righteousness in man, save He Who justifieth the ungodly, that is, through His grace rendereth him righteous instead of ungodly? Whence the Apostle Rom. 3, saith, *Justified freely through His grace.* He therefore who  
 24. hath within himself righteousness, that is, the work of grace, dealeth righteousness, that is, the work of righteousness.

2. *I have dealt righteousness and judgment, O give me not over to mine oppressors:* that is, I have dealt just judgment, O give me not over to them who on that account persecute me. For some copies read, to them that persecute

me: the Greek words τοῖς ἀντιδικούσι, being variously interpreted by the Latin nocentibus, persequentibus, and calumniantibus. I wonder, however, that I have never met with the version adversantibus in any of the copies which I have read, since there is no doubt, that the Greek ἀντιδικός is the same as the Latin adversarius. While he prays therefore that he may not be given up to his adversaries by the Lord, what doth he pray, save what we pray, when we say, *Lead us not into temptation?* For he is the adversary of whom the Apostle saith, *Lest perchance the tempter tempt you.* Unto him God giveth up whom He forsaketh. For the tempter deceiveth not him whom God forsaketh not, of His free will “giving strength to man’s beauty.” But He turned away His countenance from him who had said in his strength, *I will not ever be moved;* and he became confounded, and was displayed unto himself. Whoso therefore in the chaste fear of God hath his flesh crucified, and corrupted by no carnal allurements, dealeth judgment and the work of righteousness, ought to pray that he may not be given up to his adversaries; that is, that he may not, through his dread of suffering evils, yield unto his adversaries to do evil. For he receiveth power of endurance, which guardeth him from being overcome with pain, from Him from Whom he receiveth the victory over lust, which preventeth his being seduced by pleasure: since of whom it is said, *The Lord shall shew lovingkindness,* of Him it is also said, *From Thee is my patience.*

VER.  
122, 123.Matt. 6,  
13.1 Thess.  
3, 5.Ps. 30,  
6, 7.Ps. 85,  
12.

Ps. 82, 5.

3. Ver. 122, 123. He next saith, *Take off Thy servant to that which is good, that the proud calumniate me not.* They drive me on, that I may fall into evil; do Thou take me off to that which is good. They who rendered these words by the Latin, *calumnientur*, have followed a Greek expression, not commonly used in Latin. Have the words, *Let not the proud calumniate me,* the same force, as, *Let them not succeed in calumniating me?*

4. But many calumnies of the proud, by whom Christian humility is spurned, may be understood; and this is the chief, if men are understood to be called proud in this passage, because they object to us that we worship one who died. For Christian humility is taught by the death of Christ itself, and is thus divinely commended unto us. Now this scandal

**PSALM** is common to both classes of infidels, I mean, Jews and  
**CXIX.** Gentiles. Heretics have their scandals also, peculiar to  
**XXVI.**

their several heresies: schismatics have also, all of whom  
 pride hath cast asunder from the communion of the mem-  
 bers of Christ. But how great is the scandal of the devil  
 himself, whereby he doth calumniate the righteous, saying,

**Job 1,9.** *Doth Job fear God for nought?* The calumnies of all these

**Numb.** proud ones are overcome, like the poison of the serpents, when  
**21, 9.** we fix our minds upon Christ crucified with a most earnest  
**John 3,** and watchful piety. To prefigure His Cross, Moses by the  
**14.** merciful command of God raised aloft on a pole the image of

a serpent in the desert, that the likeness of sinful flesh which  
 must be crucified in Christ might be prefigured. By gazing  
 upon this healing Cross, we cast out all the poison of the  
 scandals of the proud: the Cross, which the Psalmist intently  
 looking upon, saith, (ver. 123.) *My eyes have failed for Thy  
 salvation, and for the words of Thy righteousness.* For

**Rom. 8,** God made Christ Himself to be sin for us, on account of the  
**3.** likeness of sinful flesh, that we may be made the righteous-  
**2 Cor. 5,** ness of God in Him. For His utterance<sup>1</sup> of the righteousness  
**21.** of God he therefore saith that his eyes have failed, from  
<sup>1 elo-</sup> gazing ardently and eagerly, while, remembering human  
**quium** infirmity, he longeth for divine grace in Christ.

5. Ver. 124. In connexion with this he goes on to say,  
*O deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy;*  
 not according to my righteousness. *And teach me,* he saith,  
*Thy righteousnesses;* those beyond doubt, whereby God  
 rendereth men righteous, not they themselves.

6. Ver. 125. *I am Thy servant.* For it was not well for  
 me, when I wished to be free as my own, not Thy servant.  
*O grant me understanding, that I may know Thy testi-*  
*monies.* This petition must never be intermitted. For it  
 sufficeth not to have received understanding, and to have  
 learnt the testimonies of God, unless it be evermore received,  
 and evermore in a manner quaffed from the fountain of  
 eternal light. For the testimonies of God are the better and  
 the better known, the more understanding a man attaineth to.

7. Ver. 126. *It is time,* he saith, *for the Lord to lay to*  
*His hand.* For this is the reading of most copies: not as  
*some have, O Lord.* What time then, and for doing what, did

he mean to be understood? What he had a little before VER. 127.  
said: *Deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy:* 127.  
it is the time for the Lord to do this. Now what is this, save  
the grace which was revealed in Christ at its own time?  
Of which season the Apostle saith, *But when the fulness of Gal. 4, 4.*  
*time was come, God sent His Son.* In reference to this also,  
adding a prophetic testimony in another passage, he saith,  
*In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Isa. 49,*  
*salvation have I helped thee; lo, now is the accepted time: 2 Cor. 6,*  
*lo, now is the day of salvation.* But wherefore is it that, 2.  
seemingly anxious to shew the Lord that it was time to lay  
to His hand, he hath subjoined, *They have scattered Thy*  
*law;* as if it were the season for the Lord to act, because  
the proud scattered His law, *who, not knowing the right- Rom. 10,*  
*eousness of God, and wishing to set up their own, are not 3.*  
*subject unto the righteousness of God?* For what meaneth,  
*They have scattered Thy law,* save this, In the wickedness of  
transgression, they have not guarded its integrity. It was  
needful therefore that the Law should be given to the proud  
and those presuming in the freedom of their own will, after a  
transgression of which whosoever were contrite and humbled,  
might run no longer by the Law, but by faith, to aiding grace.  
When the Law therefore was scattered, it was time that mercy  
should be sent through the only-begotten Son of God. For  
*the Law entered that sin might abound;* by which sin the  
Law was destroyed; and Christ came now in an opportune  
season, *that where sin had abounded, grace might much Rom 5,*  
*more abound.* 20.

8. Ver. 127. *Therefore, he saith, I love Thy command-  
ments above gold and topaz.* Grace hath this object, that  
the commandments, which could not be fulfilled by fear,  
may be fulfilled by love. *For, by the grace of God, love Rom. 5,*  
*is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which is 5.*  
*given unto us.* Thus our Lord Himself saith, *I came not to Matt. 5,*  
*destroy the Law, but to fulfil it;* and the same Apostle, *Love 17.*  
*is the fulfilling of the Law.* Rom. 13, Therefore, they are above gold 10.  
and topaz stones. For this is read in another Psalm also,  
*Above gold and exceeding precious stones.* For topaz is a Ps. 19,  
stone considered very precious. But they not understanding 10.  
the hidden grace which was in the Old Testament, skreened

492 *Uprightness, through love of God's Commandments.*

PSALM CXIX. XXVI. as it were by the veil, (this was signified when they were unable to gaze upon the face of Moses,) endeavoured to obey the commandments of God for the sake of an earthly and carnal reward, but could not obey them; because they did not love them, but something else. Whence these were not the works of the willing, but rather the burdens of the unwilling. But when the commandments are loved for their own sake *above gold and exceeding precious stones*, all earthly reward compared with the commandments themselves is vile; nor are any other goods of man comparable in any respect with those goods whereby man himself is made good.

9. Ver. 128. *Therefore, he saith, was I made straight unto all Thy commandments.* I was made straight, doubtless, because I loved them; and I clung by love to them, which were straight, that I might also myself become straight. Then what he addeth, naturally follows; *and every unrighteous way I utterly abhor.* For how could it be that he who loved the straight could do aught save abhor an unrighteous way? For as, if he loved gold and precious stones, he would abhor all that might bring loss of such property: thus, since he loved the commandments of God, he abhorred the path of iniquity, as one of the most savage rocks in the sailor's track, whereon he must needs suffer shipwreck of things so precious. That this may not be his lot, he who saileth on the wood of the Cross with the divine commandments as his freight, steereth far from thence.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

PSALM CXIX.

*Discourse XXVII.*

PR. 1. Ver. 129. The following are the words of the Psalm, on which, by the Lord's help, we are about to discourse: *Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore hath my soul searched them.* Who counteth, even by their kinds, the testimonies of God? Heaven and earth, His visible and invisible works, declare in some manner the testimony of His goodness and greatness; and the very ordinary and accustomed course of nature, whereby the seasons are rapidly

revolved, in all things after their kinds, however temporal and perishable, however held cheap through our constant experience of them, give, if a pious thinker give heed to them, a testimony to the Creator. But which of these is not wonderful, if we measure each not by its habitual presence, but by reason? But if we venture to bring all nature within the comprehensive view of one act of contemplation, doth not that take place in us which the prophet describeth, *I considered Thy works, and trembled?* Yet the Psalmist <sup>HABAK.</sup> was not terrified in his wonder at creation, but rather said <sup>3, 2.</sup> that this was the reason that he ought to search it, because it was wonderful. For after saying, *Thy testimonies are wonderful*; he addeth, *therefore hath my soul searched them*; as if he had become more curious from the difficulty of thoroughly searching them. For the more abstruse are the causes of any thing, the more wonderful it is.

2. If therefore we were to meet such a man, as would say that he searched the testimonies of God for this reason, because they are wonderful, while the whole creation, both visible and invisible, is full of them; should we not restrain him, saying, *Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but that which the Lord hath commanded thee, meditate there-upon always?* But if he answer us, and say, These very commandments of the Lord, which ye enjoin me to meditate upon, are His wonderful testimonies; since they attest Him to be the Lord, because He commandeth, and to be good and great, because He commandeth such things; shall we venture to recall the man from searching into such things, and not rather exhort him carefully to continue doing so, and to devote as much attention as possible to so great a subject? Shall we confess that the commandments of God are testimonies of His goodness, and yet deny them to be wonderful? For what wonder is it, if a good Lord giveth good commandments? Yea, it is this which is to be wondered at, and should have its reasons carefully examined, that, while a good God hath commanded good things, yet He hath given a good law unto them, to whom that law could not give life, so that there was no righteousness to be gained from that good law. *For if there had been a law given*

VER.  
120.

HABAK.  
3, 2.

ECCLES.  
3, 21. 22.

**PSALM** *which could have given life, verily righteousness should have*  
**CXIX.** *been by the law.* Why then was one given which could not  
**XXVII.** give life, and out of which there was no righteousness? We  
 may well wonder, well feel astonished at this. These then  
 are the wonderful testimonies of God: on this account this  
 man's soul hath searched them, since concerning them it  
 could not be said unto him, *Seek not out the things that are*  
*too hard for thee, neither search that which is above thy*  
*strength; but that which is commanded thee, meditate there-*  
*upon always.* These very things are the Lord's command-  
 ments; and for this reason they should ever be meditated  
 upon. Let us therefore rather consider what this man's soul  
 searched, what it discovered.

3. Ver. 130. *When thy word goeth forth, he saith, it*  
*giveth light, and maketh His little ones to understand.*  
 What is the little one save the humble and weak? Be not  
 proud therefore, presume not in thine own strength, which  
 is nought; and thou wilt understand why a good law was  
 given by a good God, though it cannot give life. For it was  
 given for this end, that it might make thee a little one in-  
 stead of great, that it might shew that thou hadst not strength  
 to do the law of thine own power: and that thus, wanting  
 Ps. 6, 2. aid and destitute, thou mightest fly unto grace, saying, *Have*  
*mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.* By searching,  
 then, this little one understood the same, that Paul, the  
 least, that is, the simplest of the Apostles, sheweth, that the  
 Gal. 3, Law, which could not give life, was given because *Scripture*  
 21. 22. *hath concluded all things under sin, that the promise by*  
*faith of Jesus Christ might be given to all that believe.* Do  
 thus, do thus, merciful Lord; command what cannot be  
 fulfilled, yea, command what cannot, save through Thy  
 grace, be fulfilled: that when men have proved incapable of  
 fulfilling Thy commandments through their own strength,  
*every mouth may be stopped,* and no man may seem great  
 unto himself. Let all be little ones, and let all the world be  
 Rom. 3, guilty before Thee: because *by the deeds of the Law there*  
 19-21. *shall no flesh be justified* in Thy sight; *for by the Law is*  
*the knowledge of sin.* But now Thy *righteousness without*  
*the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the*  
*Prophets.* These are Thy wonderful testimonies, which the

soul of this little one hath searched; and hath therefore found, because he became humbled and a little one. For who doth Thy commandments as they ought to be done, that is, by *faith which worketh through love*, save love itself be shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit?

4. Ver. 131. This is confessed by this little one; *I opened my mouth*, he saith, *and drew in the spirit: for I longed for Thy commandments*. What did he long for, save to obey the divine commandments? But there was no possibility of the weak doing hard things, the little one great things: he opened his mouth, confessing that he could not do them of himself: and drew in power to do them: he opened his mouth, by seeking, asking, knocking: and athirst drank in the good Spirit, which enabled him to do what he could not do by himself, *the commandment holy and just and good*. For if we, *being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?* For not they that are led by their own spirit, but *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God*; not that they themselves do nothing; but that they may not do nothing good, they are moved to act by the good Spirit. For so much the more is every man made a good son, in proportion as the good Spirit is given unto Him by the Father in a greater measure.

5. Ver. 132. He still prayeth. He hath opened his mouth, and drawn in the Spirit; but he still knocketh in prayer unto the Father, and seeketh: he drinketh, but the more sweet he findeth it, the more eagerly doth he thirst. Hear the words of him in his thirst. *O look Thou upon me*, he saith, *and be merciful unto me: according to the judgment of those that love Thy Name*: that is, according to the judgment Thou hast dealt unto all who love Thy Name; since Thou hast first loved them, to cause them to love Thee. For thus saith the Apostle John, *We love God, because He first loved us*.

6. Ver. 133. See what the Psalmist next most openly saith: *Order my steps after Thy word: and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me*. Where what else doth he say than this, Make me upright and free according to Thy promise. But so much the more as the love of God reigneth in every man, so much the less hath wickedness dominion

436 *The Church prays she may not give way to calumnies.*

PSALM over him. What else then doth he seek than that by the gift  
CXIX. of God he may love God? For by loving God he loveth  
XXVII. himself, so that he may healthily love his neighbour also as  
Mat. 23, himself: on which commandments hang all the Law and the  
37—40. Prophets. What then doth he pray, save that God may cause the fulfilment by His help of those commandments which He imposeth by His bidding?

7. Ver. 134. But what meaneth this that he saith, *O deliver me from the calumnies of men: so shall I keep Thy commandments?* If those men impute true charges against him, they do not calumniate: if false, what reason is there that he should long to be delivered from these calumnies, that is, from false charges, which cannot injure him? For a false charge, that is, a calumny, doth not make a man guilty, save before a human judge: but when God is Judge, no man is injured by a false accusation; because it is imputed not to him against whom it is preferred, but to him who chargeth it. Is the prayer of the Church here prefigured,—the prayer of the whole Christian people,—which was delivered from the calumnies of men, whereby the Christians were harassed in every part of the world? But doth he on this account keep the commandments of God? Did not the holy people of God much the more gloriously keep the commandments among these very calumnies, when they were at their hottest in the midst of tribulations, when they yielded not to their persecutors to commit impieties? But, in truth, the meaning of these words, *O deliver Thou me from the calumnies of men, so shall I keep Thy commandments*, is this: Do Thou, by pouring upon me Thy Spirit, guard me from being overcome by the terrors of human calumny, and from being drawn over to their evil deeds away from Thy commandments. For if Thou hast thus dealt with me, that is, if Thou hast in this manner delivered me by the gift of patience from their calumnies, so that I fear not the false charges they prefer against me; among those very calumnies I will keep Thy commandments.

8. Ver. 135. *Shew the light of Thy countenance on Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes:* that is, manifest Thy presence, by succouring and aiding me. *And teach me Thy righteousnesses.* Teach me to work them: as it is

more plainly expressed elsewhere, *Teach me to do Thy will.* <sup>VER. 136.</sup>  
 For they who hear, although they retain in their memories <sup>Ps. 143,</sup>  
 what they hear, are by no means to be considered to have <sup>10.</sup>  
 learnt, unless they do. For it is the word of Truth: *Every* <sup>John 6,</sup>  
*man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father,* <sup>46.</sup>  
*cometh unto Me.* He therefore who obeyeth not in deed,  
 that is, who cometh not, hath not learnt.

9. Ver. 136. The Psalmist, recalling to mind his sorrowful  
 penitence for his transgression, saith, *My eyes have descended*  
*streams of waters, because they have not kept Thy law:*  
 that is, my eyes. For in some copies there is this read-  
 ing, *Because I have not kept Thy law, streams of waters*  
*therefore descended,* that is, floods of tears. And in the  
 same form of speech as he might say, 'My feet have  
 descended mountains,' without saying, 'over mountains,' or  
 'on mountains;' so we say, 'he descended ladders,' though  
 one say not 'by ladders;' or 'he went down the well,' with-  
 out saying, 'into the well.' And he rightly said, *descended,*  
 marking the humility of his penitence. For his eyes  
 ascended, when they were raised aloft and elate with con-  
 tumacious pride. For they seemed to themselves to be  
 raised on high, when, not knowing the righteousness of <sup>Rom. 10,</sup>  
 God, they wished to set up their own; wherein being wearied <sup>3.</sup>  
 and confused by their transgression of the law, they have  
 descended from that elevation in tears, that they might  
 rather gain the righteousness of God by repentance. There  
 are copies which do not read *descended,* but, *overpassed,*  
 meaning that he said hyperbolically, that in weeping he had  
 overpast streams of waters, that is, by weeping more than the  
 waters flow in their streams. But why doth he thus weep  
 for not keeping of the law, save to obtain grace, which  
 blotteth out the iniquity of the penitent, and aideth the will  
 of the believer?

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

Discourse XXVIII.

1. Ver. 137, 138. He who singeth this Psalm had said <sup>TADZE.</sup>  
 above, *My eyes have descended streams of waters, since they*  
*have not kept Thy law:* where he testifieth that he hath

**PSALM** wept much for his transgression. Thus, then, as if giving a  
**CXIX.** reason why he had cause to weep much, and to mourn  
**XXVIII.** deeply for his sin, he saith, *Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment. Thou hast commanded Thy testimonies, righteousness, and Thy truth exceedingly.* This righteousness of God and righteous judgment and truth, is to be feared by every sinner: for thereby all who are condemned are condemned of God; nor is there one who can righteously complain against the righteous God of his own damnation. Therefore the tears of the penitent are needful; since if his impenitent heart were condemned, he would be most justly condemned. He indeed calleth the testimonies of God righteousness: for He proveth himself righteous by giving righteous commandments. And this is truth also, that God may become known by such testimonies.

2. Ver. 139. But what is it that followeth: *My zeal hath caused me to pine*; or, as other copies read, *Thy zeal*? Others have also, *The zeal of Thy house*: and, *hath eaten me up*, instead of, *hath caused me to pine*. This, as it seems to me, has been considered as an emendation to be introduced from another Psalm, where it is written, *The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up*: a text quoted also, as we know, in the Gospel. The two words, however, *hath caused me to pine*, and *hath eaten me up*, are somewhat like. But the words, *my zeal*, which most of the copies read, occasion no dispute: for what wonder is it if every man pineth away from his own zeal? The words read in other copies, *Thy zeal*, signify a man zealous for God, not for himself: but there is no difficulty in using *my* in the same sense.

**Pa. 169,**  
**9.**  
**John 2,**  
**17.**

**2 Cor.** For what else doth the Apostle say, *I am jealous over you*  
**11, 2. 3.** *for God, with a godly jealousy*? In saying, *I am jealous over you*, doth he not display a jealousy of his own? But as he said for God, that is, not for himself, but for God, he addeth, *with a godly jealousy*. For God inspireth this among His faithful by His own Spirit: for it is a sign of love, not of envy. For what induced the Apostle to say this? *I have betrothed you*, he saith, *to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his cunning, so also your*

*minds be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ.* The zeal of the house of God devoured him, <sup>VER. 140.141.</sup> yet this jealousy he felt for Christ, not for himself. For the Bridegroom is jealous of the Bride for Himself, but the friend of the Bridegroom should not be jealous of her for himself, but for the Bridegroom. The Psalmist's jealousy is therefore also to be understood in a good sense: for he addeth the cause, and saith, *Because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.* They then were returning evil for good, because he was jealous of them for God so vehemently and ardently, that he said he was wasted with that zeal; but they for this cause carried on hostilities against him: because in fact he wished those, of whom from love he was jealous, to love the Lord. For not being ungrateful to the grace of God, by which he, who was before an enemy, had been reconciled to God, he too loved his own enemies, and was jealous of them for God, grieving and pining away, because they had forgotten His word.

3. Ver. 140. Then considering with himself with what a flame of love he burned for the commandments of God: *Fiery, saith he, is Thy word exceedingly, and Thy servant hath loved it.* Justly jealous was he of the impenitent heart in His enemies, who had forgotten God's word: for he endeavoured to bring them unto that which he himself most ardently loved.

4. Ver. 141. *I am young, and of no reputation: yet do I not forget Thy righteousnesses:* not as my enemies, who *have forgotten Thy words.* The younger seems to grieve for those older than himself who had forgotten the righteousnesses of God, while he himself had not forgotten. For what meaneth, *I am young, yet do I not forget?* save this, Those older than me have forgotten. For the Greek word is *νεώτερος*, the same as that used in the words above, *Where-* <sup>ver. 9.</sup> *withal shall a young man cleanse his way?* This is a comparative, and is therefore well understood in its relation to some one older. Let us therefore here recognise the two nations, who were striving even in Rebecca's womb; when <sup>Gen. 25, 22, 23.</sup> it was said to her, not from works, but of Him that calleth, *The elder shall serve the younger.* But the younger saith <sup>Rom. 9, 12, 13.</sup> here that he is, of no reputation: for this reason he hath

PSALM CXIX. XXVIII. become greater: since *God hath chosen the base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things that* 1 Cor. 1. 28. *are not as though they were, to bring to nought things that* Mat. 20. 16. *are. And, behold, they that were first are last, and they that were last first.*

5. Ver. 142. It is no wonder that they have forgotten the Rom. 10. 3. words of God, who have chosen to set up their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God; but he, the younger, hath not forgotten, for he hath not wished to have a righteousness of his own, but that of God, of which he now also saith, *Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth.* For how is not the law truth, through which came the knowledge of sin, and that which giveth testimony of the righteousness of God? For thus the Rom. 3. 20. 21. Apostle saith: *The righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.*

6. Ver. 143. On account of this law the younger suffered persecution from the elder, so that the younger saith what followeth: *Trouble and hardship have taken hold upon me: yet is my meditation in Thy commandments.* Let them rage, let them persecute; as long as the commandments of God be not abandoned, and, after those commandments, let even those who rage be loved.

7. Ver. 144. *Thy testimonies are righteousness unto everlasting: O grant me understanding, and I shall live.* This younger one prayeth for understanding; which if he had not, ver. 100. he would not be *wiser than the aged*; but he prayeth for it in trouble and hardships, that he may thereby understand how contemptible is all that his persecuting enemies can take from him, by whom he saith he hath been despised. Therefore he hath said, *and I shall live*: because if trouble and heaviness reached such a pitch, that his life should be terminated by the hands of his persecuting enemies, he will live for ever, who preferreth righteousness to temporal things, which remaineth for evermore. This righteousness in trouble and hardship are the *Martyria Dei*, that is, the testimonies of God, for which Martyrs have been crowned.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

Discourse XXIX.

1. Ver. 145. WHO can doubt, that cries unto the Lord, ΚΟΡΗ. made in prayer, if uttered only from the mouth of the body, and not with the heart fixed upon God, sound in vain? But if they proceed from the heart, though the voice of the body be silent, they may escape any other man whomsoever, but not God. Whether then we cry unto the Lord, when we pray, with our fleshly voices, when there is occasion for them, or in silence, we must cry from the heart. Now the cry of the heart is a solemn earnestness of thought; which when vented in prayer, doth express a deep longing and affection of him that prayeth, so that he despaireth not of success. Then also we cry with the whole heart, when we have no thoughts elsewhere. Such prayers are rare among the many, frequent among the few; whether all are such with any one person, I know not. He who singeth this Psalm, mentioneth such a prayer of his own: *I have called with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord!* For to what end his cry profiteth, he addeth: *I will search out Thy righteousnesses.* For this purpose then he hath called with his whole heart, and hath longed that this might be given him by the Lord listening unto him, that he may search out His righteousnesses. That therefore which we are commanded to do, we pray that we may search out. How far is he who seeketh from him that doeth? For it doth not follow that he who seeketh should find; or that he who findeth, should do: but he cannot do, unless he hath found; nor find, unless he hath sought. But our Lord Jesus inspired great hope by saying, *Seek, and ye shall find.* But again, Wisdom (and what is this, save Himself?) saith, *The wicked shall seek me, and shall not find me.* It is not said, therefore, to the wicked, Matt. 7. but to the good, *Seek, and ye shall find.* Nay, but it is said Prov. 1, to those, to whom it is said a little after in the same passage, *If then ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children.* Matt. 7. How then is it said to the wicked, *Seek, and ye shall find;* and again said, *The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me?* Did the Lord wish them to seek any thing

**PSALM** save wisdom, when He promised that they should find it if  
**CXIX.** they would seek it? For in it are all things which are to be  
**XXIX.**

sought by those who wish to be happy. The righteousnesses of God therefore are there also. It remaineth therefore for us to understand, not that all wicked men do not find wisdom, if they seek it; but those who are so far evil as to hate it.

**Prov. 1,** For thus He hath said: *The wicked shall seek Me, and shall*  
**28. 29.** *not find Me, for they hate wisdom.* They fail to find it then,

because they hate it. But again, if they hate it, why do they seek it; save because they do not seek it on its own account, but for the sake of something which the wicked love, and think they will more readily arrive at through Wisdom!

For there are many who most studiously examine into the words of wisdom, and wish to have it in doctrine, not in life; not so that they may reach the light of God, which is wisdom herself, by means of the conduct which wisdom prescribes, but that by means of the discourses which she yieldeth, they may reach the praise of men, which is vain glory. They do not therefore seek wisdom even when they are seeking her; because they do not seek her for her own sake, otherwise they would live according to her: but they wish to be puffed up with her words; and the more they are puffed up, the further they are placed without her pale. Whereas the Psalmist, seeking this very thing of the Lord, which the Lord commandeth him to do, that He may work in him what

**Phil. 2,** He commandeth; for *it is God who worketh in us both to*  
**18.** *will and to do of His good pleasure; saith, I have called with*

*my whole heart: hear me, O Lord: I will search out Thy righteousnesses: to do them, not merely to know them: that I may not become like that stiffnecked servant, who,*

**Prov. 29,** *although he understand, will not obey.*

**19.** 2. Ver. 146. *I have called, save me; or as some copies, both Greek and Latin, have it, I have called to Thee. But what is, I have called to Thee, save that by calling I have invoked Thee? But when he had said, save me; what did he add? And I will keep Thy testimonies: that is, that I may not, through infirmity, deny Thee. For the health of the soul causeth that to be done which it is known to be our duty to do, and thus in striving even to the death of the body, if the extremity of temptation demand this in*

defence of the truth of the divine testimonies : but where there is not health of the soul, weakness yieldeth, and truth is deserted. VER.  
147.

3. Ver. 147. But what follows contains something obscure, which must be explained at somewhat greater length. *I have prevented in the night watches (intempestá nocte)*. Many copies have not, *intempestá nocte* : but, *immaturitate* (at an unseasonable time) : but hardly one is found which has the preposition doubled, *in immaturitate*. *Immaturitas* means in this passage a season at night, which is not mature, that is, opportune for any thing being done waking : just what is commonly called, an unseasonable hour. Night is also called *intempesta*, that is, midnight, when we ought to be at rest, because it is inopportune for the actions of men awake. For by *tempestivum* the ancients meant opportune : and by *intempestivum*, inopportune : the word being derived from *tempus*, time, not from that sense of *tempestas*, which, according to the custom of the Latin tongue, signifies a storm in the sky. Although historians willingly use this word, *ed tempestate* for *eo tempore* : and in the words of a great master of expression, Virg.  
Æn. ix.  
19.

— “Unde hæc tam clara repente  
*Tempestat.*”

— Whence on a sudden this so bright  
*Tempestat.*

A sky disturbed with clouds and winds is not meant, but one refulgent with a sudden and splendid serenity. What therefore is called in Greek, ἐν ἀωγίᾳ, not in one word, but in two, that is, a preposition and a noun ; this some of our translators have rendered by *intempestá nocte* : more by, *immaturitate*, not two words, but one\*, the nominative of which is *immaturitas* : some again, by two words, like the Greek, ἐν ἀωγίᾳ, *in immaturitate* : for ἀωγία is *immaturitas*, ἐν ἀωγίᾳ is *in immaturitate* : as though he also who said, *intempestá nocte*, wished to double the preposition, and say, *in intempestá* ; so that one preposition might signify in such a time, the other might belong to the composition of the word. It matters nothing to

\* He specifies this, because the sound is so close to that of the two words “in maturitate,” that it would be difficult to make the distinction in pronouncing them.

PSALM the sense, whether any one say he did something *galli cantu*,  
 CXIX. or, *in galli cantu*: and so it would matter nothing, whether  
 XXIX. he said that he cried forth *intempestá*, or *in intempestá nocte*,  
 that is, *in nocte intempestá*. Yet the Greek said *in nocte*  
*intempestá*, which would mean the same if it were expressed  
 by *in immaturitate*, that is, at an unseasonable time of night.  
 So far we have discoursed on an obscure word: now let us  
 see what the sense itself is.

4. *I have prevented in midnight*, he saith, *and have cried: In Thy words have I trusted*. If we refer this to each of the faithful, and to the literal character of the act; it oft happeneth that the love of God is awake in that hour of the night, and, the love of prayer strongly urging us, the time of prayer, which is wont to be after the crowing of the cock, is not awaited, but prevented. But if we understand night of the whole of this world's duration; we indeed cry unto God at midnight, and prevent the fulness of time in which He will restore us what He hath promised, as is else-  
 Ps. 95, 2. where read, *Let us prevent His presence with confession*.  
 Although if we choose to understand the unripe season of  
 Gal. 4, 4. this night, before the fulness of time had come, that is, the ripe season when Christ should be manifested in the flesh; neither was the Church then silent, but preventing this fulness of time, in prophecy cried out, and trusted in the words of God, Who was able to do what He promised, that  
 Gen. 12, in the seed of Abraham all nations should be blessed.

3. and  
 22, 18. 5. Ver. 148. The Church saith also what followeth, *Mine eyes have prevented the morning watch, that I might meditate on Thy words*. Let us suppose the morning to mean  
 Isa. 9, 2. the season when *a light arose for them that sat in the shadow of death*; did not the eyes of the Church prevent this morning watch, in those Saints who before were on earth, because they foresaw beforehand that this would come to pass, so that they meditated on the words of God, which then were, and announced these things to be destined in the Law and the Prophets?

6. Ver. 149. *Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy loving-mercy; and quicken Thou me according to Thy judgment*. For first God according to His loving-mercy taketh away punishment from sinners, and will give them life afterwards,

when righteous, according to His judgment; for it is not without a meaning that it is said unto Him, *My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord*; in this order of the terms: although the season of mercy itself be not without judgment, whereof the Apostle saith, *If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord: but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world*: and his fellow Apostle, *The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?* And the final season of judgment shall not be without mercy, since as the Psalm saith, *He crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness. But judgment shall be without mercy, but unto those on the left, who have not dealt mercy.*

7. Ver. 150. *They draw nigh, that of malice persecute me*: or, as some copies read, *maliciously*. Then they that persecute draw nigh, when they go the length of torturing and destroying the flesh: whence the twenty-first Psalm, wherein the Lord's Passion is prophesied, saith, *O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand*; where those things are spoken of which He suffered when His Passion was not imminent upon Him, but actually realised. But by trouble being nigh at hand, he meant that which took place in the flesh; for there is nothing nearer to the soul than the flesh which it weareth. The persecutors therefore drew near, by afflicting their flesh, whom they persecuted. But heed what followeth: *and are far from Thy law*. The nearer they drew to the persecuting the righteous, so much the farther were they from righteousness. But what harm did they do unto those, to whom they drew near by persecution; since the approach of their Lord is nearer unto their souls, by Whom they no wise are forsaken?

8. Ver. 151. Lastly, it followeth, *Thou art nigh at hand, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth*. Even in their troubles, it hath been a wonted confession of the saints, to ascribe truth unto God, because they suffer them not undeservedly. So did Queen Esther, so did holy Daniel, so did the three men in the furnace, so do other associates in their sanctity confess. But it may be asked, in what sense it is here said,

V BR.  
150. 151.  
Ps. 101,

1.

1 Cor. 11,  
31. 32.

1 Pet. 4,  
17.  
Ps. 103,

4.

James 2,  
13.

Ps. 22,  
11.

Esther  
14, 6. 7.  
Dan. 9,  
4. 16.  
Song of  
3 Chil.  
2-10.

PSALM *All Thy ways are truth*; since in another Psalm it is read,  
 CXIX. *All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.* But towards  
 XXIX. the saints, All the ways of the Lord are at once mercy and  
 Ps. 25, truth: since He aideth them even in judgment, and thus  
 10. mercy is not wanting; and in having mercy upon them, He  
 performeth that which He hath promised, so that truth is  
 not wanting. But towards all, both those whom He freeth,  
 and those whom He condemneth, all the ways of the Lord  
 are mercy and truth; because where He doth not shew  
 mercy, the truth of His vengeance is displayed. For He  
 freeth many who have not deserved, but He condemneth  
 none who hath not deserved it.

2. Ver. 152. *From the beginning I have known*, he saith,  
*as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded*  
*them for ever.* The Greek word *καταρχὰς* hath been vari-  
 ously rendered by the Latin translators by *ab initio*, *initio*,  
 and *in initiis*. Those who rendered it in the plural, have  
 followed the Greek phrase. But it is more usual in the  
 Latin tongue to express the idea conveyed by *καταρχὰς*,  
 which in Greek is used in the plural or adverbially, by the  
 words *ab initio*, or *initio*; just as with us, when we say,  
 Otherwise I do this (alias hoc facio), we seem to be using  
 the plural of the feminine gender, whereas the word is an  
 adverb, and signifies, at another time. What then meaneth,  
*From the beginning have I known as concerning Thy*  
*testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever?* He  
 saith that the testimonies of the Lord were grounded by  
 Him for ever, and he testifieth that he knew this from the  
 beginning, and knew it from no other source than from those  
 very testimonies. What are these testimonies, save those  
 wherein God hath declared that He will give an everlasting  
 kingdom unto His sons? And since He hath declared that  
 He will give this in His only-begotten Son, of Whom it is  
 Luke 1, said, *Of His kingdom there shall be no end*; he said that  
 33. the testimonies themselves were grounded for ever, since  
 that which God hath promised through them, was everlast-  
 ing. For the testimonies will not of themselves be needful,  
 when the reality, for the sake of the belief in which, testi-  
 monies are now required, shall be displayed. And for this  
 reason the words, *Thou hast grounded them*, are rightly

*God's law of abasing the proud and exalting the humble. 447*

thus understood, because they are shewn to be true in VER. 153.  
Christ. *For no man can lay any other foundation than that* 1 Cor. 3,  
*which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* Whence then did the 11.  
Psalmist know this in the beginning, save because the  
Church speaketh, which was not wanting to the earth from  
the commencement of the human race, the first-fruits whereof  
was the holy Abel, himself sacrificed in testimony of the Gen. 4,  
future blood of the Mediator that should be shed by a 8.  
wicked brother? For this also was at the beginning, *They* id. 2, 24.  
*two shall be one flesh:* which great mystery the Apostle  
Paul expounding, saith, *I speak concerning Christ and the* Eph. 5,  
*Church.* 32.

PSALM CXIX.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

*Discourse XXX.*

1. Ver. 153. LET no man, set in Christ's body, imagine RUSCH.  
these words to be alien from himself, (since in truth it is the  
whole body of Christ placed in this humble state that  
speaketh,) whence beginneth the reading of this Psalm, con-  
cerning which we have now undertaken to treat: *O consider  
my humiliation, and deliver me: for I forget not Thy law.*  
In this place we cannot understand any law of God so  
suitably, as that whereby it is immutably determined that  
*every one that exalleth himself, shall be abased; and every* Luke 14,  
*one that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.* The proud 11. and  
therefore is involved in evils, that he may be humbled; the 13, 14.  
humble is delivered from evils, that he may be exalted.

2. Ver. 154. *Avenge Thou, he saith, my cause, and  
deliver me.* The former sentence is here almost repeated.  
For the words, *O consider mine humiliation;* answer unto  
these, *Avenge Thou my cause:* and the words, *deliver me,*  
also occur above. And what is there said, *For I do not  
forget Thy law,* agreeth with what we read here, *Quicken me,  
according to Thy word.* For these words are the law of  
God, which he hath not forgot, so that he hath abased  
himself, and will therefore be exalted. But the words,  
*Quicken me,* pertain to this very exaltation; for the exalt-  
ation of the saints is everlasting life.

PSALM 3. Ver. 155. *Health, he saith, is far from the ungodly:*  
 CXIX. *for they regard not Thy righteousnesses.* For who discerneth thee, O thou who hast said, *Health is far from the*  
 XXX. *ungodly:* who separateth thee from the ungodly, so that health is not far from thee, but with thee? This separateth thee, that what they have not done, thou hast done, that is,

1 Cor. 4. 7. thou hast regarded the righteousnesses of God. But *what hast thou that thou hast not received?* Art thou not he who a little before didst say, *I call with my whole heart: Hear me, O Lord: I will keep Thy righteousnesses?* Thou therefore hast received from Him, unto Whom thou didst call, the power to keep them. He therefore doth Himself separate thee from those from whom health is far, because they have not regarded the righteousnesses of God.

4. Ver. 156. This he saw himself also. For I should not see it, save I saw it in Him, save I were in Him. For these are the words of the Body of Christ, whose members we are. He saw this, I say, and at once added, *Great are Thy mercies, O Lord.* Even our seeking out Thy righteousnesses, then, cometh of Thy mercies. *Quicken me according to Thy judgment.* For I know that Thy judgments will not be upon me without Thy mercy.

5. Ver. 157. *Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me; yet do I not swerve from Thy testimonies.* This hath been realised: we know it, we recollect it, we acknowledge it. The whole earth hath been crimsoned by the blood of Martyrs; heaven is flowery with the crowns of Martyrs, the Churches are adorned with the memorials of Martyrs, seasons distinguished by the birthdays of Martyrs, cures more frequent<sup>1</sup> by the merits of Martyrs. Whence this, save because that hath been fulfilled which was prophesied of that Man Who hath been spread abroad around the whole world, *Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me: yet have I not swerved from Thy testimonies?* We recognise this, and render thanks to the Lord our God. For thou, man, thou hast thyself said  
 Ps. 124. 2. 3. *in another Psalm, If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, they would have swallowed us up quick.* Behold the reason why thou hast not swerved from His *testimonies*, and hast won the palm of thy heavenly calling

<sup>1</sup> cre-  
 brescunt  
 sanita-  
 tes. de  
 Civ. De,  
 22, 8.

amid the hands of the many who persecuted and troubled thee. VER.  
158-160.

6. Ver. 158. *I have seen*, he saith, *the foolish, and I pined*: or, as other copies read, *I have seen them that keep not covenant*: this is the reading of most. But who are they who have not kept covenant, save they who have swerved from the testimonies of God, not bearing the tribulation of their many persecutors? Now this is the covenant, that he who shall have conquered shall be crowned. They who, not bearing persecution, have by denial swerved from the testimonies of God, have not kept the covenant. These then the Psalmist saw, and pined, for he loved them. For that jealousy is good, springing from love, not from envy. He addeth in what respect they had failed to keep the covenant, *Because they kept not Thy word*. For this they denied in their tribulations.

7. Ver. 159. And he commendeth himself as differing from them, and saith, *Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments*. He saith not, I have not denied Thy words or testimonies, as the Martyrs were urged to do, and, when they refused, suffered intolerable torments: but he said this wherein is the fruit of all sufferings; for, *if I give up my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing*. 1 Cor.  
13, 3. The Psalmist, praising this virtue, saith, *Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments*. Then he asketh his reward, *O Lord, quicken me, according to Thy mercy*. These put me to death, do Thou quicken me. But if a reward be asked of mercy, which justice is bound to give; how much greater is that mercy, which enabled him to gain the victory, on account of which the reward was sought for?

8. Ver. 160. *The beginning*, he saith, *of Thy words is truth; all the judgments of Thy righteousness endure for evermore*. From truth, he saith, Thy words do proceed, and they are therefore truthful, and deceive no man, for in them life is announced to the righteous, punishment to the ungodly. These are the everlasting judgments of God's righteousness.

LAT.  
CXVIII.

## PSALM CXIX.

Discourse XXXI.

**SCHIN.** 1. Ver. 161. WE know what persecutions the body of Christ, that is, the holy Church, suffered from the kings of the earth. Let us therefore here also recognise the words of the Church: *Princes have persecuted me without a cause: and my heart hath stood in awe of Thee.* For how had the Christians injured the kingdoms of the earth, although their King promised them the kingdom of heaven? How, I ask, had they injured the kingdoms of earth? Did their King forbid His soldiers to pay and to render due service to the kings of the earth? Saith He not to the Jews who **Mat. 22,** were striving to calumniate Him, *Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's?* Did he not even in His own Person pay tribute from the mouth of a fish? Did not His forerunner, when the soldiers of this kingdom were seeking what they ought to do for their everlasting salvation, instead of replying, Loose your belts, throw away your arms, desert your king, that ye may **Luke 3,** wage war for the Lord, answer, *Do violence to no man: neither accuse any falsely: and be content with your wages?* Did not one of His soldiers, His most beloved companion\*, say to his fellow soldiers, the provincials<sup>1</sup>, so to speak, of **Ps. 91. 5.** Christ, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers?* **10. and** on **Ps. 104. ser.** and a little lower he addeth, *Render to all their dues: iii. 5. 9. tribute to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom: Rom. 13. 1. 7. 8. fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Does he not enjoin the **1 Tim. 2,** Church to pray for even kings themselves? How then have **1. 2.** the Christians offended against them? What due have they not rendered? in what have not Christians obeyed the monarchs of earth? The kings of the earth therefore have persecuted the Christians without a cause. But heed what he hath subjoined: *And my heart hath stood in awe of Thy word.* They too had their threatening words: I banish, I proscribe, I slay, I torture with claws, I burn with fires, I expose to beasts, I tear the limbs piecemeal: but rather

\* 'Comes;' a title of honour in the Imperial Court.

of Thy word hath my heart stood in awe. Fear not them <sup>V. 162, 163.</sup> which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but <sup>Mat. 10,</sup> rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body <sup>28.</sup> in hell. My heart hath stood in awe of these words of Thine; and I have scorned man who persecuteth me, and have overcome the devil that would seduce me.

2. Ver. 162. Then follows, *I am as glad of Thy word as one that findeth great spoils.* By the same words he conquered, of which he stood in awe. For spoils are stripped from the conquered; as he was overcome and despoiled of whom it is said in the Gospel, *No man entereth into the <sup>Mat. 12,</sup> strong man's house to spoil his goods, except he first bind <sup>29.</sup> the strong man.* But many spoils were found, when, admiring the endurance of the Martyrs, even the persecutors believed; and they who had plotted to injure our King by the injury of His soldiers, were gained over by Him in addition. Whoever therefore standeth in awe of the words of God, fearing lest he be overcome in the contest, rejoiceth as conqueror in the same words.

3. Ver. 163. For lest we should imagine it possible that hatred of God's words might have crept in, in consequence of this fear, although he had already said, *I am glad of Thy word,* which he certainly would not say, if he hated it; nevertheless he added, *As for iniquity, I hate and abhor it; but Thy law have I loved.* That awe, therefore, of His word did not create hatred of those words, but maintained his love unimpaired. For the words of God are no other than the law of God. Far be it therefore that love perish through fear, where fear is chaste. Thus fathers are at once feared and loved by affectionate sons; thus doth the chaste wife at once fear her husband, lest she be forsaken by him, and loveth him, that she may enjoy his love. If then the human father and the human husband desire at once to be feared and loved; much more doth our Father Who is in heaven, <sup>Mat. 6,</sup> and that Bridegroom, *beautiful beyond the sons of men,* not <sup>Ps. 45, 2.</sup> in the flesh, but in goodness. For by whom is the law of God loved, save by those by whom God is loved? And what that is severe hath the father's law to good sons? Is it hard that *He chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every <sup>Heb. 12,</sup> son whom He receiveth?* But he who refuseth these judg- <sup>6.</sup>

ments, receiveth not the promises. Let the Father's judgments therefore be praised even in the scourge, if His promises be loved in the reward.

4. Ver. 164. Such was, assuredly, the conduct of the Psalmist, who saith, *Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments.* The words *seven times a day*, signify *evermore*. For this number is wont to be a symbol of universality; because after six days of the divine work of creation, a seventh of rest was added; and all times roll on through a revolving cycle of seven days.

Gen. 2, 2. For no other reason it was said, *a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again*: that is, the just man perisheth not, though brought low in every way, yet not induced to transgress, otherwise he will not be just. For the words, *falleth seven times*, are employed to express every kind of tribulation, whereby man is cast down in the sight of men: and the words, *riseth up again*, signify that he profiteth from all these tribulations. The following sentence in this passage sufficiently illustrates the foregoing words: for it follows, *but the wicked shall fall into mischief*. Not to be deprived of strength in any evils, is therefore the falling seven times, and the rising again of the just man. Justly hath the Church then praised God seven times in a day for His righteous judgments; because, when it was time that judgment should begin at the house of God, she did not faint in all her tribulations, but was glorified with the crowns of Martyrs.

Prov. 24, 16. 1 Pet. 4, 17.

5. Ver. 165. *Great is the peace*, he saith, *that they have who love Thy law: and there is no offence to them.* Doth this mean that the law itself is not an offence to them that love it, or that there is no offence from any source unto them that love the law? But both senses are rightly understood. For he who loveth the law of God, honoureth in it even what he doth not understand; and what seemeth to him to sound absurd, he judgeth rather that he doth not understand, and that there is some great meaning hidden: thus the law of God is not an offence to him. But that he may suffer no offence at all, let him not heed men of each holy profession to such a degree as to allow his faith to depend upon their conduct; lest, if some fall, whom he highly esteemed, he

perish by an offence: but let him love the law of God itself, VER. 106-168. and he shall have much peace, and no offence. For he is safe in loving that, which, although many sin in it, doth not itself know sin.

6. Ver. 166. *I have waited*, he saith, *for Thy saving health, O Lord, and have loved Thy commandments.* For what would it have profited the righteous of old to have loved the commandments of God, save Christ, Who is the saving health of God, had freed them; by the gift of whose Spirit also they were able to love the commandments of God? If therefore they who loved God's commandments, waited for His saving health; how much more necessary was Jesus, that is, the saving Health of God, for the salvation of those that did not love His commandments? This prophecy may suit also the Saints of the period since the revelation of grace, and the preaching of the Gospel, for they that love God's commandments look for Christ, that *when Christ, our life,* Coloss. 3, 4. *shall appear, we may then appear with Him in glory.*

7. Ver. 167, 168. *My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I have loved them exceedingly:* or, as some copies read, *hath loved them, understanding, my soul.* The testimonies of God are kept, while they are not denied. This is the office of Martyrs, for testimonies are called Martyria in Greek. But since it profiteth nothing, even to be burnt with flames with-1Cor.13, out charity, he addeth, *and I have loved them exceedingly.* 3. He had said above, *I have loved Thy commandments;* then in the following verse, *I have kept and have loved Thy testimonies:* further down, *I have kept both Thy commandments and Thy testimonies;* for he saith, *I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies.* For he who loveth, keepeth them in the Spirit of truth and faithfulness. But generally, while the commandments of God are kept, they against whose will they are kept become our foes: then, indeed, His testimonies also must be kept courageously, lest they be denied when the enemy persecuteth.

8. After the Psalmist, then, had declared that he had done both these things, he ascribeth unto God his having been enabled to do so, by adding, *because all my ways are in Thy sight.* He saith therefore, *I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; because all my ways are in Thy sight.*

**PSALM CXXI.** As much as to say, Hadst Thou turned away Thy face from me, I should have been confounded, nor could I keep Thy commandments and testimonies. *I have kept them*, then, because *all my ways are in Thy sight*. With a look favouring and aiding man, he meant it to be understood that God seeth his ways: according to the prayer, *O hide not Thou Thy face from me*. For, *the face of the Lord is also over them that do evil*, but so, that *He may blot out the memory of them from the earth*. Not in this sense indeed hath the Psalmist said that his ways are seen of Him, but as *the Lord knoweth the ways of the righteous*, and as He saith unto Moses, *I know Thee above all*. For if this did not aid him as he walked, that his ways are before God, he would not say that he had kept his commandments and testimonies, because all his ways were before the Lord. For he knew how to hear, *Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. Take hold on discipline, lest the Lord be angry, and so ye perish from the right way*: for, save he were in the sight of the Lord, his way would not be the right way. For the Apostle Paul enjoineth this fear and trembling upon those to whom he saith, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*; and, explaining why he speaketh thus, *For it is God, he addeth, Who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*. For this end, then, the ways of the righteous are before the Lord, that He may direct their steps, since these are the ways of which it is said in Proverbs, *The Lord knoweth the paths that are on the right: but they that are on the left are perverse*: so that we may understand that the Lord knoweth them not, because He will say to the perverse, *I know you not*. Moreover, to shew the fruit of the Lord's knowing those paths which are on the right, that is, those of the righteous, he at once addeth, *For He will make Thy paths straight, and will lead thy footsteps in peace*. Behold then the reason why the Psalmist also saith, *I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies*. And, as though we asked how he was able to keep them, he answereth, *Because all my ways are in Thy sight, O Lord*.

PSALM CXIX.

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Discourse XXXII.

3. Ver. 169. LET us now hear the words of one praying: **TAU.** since we know who is praying, and we recognise ourselves, if we be not reprobate, among the members of this one praying. *Let my prayer come near in Thy sight, O Lord: for, The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart.* **Ps. 34,** *Give me understanding, according to Thy word.* He **18.** claimeth a promise. For he saith, *according to Thy word,* which is to say, according to Thy promise. For the Lord promised this when He said, *I will inform thee.* **Ps. 32,**

**8.** 2. Ver. 170. *Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: deliver me, according to Thy word.* He repeateth what he hath asked. For his former words, *Let my prayer come near in Thy presence, O Lord:* are like unto what he saith, *Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord:* and the words, *Give me understanding according to Thy word,* agree with these, *Deliver me according to Thy word.* For by receiving understanding he is delivered, who of himself through want of understanding is deceived.

3. Ver. 171. *My lips shall burst forth praise: when Thou hast taught me Thy righteousnesses.* We know how God teacheth those who are docile unto God. For every one who hath heard from the Father and hath learned, comes **John 6,** unto Him *Who justifieth the ungodly:* so that he may keep **46.** **Rom. 4,** the righteousnesses of God not only by retaining them in his **5.** memory, but also by doing them. Thus doth he who glorieth, **1 Cor. 1,** glory not in himself, but in the Lord, and burst forth praise. **31.**

4. Ver. 172. But as he hath now learned, and praised God his Teacher, he next wisheth to teach. *Yea, my tongue shall declare Thy word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness.* When he saith that he will declare these things, he becometh a minister of the word. For though God teach within, nevertheless *faith cometh from hearing:* **Rom. 10,** *and how do they hear without a preacher?* For, because **17, 14.** *God giveth the increase,* is no reason why we need not plant **1 Cor. 3,** and water. **7.**

5. Ver. 173, 174. But he is aware what perils will follow

PSALM from the adversaries and persecutors, when he shall become  
 CXIX. a declarer of God's words: wherefore he hath added, *Let*  
 XXXII. *Thy hand be stretched forth (fiat, be made) to save me, for*  
*I have chosen Thy commandments.* That I might not fear,  
 and that not only might my heart hold fast, but my tongue  
 also utter Thy words: *I have chosen Thy commandments,*  
 and have stifled fear with love. Let Thy hand therefore be  
 stretched forth, to save me from another's hand. Thus God  
 saved the Martyrs, when He permitted them not to be slain  
 in their souls: for *rain is the safety of man* in the flesh.  
 Pr. 60, 11. The words, *Let Thy hand be made,* may also be taken  
 to mean Christ the Hand of God: in the sense of those  
 Is. 53, 1. words of Isaiah, *And unto Whom hath the arm of the Lord*  
*been revealed?* For the Only-Begotten was not created, since  
 John 1, 3. *by Him were all things created;* but He was *made of the*  
 Rom. 1, 3. *seed of David,* that He might be Jesus, that is the Saviour,  
 Who was already the Creator. But as these are familiar  
 Scriptural phrases, *Let Thy hand be stretched forth* (lit.  
 Ezek. 1, 3. *made*); and, the *Hand of the Lord was made*: I know  
 3. &c. not whether this sense can be found in all these pas-  
 sages. Certainly where we read the following words,  
 (ver. 174.) *I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord:* even  
 if all our foes be reluctant, let Christ the Salvation of God  
 occur to us: the righteous men of old confess that they  
 longed for Him, the Church longed for His destined coming  
 from His mother's womb, the Church longeth for His  
 coming at His Father's right hand. Subjoined to this  
 sentence are the words, *And Thy law is my meditation:*  
 for the Law giveth testimony unto Christ.  
 Rom. 10, 6. Ver. 175. But in this faith, while *with the heart we*  
 10. *believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is*  
 Ps. 2, 1. *made unto salvation;* though the heathen rage furiously,  
 and the people imagine a vain thing: though the flesh be  
 slain while it preacheth Thee: *My soul shall live, and shall*  
*praise Thee: and Thy judgments shall help me.* These are  
 1 Pet. 4, 17. those judgments, which it was time should begin at the house  
 of the Lord. But *they will help me,* he saith. And who  
 cannot see how much the blood of the Church hath aided  
 the Church? how great a harvest hath risen in the whole  
 world from that sowing?

7. Ver. 176. At length he openeth himself completely, and sheweth what person was speaking throughout the whole Psalm. *I have gone astray*, he saith, *like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments.* Some copies have not *seek*, but *quicken*. For there is a difference only of one syllable, between the corresponding Greek words  $\zeta\eta\sigma\omicron\nu$  and  $\zeta\eta\rho\eta\sigma\omicron\nu$ : whence the Greek copies themselves derive the variation. But whichever of these be right, let the lost sheep be sought, let the lost sheep be quickened, for whose sake its Shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and while seeking it, was torn by Jewish thorns. But it is still being sought, let it still be sought, partly found let it still be sought. For as to that company, among whom the Psalmist saith, *I do not forget Thy commandments*, it hath been found; but through those who choose the commandments of God, gather them together, love them, it is still sought, and by means of the blood of its Shepherd shed and sprinkled abroad, it is found in all nations.

VER.  
176.

Mat. 18,  
12. 13.

8. As far as I have been able, as far as I have been aided by the Lord, I have treated throughout, and expounded, this great Psalm. A task which more able and learned expositors have performed or will perform better; nevertheless, my services were not to be withheld from it on that account, when my brethren earnestly required it of me, to whom I owed this office. That I have said nothing of the Hebrew alphabet, in which every eight verses are ranged under a particular letter, and the whole Psalm arranged in this manner, let no one wonder, since I found nothing that related especially to this Psalm: for it is not the only one which hath these letters. Let those who cannot find it in the Latin and Greek versions, since it is not adopted there, know that every set of eight verses in the Hebrew copies beginneth with that letter which is prefixed to them; as is indicated to us by those who are acquainted with the Hebrew tongue. This is done with much more care, than our writers have shewn in their Latin or Punic compositions of Psalms which they style *abecedarii*. For they do not begiu all the verses down to the close of a period, but the first only with the same letter which they prefix to it.

LAT.  
CXIX.

## PSALM CXX.

1. Ver. 1. THE Psalm which we have just heard chanted, and have responded to with our voices, is short, and very profitable. Ye will not long toil in hearing, nor will ye toil fruitlessly in working. For it is, according to the title prefixed to it, *A song of degrees*. In Greek it is written, *ἀναβαθμῶν*. Degrees are either of ascent or of descent. But degrees, as they are used in this Psalm, are of ascending. Let us understand it therefore as men who are resolved to ascend: and let us not seek ascent with our bodily feet, but, as it is written in another Psalm, *He hath set steps of ascent in his heart, in the vale of misery, towards the place that He hath ordered*. He saith, steps of ascent: where? in the heart. Whence? from the vale of misery. Now whither we ascend, since human language faileth, we cannot unfold, nor even imagine. Ye heard but now, when the Ps. 84, 6. 7. *1 Cor. 2,* Apostle was being read, the words, *Which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man*. It hath not ascended into the heart of man: let man's heart ascend thither. Since therefore eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man; how can it be said whither we must ascend? Since therefore it was impossible to utter this, he said, *unto the place which He hath ordered*. What more shall I tell thee, saith he, through whom the Holy Spirit spoke? unto such or such a place? Whatever I should say, thou thinkest of some earthly spot, thou crawlest on the ground, thou *Wind. 9,* bearest flesh: *the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, 15.* *and the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things*. Unto whom shall I speak? Who will hear? Who will understand, where we shall be after this life, if we ascend in heart? Since then no one can conceive of this; hope for some ineffable realm of bliss, which He hath fixed for thee who set steps of ascent in thy heart. But where? *In the vale of misery*. A vale signifieth humility: a mountain signifieth loftiness. There is a mountain whither we may ascend, a kind of spiritual loftiness. And what is this mountain, whither we ascend, save our Lord Jesus Christ? He Himself made for thee, by suffering,

a vale of misery, Who made, by His abiding, a mountain <sup>V. 21.</sup> of ascent. What is a vale of misery? *The Word was made* <sup>1.</sup> *flesh, and dwell among us.* What is a vale of misery? *He* <sup>Lament. 3, 30.</sup> *giveth His cheek to him that smiteth Him: He is filled full* <sup>3, 30.</sup> *with reproach.* What is a vale of misery? *He was buffeted,* <sup>Mat. 26, 67.</sup> *spit upon, crowned with thorns, crucified.* This is the vale of misery whence thou must ascend. But whither must thou ascend? *In the beginning was the Word, and the* <sup>John 1, 1. 14.</sup> *Word was with God, and the Word was God.* For *the Word Himself was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* He so descended unto thee, as still to abide in Himself: He descended unto thee, so as to become for thee a vale of misery: He abode in Himself, that He might be for thee a mountain of ascent. *There will be,* <sup>Isa. 2, 2.</sup> *saith Isaiah, in the last days, the mountain of the Lord set forth on the top of the mountains.* Behold, whither we must ascend. But conceive not any thing earthly, nor, because thou hast heard of a mountain, think of the high places of the earth: nor, when thou hearest a stone or a rock mentioned, understand hard- <sup>1 Cor. 10, 4.</sup> *ness; nor, when thou hearest of a lion, imagine ferocity: nor, when thou hearest of a lamb, think of a brute animal.* <sup>John 1, 36.</sup> There is none of these in Him, and He became all these for thy sake. Hence therefore we must ascend, thitherward we must ascend; from His example, unto His Divinity. For He made Himself an example by humbling Himself. For they who refused to ascend from the vale of misery, were rebuked by Him. For they wished to ascend too rapidly, they thought of exalted honour, they thought not of the path of humility. Beloved brethren, understand ye what I mean: the two disciples wished to sit at their Lord's side, one at the right, the other at the left: the Lord saw that they were too hastily, and out of due order, thinking of honours, when they ought first to have learnt humiliation, that they might be exalted; and said unto them, *Are ye able to drink of the* <sup>Mat. 20, 21. 22.</sup> *cup that I shall drink of?* For He was to drink the cup of His Passion in the vale of misery; while they, not heeding Christ's humiliation, wished to attain the loftiness of Christ. He recalled them unto the way, as wanderers; not meaning to deny them what they wished, but to shew them the path whereby to attain it.

**PSALM CXX.** 2. Let us therefore, my brethren, chant this Psalm of ascension, ourselves resolved to ascend in heart; for He descended unto us that we might ascend. **Gen. 28, 12.** Jacob saw a ladder, and some appeared unto him ascending and descending; he saw both. We may conceive that those who were seen to ascend, were those who were spiritually progressing; those who were seen to descend, those who were falling off; for we actually find this in the people of God: some progress, others fall back. This ladder might signify the latter: but perhaps it is better to understand all as good men on that ladder, both in those who were ascending and in those who were descending. For it is not without a meaning that the word *descending* is used instead of falling. There is a wide difference between these two words. For because Adam fell, therefore Christ descended: the one fell, the other descended: the one fell from pride, the other descended in mercy. But He did not alone descend: though indeed He alone descended from heaven: but many saints in imitation of Him descend unto us, and have descended unto us. For the Apostle was dwelling in a kind of loftiness of heart, when he said, *Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God.* **2 Cor. 5, 13.** In his mental transport, he was transported unto God. Transported in his mind beyond all human frailty, all the temporal interests of the world, all the things which, in alternate birth and death, vanish away, all these transitory things; he dwelt in heart in a certain ineffable contemplation, as far as he was able, of which he saith, that he *heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* **2 Cor. 12, 4.** He could not reveal these words to thee: yet he could see those things in a degree, which he could not reveal to thee. If therefore he chose ever to remain in that which he saw, and could not describe, he could not raise thee where thou also couldest see. But what did he do? He descended. **2 Cor. 5, 13.** For he there saith, *For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your sake.* What meaneth, *whether we be sober?* Whether we speak so that you may understand. For Christ also made Himself so by His Birth and Passion, that men might speak of Him: for a man easily speaketh of a man. When can man so speak of God, as God Is? But man

speaketh easily of man. That the great, therefore, might descend unto the humble, and yet might tell them nought save great things; He Who was great, became humble, that the great might speak of Him to the humble. Ye have just heard what I am speaking, whilst the Apostle was being read. If ye heeded, he said this; *I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.* To the spiritual therefore he speaketh in lofty terms; but, that he may speak to the carnal, he descendeth. And that ye may be sure that when he descendeth, he speaketh of Him Who descended; behold, John speaketh of Him abiding in Himself: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.* Take this, if thou canst; take it eagerly, it is food. But thou wilt answer me, That indeed is meat, but I am an infant, I must be suckled with milk, that I may be fit to eat meat. Since thou then must be nourished with meat, and He is meat, this Meat hath been through the flesh brought unto thy mouth. As the mother, therefore, doth eat the meat, that she may through the flesh transmit it to her infant when it hath become milk; so the Lord, the Word, the Food of Angels, was made flesh, and became milk; and the Apostle saith, *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, nor yet are ye able.* By giving milk, then, he descended unto the infants: and in descending, gave Him Who descended. For he saith, *Did I say that I knew any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified?* For if he said only, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is also after His Divine Nature, in that He was the Word with God, Jesus Christ the Son of God: but infants understand Him not thus, that is, spoken of in this character. How then do they who take milk, receive Him? *Jesus Christ, he saith, and Him crucified.* Suck thou that which He became for thee, and thou growest unto that which He is. There are therefore both those who ascend and those who descend on that ladder. Who are they that ascend? They who progress towards the understanding of things spiritual. Who are they that descend? They who,

VER.  
1.

1 Cor. 3,

1.

1 Cor. 3,

2.

1 Cor. 2,

2.

Gen. 28,

12.

**PSALM CXX.** although, as far as men may, they enjoy the comprehension of things spiritual: nevertheless, descend unto the infants, to say to them such things as they can receive, so that, after being nourished with milk, they may become fitted and strong enough to take spiritual meat. Isaiah, my brethren, himself was one of those who descend unto us: for the very steps of his descent are clearly traceable. For when he said of the Holy Spirit, *The Spirit of wisdom and understanding shall rest upon him, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord*; he began with wisdom, and descended unto fear. As he who taught, descended from wisdom unto fear; thou who learnest, if thou art profiting, ascend from fear unto wisdom; for it is written, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. Now therefore hear ye the Psalm. Let us place before our eyes a man who is about to ascend. To ascend wherein? *in heart*. Whence? From humility, that is, from *the vale of misery*. To ascend whither? To that unspeakable bliss, which, since it could not be named, is described as the *place that He hath fixed*.

Isa. 11,  
2. &c.

Prov. 1,  
7.

3. When therefore a man hath commenced thus to order his ascent; to speak more plainly, when a Christian hath begun to think of spiritual amendment, he beginneth to suffer the tongues of adversaries. Whoever hath not yet suffered from them, hath not yet made progress; whoever suffereth them not, doth not even endeavour to improve. Doth he wish to know what we mean? Let him at the same time experience what is reported of us. Let him begin to improve, let him begin to wish to ascend, to wish to despise earthly, fragile, temporal objects, to hold worldly happiness for nothing, to think of God alone, not to rejoice in gain, not to pine at losses, to wish even to sell all his substance, and distribute it among the poor, and to follow Christ; let us see how he suffereth the tongues of detractors and of constant opponents, and—a still greater peril—of pretended counsellors, who lead him astray from salvation. For whoever counselleth another, counselleth him with a view to his salvation, counselleth him for his own good; but the feigned adviser draweth him back from salvation. *Because, therefore, he seemeth to be wrapped in the robe of*

a counsellor, and hath the poison of a murderer, he is styled the deceitful tongue. He then, who will ascend, first of all prayeth God against these very tongues: for he saith, *When I was in trouble, I called on the Lord; and He heard me.* Why did He hear him? That He might now place him at the steps of ascent.

4. Ver. 2. And since now that he is resolved to rise, he hath been heard: what doth he pray? *Deliver my soul, O Lord, from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue.* What is a deceitful tongue? A treacherous tongue, one that hath the semblance of counsel, and the bane of real mischief. Such are those who say, And wilt thou do this, that nobody doth? Wilt thou be the only Christian? And if he shall shew that others do this, and hath quoted the Gospel where the Lord hath enjoined it to be done, or read the Acts of the Apostles: what do they say with their deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips? "You will probably be unable to fulfil it: it is too much that you attempt." Some deter by dissuasion, others discourage yet more by their praise. For since such is the life that hath for some time been diffused over the world, so great is the authority of Christ, that not even a pagan ventureth to blame Christ. He Who cannot be censured is read. He Who said, *Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me:* they cannot contradict Christ, they cannot contradict the Gospel, Christ cannot be censured; the deceitful tongue turneth itself to praise as an hindrance. If thou praisest, exhort. Why dost thou discourage with thy praise? Thou wouldest better blame, than deceitfully praise. For what wouldest thou say if thou didst blame? God forbid! this is a foul life, an evil life! But as thou knowest that, if thou sayest this, thou mayest be pressed with the authority of the Gospel; thou turnest thyself to another mode of dissuasion, that by false praise, thou mayest turn me away from true praise; nay, that by praising Christ, thou mayest keep me away from Christ, saying, What is this? Behold these men have done this: thou, perhaps, wilt not be able: thou beginnest to ascend, thou fallest. It seemeth to warn thee: it is the serpent, it is the deceitful tongue, it hath poison. Pray against it, if thou wishest to ascend, and say unto thy God, *Lord, deliver my soul from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue.*

**PSALM** 5. Ver. 3, 5. And thy Lord saith unto thee, *What shall*  
**CXX.** *be given thee, or what shall be set before thee, against the*  
*deceitful tongue?* What shall be given thee, that is, as a  
 weapon to oppose to the deceitful tongue, to guard thyself  
 against the deceitful tongue? *What shall be given thee,*  
*or what shall be set before thee?* He asketh to try  
 thee: for He will answer His own question. For He answers  
 following up his own enquiry, *even sharp arrows of the*  
*Mighty One, with coals that desolate, or that lay waste.* They  
 that desolate, or that lay waste, (for it is variously written in  
 different copies,) are the same, because by laying waste, as ye  
 may observe, they easily lead unto desolation. What are these  
 coals? First, beloved brethren, understand what are arrows.  
 The *sharp arrows of the Mighty One*, are the words of God.  
 Lo, they are shot, and they transfix hearts: but when hearts  
 have been transfixt by the arrows of God's word, love is  
 roused, not destruction brought about. The Lord knoweth  
 how to shoot arrows of love: and no one more graciously  
 shooteth arrows of love, than he who shooteth with the  
 Word; yea, He shooteth the heart of him that loveth, that  
 He may aid the loving; He shooteth, that He may make him  
 loving. Arrows they are, when we plead with words. What  
 then are the *coals that lay waste*? It is not enough to plead  
 with words against a deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips:  
 it is not enough to plead with words; we must plead with  
 examples also. The *coals that lay waste* are the examples.  
 Wherefore they be styled coals, beloved brethren, briefly  
 hear. First, consider, how we should deal with examples.  
 The deceitful tongue, the more deceitful it is, knoweth  
 nothing so well to allege, as this: "consider that thou mayest  
 not be able to fulfil this duty; for it is a hard task for thee  
 to attempt it." Thou hast received the evangelical precept,  
 thou hast the arrow; but thou hast not as yet the coals. It  
 is to be feared lest the arrow alone may not avail to guard  
 thee against the deceitful tongue; there are the hot coals also.  
 For instance, suppose God beginneth to say unto thee, Thou  
 canst not; wherefore can that man? Wherefore could the  
 other? Art thou more delicate than that Senator? Art thou  
 weaker than this man or that in health? Art thou weaker  
 than women? Women have been able, are not men able?  
*delicato* wealthy men have been able, are poor men not able?

But I, he replieth, have sinned greatly, and am a great <sup>VER.</sup> sinner. They also who have greatly sinned are mentioned: 3-5. and the more that hath been forgiven them, the more have they loved: as it is said in the Gospel, *To whom little is* <sup>Luke 7,</sup> *forgiven, the same loveth little.* <sup>47.</sup> Since these things have been mentioned, and men have been named who have succeeded, he, when he hath received the arrow in his heart, with the hot coals that lay waste in addition, hath his earthly thoughts therein laid waste. What doth this word, 'laid waste,' mean? Is brought unto desolation. For there were many things in him which had bloomed with rank luxuriance, many carnal thoughts, many secular affections: these are burned with the coals that lay waste, that the place thus made desolate may be cleared, in whose clean space God may build His House; for the devil there hath come to ruin, and Christ is now built there: for as long as the devil abideth there, Christ cannot be built. The coals that lay waste come thither, and throw down what had been built for evil, and when the spot hath been made desolate, a structure of perpetual bliss is raised. Consider therefore why they are called hot coals. Because they who turn themselves unto the Lord, live again from the dead. They that are coals when they are set on fire, before they were set on fire, were extinguished. Extinguished coals are called dead; burning coals are called live. The word coals, then, is used to express the examples of many sinners converted to the Lord. Thou hearest men wonder, and say, I knew that man, how addicted he was to drinking, what a villain, what a lover of the circus, or of the amphitheatre, what a cheat: now how he serveth God, how innocent he hath become! Wonder not; he is a live coal. Thou rejoicest that he is alive, whom thou wast mourning as dead. But when thou praisest the living, if thou knowest how to praise, apply him to the dead, that he may be inflamed; whosoever is still slow to follow God, apply to him the coal which was extinguished, and have the arrow of God's word, and the coal that layeth waste, that thou mayest meet the deceitful tongue and the lying lips.

6. What followeth? This man hath received the burning arrows, let him receive the coals that lay waste. He now repelleth the deceitful tongue and the unrighteous lips, he

**PSALM** now ascendeth a step, he beginneth to improve : but he still  
**CXX.** liveth among wicked, unrighteous men : the floor hath not yet been winnowed : suppose he hath become wheat, yet is he in the barn ? It is needful that he be crowded with much chaff ; and the more he improveth, the greater offences doth he see in the people. For if he were not improving, he would not discern iniquities ; if he be not a faithful Christian himself, he seeth not the hypocrites. The Lord, my brethren, teacheth us this lesson from that parable also, concerning

**Mat. 13,** the corn and the tares. *But when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also ; that is, that the wicked appear unto no man, save he himself hath become good ; for when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. He therefore now beginneth to amend, and beginneth to see the wicked, and many evils which he had not known before, and crieth unto the Lord : (ver. 5.) Alas, that my sojourning is become far off ! It hath departed far from Thee : my pilgrimage hath become a far one. I have not yet reached that country, where I shall live with no wicked person ; I have not yet reached that company of Angels, where I shall not fear offences. But why am I not as yet there ? Because my sojourning is become so far off. Sojourning is pilgrimage. He is called a sojourner who dwells in a foreign land, not in his own country. My sojourning, he saith, is become far off. And when is it far off ? Sometimes, my brethren, when a man goeth abroad, he liveth among better persons, than he would perhaps live with in his own country : but it is not thus, when we go afar from that heavenly Jerusalem. For a man changeth his country, and this foreign sojourn is sometimes good for him ; in travelling he findeth faithful friends, whom he could not find in his own country. He had enemies, so that he was driven from his country ; and when he travelled, he found what he had not in his country. Such is not that country Jerusalem, where all are good : whoever travelleth away from thence, is among the evil ; nor can he depart from the wicked, save when he shall return to the company of Angels, so as to be where he was before he travelled. There all are righteous and holy, who enjoy the word of God without reading, without letters : for*

what is written to us through pages, they perceive there through the Face of God. What a country! A great country — <sup>VER.</sup>  
indeed, and wretched are the wanderers from that country. <sub>5.</sub>

7. But what he saith, *My pilgrimage hath been made distant*, are the words of those, that is, of the Church herself, who toileth on this earth. It is her voice, which crieth out from the ends of the earth in another Psalm, saying, *From the ends of the earth have I cried unto Thee.* Which of us crieth from the ends of the earth? Neither I, nor thou, nor he, but the whole body of the Church, the whole inheritance of Christ crieth; for the Church is His heritage, and it is said of the Church, *Desire of Me, and I shall give the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.* If therefore the possession of Christ extends to the utmost parts of the earth, and all the saints are the possession of Christ, and all the saints are one man in Christ, because holy unity is in Christ; this one man saith, *From the ends of the earth have I called unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness.* The pilgrimage of this man, then, became distant among the wicked. And as if it were said unto him, With whom then dost thou dwell, that thou dost groan? *My pilgrimage*, he saith, *is become far distant.* But what, if it were with the good? If it were with the good, he would not say, *Alas!* Alas is an expression of misery, is an expression of calamity and unhappiness; but nevertheless in hope, since he hath already learnt even to groan. For many are wretched, and groan not, and wander afar, and yet are reluctant to return. This one now wishing to return, learneth the unhappiness of his wandering: since he hath recognised it, he returneth; and be- ginneth to ascend, for he be- ginneth to sing the ‘song of steps.’ Where then doth he groan, and among whom doth he dwell? *I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar.* Since this is a Hebrew word, beyond doubt ye have not understood it. What meaneth, *I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar?* *Kedar*, as far as we remember of the interpretation of Hebrew words, signifieth darkness. *Kedar* rendered into Latin is called *tenebræ*. Now ye know that Abraham had two sons, whom indeed the Apostle mentioneth, and declareth them to have been types of the two covenants: <sup>Gal. 4,</sup>  
<sub>22. &c.</sub>

**PSALM CXX.** **ONE** was the son of a bondwoman, the other of a freewoman. Ishmael was the son by the bondwoman; Isaac the son whom he received, after he had ceased to hope it, through faith, from Sarah the freewoman. Each was of the seed of Abraham: but each was not the heir of Abraham. One is born of Abraham, yet he doth not receive the heritage: the other is also the heir; not the son only, but the heir. In Ishmael are all they who carnally worship God. For unto them the old covenant also doth pertain: for the Apostle speaketh thus, *Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants.* What are the two covenants? One is the old, the other is the new. The old covenant is from God, and the new covenant is from God; as both Ishmael and Isaac were sons of Abraham. But Ishmael belongeth to the earthly, Isaac to the heavenly, kingdom. Therefore the old covenant hath earthly promises, an earthly Jerusalem, an earthly Palestine, an earthly kingdom, an earthly salvation, the subjugation of enemies, abundance of sons, exuberance of fruits. All these things are earthly promises. They are understood spiritually as figurative, as the earthly Jerusalem was the shadow of the heavenly kingdom, and the earthly kingdom was the shadow of the kingdom of heaven. Ishmael was in the shadow, Isaac in the light. If then Ishmael was in the shadow, it is no wonder that there was darkness there. For darkness is only a deeper shadow. Ishmael therefore was in darkness, Isaac in light. Whoever here also seek earthly felicity in the Church, from God, shall belong to Ishmael. These are the very persons who gainsay the spiritual ones who are progressing, and detract from them, and have deceitful tongues and unrighteous lips. Against these the Psalmist, when ascending, prayed, and hot coals that lay waste, and swift and sharp arrows of the Mighty One, were given him for his defence. For among these he still liveth, until the whole floor be winnowed: he therefore said, *I have dwelt among the tents of Kedar.* The tents of Ishmael are called those of Kedar. Thus the book of *Genesis* hath it: thus it hath, that Kedar belongeth unto

Ishmael. Isaac therefore is with Ishmael: that is, they who belong unto Isaac, live among those who belong unto Ishmael. These wish to rise above, those wish to press them downwards: these wish to fly unto God, those endeavour to pluck their wings. For with the Apostle it is thus spoken: *But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now.* The spiritual then suffer persecution from the carnal. *But what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.* When will this word, 'cast out,' be fulfilled? When the floor shall begin to be winnowed. But at present, before he be cast out, *Alas me! that my sojourning hath become far off. I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar.* And he explaineth unto us, who are they who belong to the tents of Kedar.

8. Ver. 6. *My soul hath wandered much.* Lest thou shouldest understand bodily wandering, he hath said that the soul wandered. The body wandereth in places, the soul wandereth in its affections. If thou love the earth, thou wanderest from God: if thou lovest God, thou risest unto God. Let us be exercised in the love of God, and of our neighbour, that we may return unto charity. If we fall towards the earth, we wither and decay. But one descended unto this one who had fallen, in order that he might arise. Speaking of the time of his wandering, he said that he wandered in the tents of Kedar. Wherefore? Because *my soul hath wandered much.* He wandereth there where he ascendeth. He wandereth not in the body, he riseth not in the body. But wherein doth he ascend? *The ascent,* he saith, *is in the heart.* If therefore he ascendeth in heart, it is only the soul which wandered that ascendeth through the ascent of the heart. But until he arrive, *My soul hath wandered much.* Where? *In the tents of Kedar.*

9. Ver. 7. *With them that hated peace, I was peaceful.* But howsoever ye may hear, most beloved brethren, ye will not be able to test how truly ye sing, unless ye have begun to do that which ye sing. How much soever I say this, in whatsoever ways I may expound it, in whatsoever words I may turn it, it entereth not into the heart of him in whom

VER.  
6. 7.

Gal. 4,  
39.

ib. 30.  
Gen. 21,  
12.

Ps. 84, 5.

470 *They who pretend not to be among chaff, no true wheat.*

**PSALM** its operation is not. Begin to act, and see what we speak.  
**CXX.** Then tears flow forth at each word, then the Psalm is sung, and the heart doeth what is sung in the Psalm. For how many sound in words, and are remote in heart? and how many are silent in their lips, and cry forth in their feelings! Because the ears of God are unto man's heart: even as the ears of the body unto the mouth of man, so is the heart of man to the ears of God. Many whose mouths are closed are heard, and many, though they cry loudly, are not heard. We ought to pray with our feelings, and to say, *My soul hath wandered much: with them that hate peace, I was*  
<sup>1</sup> **Don-**  
**tists.** *peaceful.* For what else say we to these heretics<sup>1</sup>, save, Learn peace, love peace? Ye call yourselves righteous. But if ye were righteous, ye would groan as wheat among chaff. For since there are ears of wheat in the Catholic Church, and they are true ears; therefore they endure the chaff, until the floor be threshed; because they cry among the chaff, *Alas me! that my sojourning hath been made far off! I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar!* I have dwelt, he saith, with chaff. But as much dust goeth out of the chaff, so darkness goeth forth from Kedar. *I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar; my soul hath wandered much.* These are the words of the ears of wheat, groaning among the chaff. This we say to them that hate peace: *With those, we say, that hated peace, was I peaceful.* Who are they who hate peace? They who tear asunder unity. For had they not hated peace, they would have abode in unity. But they separated themselves, forsooth on this account, that they might be righteous, that they might not have the ungodly mixed with them. These words are either ours or theirs: decide whose. The Catholic Church saith, Unity must not be lost, the Church of God must not be cut off. God will judge afterwards of the wicked and the good. If the evil cannot now be separated from the good, they must be endured for a season: the wicked may be with us on the floor, in the barn they cannot be. And perhaps they who to-day appear evil, to-morrow will be good; and they who to-day pride themselves in their goodness, will to-morrow be discovered to be evil. Whoever therefore beareth with the wicked for a season humbly, he shall reach everlasting

repose. This is the Catholic voice. But what are the words of those, who *understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm?*—*Touch no unclean thing:* and, *Who-soever hath touched an unclean thing, the same is unclean:* let us separate ourselves, that we may not be mingled with the evil. And we say unto them, Love peace, love unity. Are ye ignorant from how many good men ye are separated, while ye slanderously call them wicked? They rage, and storm, when we speak thus: for they seek even to slay us. Their attempts, their snares, have often been disclosed. While therefore we live among their snares, and while they unto whom we say, Love ye peace, are our foes; are not these our words, *With them that hated peace, I was peaceful? When I spoke unto them, they made war upon me for nought.* What meaneth, brethren, *they made war upon me?* It was not even enough, without he added, *for nought.* Unto whom we say, Love peace, love Christ: do we say, Love and honour us? But, Honour Christ, we wish not ourselves to be honoured, but Him. For what are we to the Apostle Paul? He nevertheless said to those *babes*, whom evil men and evil advisers wished to cut off from unity into schisms: *Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* This we also say: Love ye peace, love ye Christ. For if they love peace, they love Christ. When therefore we say, Love ye peace, we say this, Love ye Christ. Wherefore? For the Apostle saith of Christ, *He is our peace, Who hath made both one.* If Christ is therefore peace, because He hath made both one: why have ye made two of one? How then are ye peace-makers, if, when Christ maketh one of two, ye make two of one? But since we say these things, we are peace-makers with them that hate peace; and yet they who hate peace, when we spake to them, made war on us for nought.

VER  
7.  
1 Tim.  
1, 7.  
Isa. 52,  
11.  
Levit.  
22, 5.

1 Cor. 3,  
1.  
1 Cor.  
1, 13.

Eph. 2,  
14.

LAT.  
CXX.

## PSALM CXXI.

## EXPOSITION.

*A Sermon to the people on the day of St. Crispina.*

1. THIS is the second Psalm of those whose title is, *A song of degrees*. For there are many, which signify, as ye have already heard in the first of them, our ascent, which goeth on in the heart unto God, from the vale of misery, that is, from the humble state of tribulation. For our ascent cannot be profitable unto us, save being first humbled, we remember that we must ascend from the vale: (for a vale is a lowly spot of land: as mountains and hills are lofty places of the earth, so is a vale a lowly place,) lest while we seek in too much haste, and before the proper season, to be exalted, we may not ascend, but fall. Now our Lord Himself taught us that we must ascend from the vale of misery, when He deigned to be humbled for us unto the death of the Cross, and to suffer. Let us not abandon His example: the Martyrs understood this vale of misery. Whence did they understand it? Whence? Because they themselves also ascended from the vale of misery, that they might be crowned.

2. This Psalm, *A song of degrees*, suiteth this day also, Ps. 126, for it is said of them, *They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed*. This is the vale of misery, where seeds are sown in tears. But what are these seeds? Good works wrought in this earthly tribulation. He who worketh well in the vale of misery, is like unto a man who soweth seed through the winter. Is he deterred from his work by the cold? Thus we ought not to be deterred from a good work by the tribulation of the world; for thou seest what followeth: *They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed*. Very miserable, if they alway wept; very miserable, if they were never to be freed from tears. But consider what followeth: *but they shall come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them*.

3. We are taught nothing else by these songs, brethren, TITLE. than to ascend; but to ascend in heart, in good affections, in faith, in hope and charity, in the longing for perpetuity and for everlasting life. Thus we ascend. It is fitting for us to say in what manner we must ascend. How many more terrible words have ye heard, Beloved, read from the Gospel! Ye see, surely, that the hour of the Lord *will come as a thief in the night. If the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his wall to be broken through.* <sup>1 Thess. 5, 2. Mat. 24, 43.</sup> Do ye say now, Who then knoweth in what hour He will come, for the hour will be as a thief? Thou knowest not in what hour He will come, watch away; that, since thou knowest not when He will come, He may find thee ready when He cometh. Perhaps, too, it is for this reason that thou knowest not when He will come, that thou mayest always be prepared. For that hour will suddenly surprise that master of the house, who, by the term master of the house, is described as a proud man. Wish not to be a master of the house, and that hour will not come upon thee suddenly. And what shall I be, thou askest? Such as thou hast heard of in the Psalm, *I am poor and in heaviness.* <sup>Ps. 69, 30.</sup> For if thou art poor and in heaviness, thou wilt not be a master of a house, whom that hour will surprise, and suddenly crush. For the masters of houses are they that presume in their lusts, and swell with the abundance of this world's delights; and exalt themselves against the humble, and trample on the saints who understand the narrow way, <sup>Matt. 7, 14.</sup> which leadeth unto life. For to such that hour will come suddenly; for such were men in the days of Noah also, a description of which days ye have heard in the Gospel. *As the days of Noe were, so, He saith, shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, they were planting, they were building, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away.* <sup>Matt. 24, 37-44.</sup> What then? Shall all perish who do these things, who marry, who give in marriage, who plant vineyards, who build? No: but they who put their trust in these things, who prefer these things to God,

**PSALM** who for the sake of these things are easily ready to offend God.

**CX XI.** But they who either use not these things at all, or who use them as though they used them not, trusting more in Him Who gave them, than in the things given, and understanding in them His consolation and loving-kindness, and not taken up with the gifts, lest they may fall away from the giver; they who are such, that hour will not find them unprepared as a

**1Thes. 5, 2—5.** thief. To such the Apostle said, *Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day.*

The Lord therefore when He declared that the hour was to be dreaded as a thief, spoke of night; and so the Apostle saith, *for the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.*

Dost thou hope that it may not find thee? Be not in night.

**Eph. 5, 8.** What meaneth, Be not in night? *Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.* Who are the children of the night and of darkness? The wicked, the ungodly, the unbelieving.

4. Ver. 1. But let these also hear before the hour come, and let the Apostle say unto them, *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.* As this Psalm saith, let them awake. The hills are already lightened: why do they still sleep? Let them *lift up their eyes to the hills, whence cometh their help.* What meaneth, The hills have been lightened? The Sun of righteousness hath already risen, the Gospel hath been already preached by the Apostles, the Scriptures have been preached, all the mysteries have been laid open, the veil hath been rent, the secret place of the temple hath been revealed: let them now at length lift their eyes up to the hills, whence their help cometh. This

the present Psalm—the second of those entitled, *a song of degrees*—enjoineth. But let them not again trust in the hills; for the hills themselves shine not of their own light, but of

**John 1, 9.** His of Whom it is said, *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* By hills may be understood, great or illustrious men. And who was greater than John the Baptist? What a hill was that, of

**Mat. 11, 11.** whom the Lord Himself saith, *Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist?*

Ye now see this great hill shining: hear him now confessing.

Confessing what? *Of His fulness have all we received*, he saith. Thy help therefore is from Him, of Whose fulness the hills received, not from the hills<sup>a</sup>; towards which<sup>b</sup>, nevertheless, save thou lift thine eyes through the Scriptures, thou wilt not approach, so as to be lighted by Him.

5. Ver. 3. Sing therefore what followeth; if thou wish to hear how thou mayest most securely set thy feet on the steps, so that thou mayest not be fatigued in that ascent, nor stumble and fall: pray in these words: *Suffer not my foot to be moved!* Whereby are feet moved; whereby was the foot of him who was in Paradise moved? But first consider whereby the feet of him who was among the Angels were moved: who when his feet were moved fell, and from an Angel became a devil: for when his feet were moved he fell. Seek whereby he fell: he fell through pride. Nothing then moveth the feet, save pride: nothing moveth the feet to a fall, save pride. Charity moveth them to walk and to improve and to ascend; pride moveth them to fall. What then doth he say in the Psalm? *The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.* If beneath the shadow, they are ever humble, ever trusting in God, ever not presuming on themselves. *Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust:* for they are not sufficient for their own bliss. But what followeth? *They shall be inebriated with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures as out of a river.* Behold them thirsty, behold them satisfied: behold, they thirst, behold, they drink: but they do not drink of themselves: they are not a well unto themselves. But whereof do they drink? *Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust.* If beneath Thy wings, they are humble. Why? Because *with Thee*, he saith, *is the well of life.* The hills therefore are not watered by themselves, even as the hills are not lighted by themselves. For see what followeth: *In Thy light shall we see light.* If

<sup>a</sup> Here some early editions, as quoted by Ben. add, "Christ, the Son of the supreme Father, is therefore our salvation, and our help, and with the same Father He is God Almighty, and with Him ever abiding in respect of that He is. To those mountains, therefore, which I have mentioned, if thou lift not up

thine eyes." There are several other additions in the commentary on this Psalm, which however seem scarcely worthy of St. Augustine, and for which no Ms. authority is given.

<sup>b</sup> al. by which thou wilt not be admonished.

V.R.R.  
3.  
John 1,  
16.

**PSALM  
CXXI.**

then we shall see light in His light, who falleth from that light, save he unto whom He is not a light? And he who wisheth to be a light unto himself, himself falleth away from the light whereby he is lighted. Knowing therefore that none falleth save he who wisheth to shine unto himself, since he is by himself darkness; he addeth, *Let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly move me:* that is, let not the imitation of their sins move me, so that I fall from Thee. Wherefore hast thou feared, and hast said, *Let not the foot of pride come against me?* The next

**Ps. 36,  
8—13.**

words answer: *There are they fallen, all that work wickedness.* Those whom thou but now sawest working wickedness, have been already condemned: the cause of their condemnation was their having fallen when the foot of pride came unto them. Rightly therefore the Psalmist, hearing how he may ascend and may not fall, prayeth unto God that he may profit from the vale of misery, and may not fail in the swelling of pride, in these words, *Suffer not my feet to be moved!* And He replieth unto him, *Let him that keepeth thee not sleep.* Attend, my beloved. It is as if one thought were expressed in two sentences; the man while ascending and singing *the song of degrees*, saith, *Suffer not my foot to be moved:* and it is as if God answered, Thou sayest unto Me, Let not my feet be moved: say also, *Let Him that keepeth thee not sleep,* and thy foot shall not be moved.

6. Ver. 4. But suppose he hath replied: Is it in my power that he who keepeth me may not slumber? I wish he may not sleep, or slumber. Therefore choose for thyself Him, who will neither sleep nor slumber, and thy foot shall not be moved. God is never asleep: if thou dost wish to have a keeper who never sleepeth, choose God for thy keeper. *Suffer not my feet to be moved,* thou sayest: well, very well: but He also saith unto thee, *Let not him that keepeth thee slumber.* Thou perhaps wast about to turn thyself unto men as thy keepers, and to say, whom shall I find who will not sleep? what man will not slumber? whom do I find? whither shall I go? whither shall I return? The Psalmist telleth thee: *He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Dost thou wish to have a keeper who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth? Behold, *He that*

keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep: for Christ <sup>VER.</sup> keepeth Israel. Be thou then Israel. What meaneth Israel? <sup>4.</sup> It is interpreted, Seeing God. And how is God seen? First by faith: afterwards by sight. If thou canst not as yet see Him by sight, see Him by faith. If thou canst not see His face, since that is sight<sup>1</sup>, see His back parts. This was said <sup>1 species</sup> unto Moses by the Lord: *Thou canst not see My face, but* <sup>Exod.</sup> *thou shalt see My back parts, when I pass by.* Thou <sup>33, 20.</sup> <sup>23.</sup> perhaps art waiting His passing by: He hath already passed: do thou see His back parts. Where hath He passed? Hear John: *When the hour was come that He should* <sup>John 13,</sup> *depart out of this world unto the Father.* Our Lord Jesus <sup>1.</sup> Christ hath already kept the Passover: for the meaning of the word Pascha is Passing Over. For it is a Hebrew word: though men imagine it to be a Greek word, signifying Passion: but it is not so. By the more diligent and learned, it hath been discovered that Pascha is a Hebrew word; and they do not interpret it as *Suffering*, but as *Passing over*. For by His Passion our Lord passed from death unto life; and made a way for us who believe in His resurrection, that we also may pass from death unto life. It is not a great thing to believe that Christ died: this the Pagans also, and the Jews, and all the wicked believe. This all believe, that He died: the resurrection of Christ is the faith of Christians: this we hold a great thing, that we believe that He rose from the dead. Therefore He wished Himself to be seen then, when He was passing away, that is, when He had risen from the dead. He wished us to believe on Him, when He was passing: because *He was delivered up for our sins, and was raised again for* <sup>Rom. 4,</sup> *our justification.* The Apostle also hath chiefly enjoined <sup>25.</sup> this very faith in Christ's resurrection: *If thou believe in* <sup>Rom. 10,</sup> *thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou* <sup>9.</sup> *shalt be saved.* He said not, If thou hast believed that Christ died, which the Pagans, Jews, and all His enemies believe: but, if thou believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. To believe this, is to be Israel, this is to see God: although thou as yet seest only His back parts, yet, when thou believest in His back parts, thou wilt come to the sight of His face. What meaneth this? When thou hast believed in that which

478 *Christ's face, His Godhead. God alone never sleepeth.*

**Psalm CXXI.** Christ became afterwards for thee; when thou hast believed in that which Christ took upon Him afterwards. For what **John 1, 1. 14.** is His Countenance in the beginning? *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* What are His back parts? *and the Word was made flesh, and dwell among us.* When therefore thou believest in this, that the Word was made flesh for thy sake, and that the Word rose again in the Flesh, that thou mightest not despair of thy flesh, thou art made Israel. But when thou hast been made Israel, He that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep; because thou art now Israel, and hast heard in the Psalm, *He that keepeth Israel shall not slumber nor sleep.* For Christ Himself slept, but He rose again. For **Pr. 3, 6.** what saith He Himself in the Psalm? *I laid me down and slept.* Did He continue in sleep? *I rose again,* He saith, *for the Lord shall take me up.* If then He hath already risen, He hath already passed over; if He hath already passed over, see His back parts. What meaneth, see His back parts? Believe in His resurrection. And since the **2Cor. 13, 4.** Apostle saith, *For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God:* and again saith, **Rom. 6, 9.** *Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over Him:* he justly singeth unto thee, *Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Perhaps thou still seekest in thy carnal sense, Who is there, who will neither slumber nor sleep? and when thou seekest among men, thou art deceived; thou wilt never find one. Trust not then in any man: every man slumbereth, and will sleep. When doth he slumber? When he beareth the flesh of weakness. When will he sleep? When he is dead. Trust not then in man. A mortal may slumber, he sleepeth in death. Seek not a keeper among men.

7. Ver. 5. And who, thou askest, shall help me, save He Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth? Hear what followeth: *The Lord Himself is thy keeper.* It is not therefore man, that slumbereth and sleepeth, but the Lord, that keepeth thee. How doth He keep thee? *The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand.* Let us, my brethren, with the Lord's help, understand what is the meaning of, *The Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand.* For it

*Meaning of God's keeping us on the 'hand of our right hand.'* 479

seemeth to me to have a hidden sense: otherwise he would have simply said, without qualification, *The Lord will keep thee*, without adding, *on thy right hand*. For how? Doth God keep our right hand, and not our left? Did He not create the whole of us? Did not He Who made our right hand, make our left hand also? Finally, if it pleased Him to speak of the right hand alone, why said He, *on the hand of thy right hand*, and not at once *upon thy right hand*? Why should He say this, unless He were keeping somewhat here hidden for us to arrive at by knocking? For He would either say, *The Lord shall keep thee*, and add no more; or if He would add the right hand, *The Lord shall keep thee upon thy right hand*; or at least, as He added *hand*, He would say, *The Lord shall keep thee upon thy hand, even thy right hand*<sup>1</sup>, not *upon the hand of thy right hand*. What the Lord Himself deigneth to suggest, I will lay before you; He who dwelleth in you, without doubt causeth you to approve of that which I say, as true. For ye know not what I am about to say; but when we shall have said it, we shall not shew of ourselves that what we say is true, but ye yourselves shall recognise the truth of what we say. But whence shall ye recognise it, save He sheweth Who dwelleth in you, as far as ye are of that number, who say, *Suffer not my feet to be moved*; and unto whom it is said, *Let not Him that keepeth thee slumber*. For Christ must not sleep in you, and ye will presently understand that what we say is true. How, thou wilt ask? Because if your faith sleep, Christ sleepeth in you. For Christ in your heart is the faith of Christ. The Apostle saith, *That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*. In whom faith sleepeth not, in him Christ watcheth. And if perchance thy faith slept, and thou didst therefore waver when thou didst ask that question, as that vessel that encountered the tempest, when Christ slept; arouse Christ, and the tempests will be appeased.

8. I ask therefore your faith, most beloved; since ye are sons of the Church, and have profited in the Church, and ye who have not as yet profited in the Church will profit in the Church, and ye who have already profited have to profit further in the Church; I ask you, how ye interpret what is said in the Gospel, *Let not your left hand know what your*

VER.  
5

<sup>1</sup>Ma-  
num  
; dexte-  
ram.

Ephes.  
3, 17.

Matt. 8,  
24—26.

Matt. 8,  
3.

**PSALM** *right hand doeth?* For if ye understand this, ye will discover  
**CXXI.** what is your right hand, and what is your left: at the same

time ye will also understand that God made both hands, the left and the right; yet the left ought not to know what the right doeth. By our left hand is meant all that we have in a temporal way; by our right hand is meant, whatever our Lord promiseth us that is immutable and eternal. But if He Who will give everlasting life, Himself also consoleth our present life by these temporal blessings, He hath Himself made our right hand and our left. The Psalm speaks of

**Ps. 144,** some, *Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand*  
**8.** *is a right hand of iniquity.* He therefore found some whom

he blamed, who held their true right hand for their left, and their real left hand for their right: he explaineth in order who these are. Every man who doth not think that happiness is man's, except only in these temporal resources and delights, and in the affluence and abundance of this world: he is a foolish and perverse man, who maketh his left hand his right: such were they of whom the Psalm speaketh; not that they had not received from God what they possessed temporally, but because they supposed this alone to be a happy life, and sought for nought else. Hear what he pre-

**Ps. 144,** sently after saith of them: *Whose mouth talketh vanity, and*  
**11—14.** *their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.* He goeth on

thus: *Whose sons grow up as the young plants, and whose daughters are adorned after the likeness of a temple: whose garners are full and bursting with store: whose sheep bring forth abundantly, multiplying in their streets: their oxen are strong to labour; there is no fall of their fence, nor of their way; nor any complaining in their streets.* He hath described the great prosperity of some man; yet any righteous man might enjoy the same prosperity: as did Job: but Job held it for his left hand, not for his right; for he had no other right hand than his perpetual and everlasting happiness with God. His left hand therefore was given up to be stricken: and his right sufficed for him. In what manner was his left hand stricken? By the temptations of the devil. The devil suddenly robbed him of all things, by God's permission indeed, that the righteous might be approved, the ungodly punished; he took away all: but Job, who knew

that his left hand was his left hand, and that his right was indeed his right hand; how did he hold unto his right hand? He rejoiced in the Lord, he was consoled for his losses, for he had not suffered loss of his inner riches; he had a heart full of God. *The Lord*, he said, *hath given, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.* This was his right hand, the Lord Himself; eternal life itself, that possession of light, *the well of life; the light in light.* *They shall be filled with the plenteousness of Thy house:* this was his right hand. But his left was as an aid of consolation: not as the foundation of his happiness. For God was his true and genuine happiness. But those of whom David saith, that their mouth talked vanity, and their right hand was a right hand of iniquity; he doth not blame them on the ground that they abounded with all these things, but because their mouth talked vanity. For what followeth? After he had mentioned their abundance, he addeth, *Happy they have called the people who are in such a case.* This is the vanity which their mouth has spoken, when they declared the people happy who are in such a case. What sayest thou, who knowest what is the left hand, and what is the right? He goeth on to say: *Blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.* VER.  
5.  
Ps. 36, 9.  
Ps. 144,  
11—15.

9. Attend then, beloved. We have seen the left hand, we have seen also the right. Hear this confirmed in the Song of Songs: *His left hand*, it is said, *is beneath my head.* The spouse saith this of her husband, the Church saith it of Christ in the embrace of piety and love. What doth she say? *His left hand is beneath my head, and His right hand doth embrace me.* But how, because His right hand was above, His left hand below, and thus the Husband embraced the Spouse, supporting her with the consolation of His left hand, and laying upon her His right hand for her protection? His left hand, she saith, is beneath my head. God giveth that left hand: therefore it is His left hand, because God giveth all these temporal blessings. How vain they are, how impious, who seek these things from idols, from devils! How many seek these things from devils, and have them not? and again, they who seek them not from devils, have them; but they are not given by

452 *Holy Scripture often uses 'the Right' and 'the Left.'*

**PSALM CXXI** devils. Also many seek them of God, and have them not. For He knoweth how to dispense the left hand, who calleth unto the right. If therefore it be the left hand, be it so: but let it be beneath thy head: let thy head be above it, that is, let thy faith be above it, where Christ dwelleth. Prefer not temporal things to thy faith; and the left hand will not be above thy head: but place all temporal things beneath thy faith, and prefer thy faith to all temporal things; and the left hand will be beneath thy head, and His right hand will rightly embrace thee.

10. Hear this very thing expounded in the Proverbs: what is the left hand, what is the right: when he saith of **Prov. 3, 16.** *Wisdom, Length of days and years of life are in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour.* That length of days is eternity. For Scripture calleth that long which is eternal, with much propriety: for whatever hath an end, is short. In another passage it is said, **Ps. 91, 16.** *With long life will I satisfy him.* And would it otherwise be said as a great thing, **Exod. 20, 12.** *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land?* In what land, save that whereof **Ps. 142, 5.** he saith, *Thou art my hope and my portion in the land of the living.* What meaneth length of days there, save to live there for ever? For what meaneth length of days here, save to reach old age? Although age seem long, when it hath passed, it is proved to be short, in that it cometh to an end. And many who curse their parents, grow old in this world; while many who obey their parents, soon go to the Lord. Is this therefore fulfilled by length of days in this world? No: length of days is there used for eternity. Length of days is in His right hand: but riches and honour, that is, the sufficiency of this life, what are considered good things by men, are in His left hand. Somebody cometh, and wisheth to strike thee on the right, that is, to rob thee of thy faith: thou hast received a blow on the right, offer **Matt. 5, 39.** him the left, that is, let him take that which is temporal, and not thy everlasting possessions. Hear the Apostle Paul doing this. Men persecuted him for being a Christian: his **Acts 22, 23.** right is smitten, he offered the left, saying, *I am a Roman.* They scorned his right hand, and he affrighted them with his left: for they could not fear his right hand; as they

had not yet believed in Christ. What then, if the right hand embrace, the left is under thy head; what meaneth, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth?* That is, after thou doest a good work, do it for eternal life. For if thou doest a good work on earth, that earthly things may abound to thee; thy left hand knoweth what thy right hand doeth, thou hast mingled thy right hand with thy left. Act not, save for everlasting life. Act for this reason, and thou wilt work without fear: for this God hath commanded. If thou doest what thou doest for human interest alone and this life alone, thy left hand alone worketh: but if thou work for life eternal, thy right hand alone worketh; but if thou hast earnest hope for eternal life, but still the lusts of this temporal life creep upon thee, so that thou heedest this even when thou doest a good work, hoping thou mayest have some reward here, thy left hand mingleth itself with the works of thy right hand: this God forbiddeth.

11. Let us now come to this verse of the Psalm: *The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand.* By hand he meaneth power. How do we prove this? Because the power of God also is styled the hand of God. For the devil who tempted Job, saith this to God; *Put forth Thy Hand now, and touch all that he hath; and see if he will not curse Thee to Thy face.* What meaneth, *Put forth Thine Hand*, save, give Thy power? Hear this more clearly proved, my brother, that thou mayest not in thy carnal sense still think God hath distinct members: hear more clearly in what sense hand is called power. Scripture saith in one passage, *Death and life are in the hands of the tongue.* We know tongues as certain slices of flesh; they move in the mouth, and by striking the palate and the teeth, make distinct the sounds by which we speak: let the hands of the tongue be shewn me. The tongue therefore hath not hands, and yet it hath hands. What are the hands of the tongue? The power of the tongue. What meaneth, "Death and life are in the hands of the tongue?" *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* If therefore the hand is power, what meaneth the hand of the right hand? I think no more consistent sense can be put upon the meaning, than that hand signifieth

**PSALM** the power which God hath given thee, that if thou art  
**CXXI.** willing, thou mayest be, by God's gift, on the right hand.

For all the ungodly will be on the left hand; but all the good sons will be on the right, unto whom shall be said,

**Mat. 25,** *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* But thou

**34.** hast received power to be on the right hand, that is, to be a son of God. What power? That whereof John saith,

**John 1,** *He gave unto them power to become the sons of God.*

**12.** Whence hast thou received this power? *To them,* he saith, *that believe in His Name.* If then thou believest, this very power is given thee, to be among the sons of God. But to be among the sons of God, is to belong to the right hand. Thy faith therefore is the hand of thy right hand: that is, the power that is given thee, to be among the sons of God, is the hand of thy right hand. But what availeth this very power which man hath received, save the Lord protect him? Behold, he hath believed: he now walketh in faith: he is weak, he is buffeted amidst temptations, among troubles, amid carnal corruptions, amid the suggestions of lust, and amid the cunning and the snares of a foe. What availeth it then, that he hath power, and hath believed in Christ, that he may be among the sons of God? Woe unto that man, except the Lord shield his faith also: that is, suffer thee not to be tempted beyond thy power to resist; as the

**1 Cor.** *Apostle saith, God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.* He, therefore, Who suffereth us not to be tempted above that we are able, although we are already faithful, although we have already the hand of our right hand, shieldeth us upon the hand of our right hand. It sufficeth us not to have the hand of the right hand, unless He also defend the hand of the right hand.

**12. Ver. 6.** Behold, this I have said concerning temptations: listen to what followeth. *May the Lord shield thee upon the hand of thy right hand.* I have said, and I believe ye have recognised it. For had ye not recognised it, and that from the Scriptures, ye would not signify your understanding of it by your voices. Since then ye have understood, brethren, consider what followeth; wherefore

the Lord shieldeth thee *upon the hand of thy right hand*, V ER. 6.  
that is, in thy faith, wherein we have received *power to* 6.  
*become the sons of God*, and to be on His right hand:  
wherefore should God shield us? On account of offences.  
Whence come offences? Offences are to be feared from  
two quarters, for there are two precepts upon which the  
whole Law hangeth and the Prophets, the love of God and of Mat. 22,  
our neighbour. The Church is loved for the sake of our 37—40.  
neighbour, but God for the sake of God. Of God, is under-  
stood the sun figuratively: of the Church, is understood the  
moon figuratively. Whoever can err, so as to think other-  
wise of God than he ought, believing not the Father and the  
Son and the Holy Ghost to be of one Substance, has been  
deceived by the cunning of heretics, chiefly of the Arians.  
If he hath believed any thing less in the Son or in the Holy  
Spirit than in the Father, he hath suffered an offence in  
God; he is scorched by the sun. Whoever again believeth Dona-  
that the Church existeth in one province only, and not that tists.  
she is diffused over the whole world, and whoso believeth  
them that say, *Lo here, and Lo there, is Christ*, as ye but now Mat. 24,  
heard when the Gospel was being read; since He Who 23.  
gave so great a price, purchased the whole world: he is  
offended, so to speak, in his neighbour, and is burnt by the  
moon. Whoever therefore erreth in the very Substance of  
Truth, is burnt by the sun, and is burnt through the day;  
because he erreth in Wisdom itself, of which it is said, *One* Ps. 19, 3.  
*day telleth another*: whence also the Apostle saith, *Com-*  
*paring spiritual with spiritual things.—One day telleth*  
*another:—comparing spiritual things with spiritual.—One*  
*day telleth another:—we speak wisdom among them that are* 1 Cor. 2,  
*perfect. What meaneth, and one night certifieth another?* 13. 6.

The humility of Christ is preached unto infants, and the  
flesh of Christ, and the crucifixion of Christ; for this is the  
milk which sufficeth infants, and therefore infants are not  
forsaken during the night, since the moon shineth during  
the night; that is, the Church is preached through the Flesh  
of Christ, for the Flesh of Christ itself is the Head of the  
Church. Whoever therefore is not offended there, in the  
Church and flesh of Christ itself, is not burnt by the moon.  
Whosoever shall not have been offended in that immutable

PSALM and uncontaminable Truth, is not burnt by the sun: it is  
 CXXI. not by that sun that he is not burnt, which flies and cattle  
 see as well as we; but by that Sun of which the ungodly  
 Wisd. 5, say in the end, *What hath pride profited us? or what hath*  
 8. 9. *riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are*  
*passed over like a shadow.* And after they had said these  
 things: *Therefore have we erred from the way of truth,*  
*and the light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and*  
*the sun rose not upon us.* Doth not this sun rise upon  
 all the ungodly, by the institution of Him of Whom it hath  
 Matt. 5, been said, *He causeth His sun to rise upon the good and*  
 46. *the evil?* God therefore hath made one sun, which riseth  
 upon the good and the evil, that sun which the good and  
 the evil see; but that Sun is another one, not created, not  
 Nicene born, through Whom all things were made, where is the  
 Creed. intelligence of the Immutable Truth: of this the ungodly  
 Wisd. 5, say, *the Sun rose not upon us*<sup>a</sup>. Whosoever erreth not in  
 6. Wisdom itself, is not burnt by the sun. Whosoever erreth  
 not in the Church, and in the Lord's Flesh, and in those  
 things which were done for us in time, is not burnt by the  
 moon. But every man although he believeth in Christ,  
 erreth either in this or that respect, unless what is here  
 prayed for, *The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy*  
*right hand*, is realized in him. For when he had said,  
*The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand:*  
 as if he had enquired and replied, Lo, here is the hand of  
 my right hand, I have already chosen to believe in Christ,  
 I have received power to be among the sons of God, why is  
 it that God is still my defence *upon the hand of my right*  
*hand?* he goeth on to say, (ver. 6.) *So that the sun shall not*  
*burn thee by day, nor the moon by night.* Thy defence,  
 therefore is upon the hand of thy right hand for this reason,  
 that the sun may not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night.

<sup>a</sup> Here old editions add, "of this Sun Father Athanasius, the Bishop, hath thus beautifully spoken. 'The Son of God,' he saith, 'is of the Father alone, neither made, nor created, but begotten;'" whence Possevinus, Torrens, and Bellarmine have quoted St. Augustine as assigning the Athanasian Creed to St. Athanasius. But Peta-

vius, Theol. Dogm. de Trin. l. vii. c. 8. n. 7. says the words have been foisted into St. Augustine, and in fact they are not in any of our Mss. nor in the editions of Amsterdam, of Erasmus, and of Louvain. *Ben.* (Some other additions are mentioned in the Benedictine notes on this Psalm, but they seem of later date than St. Aug.)

Understand hence, brethren, that it is spoken figuratively. <sup>V22.</sup>  
For, in truth, if we think of the visible sun, it burneth by <sup>7.</sup>  
day: doth the moon burn by night? But what is burning?  
Offence. Hear the Apostle's words: *Who is weak, and I* <sup>2 Cor.</sup>  
*am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* <sup>11, 29.</sup>

13. Ver. 7. *By day, then, the sun shall not burn thee: nor the moon by night.* Wherefore? *For the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil.* From offences in the sun, from offences in the moon, from all evil shall He preserve thee, Who is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, who will not sleep nor slumber. And for what reason? Because we are amid temptations: *The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord preserve thy soul:* even thy very soul. *The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore.* Not thy body; for the Martyrs were consumed in the body; but *the Lord preserve thy soul;* for the Martyrs yielded not up their souls. The persecutors raged against Crispina, whose birthday we are <sup>St. Cris-</sup>  
to-day celebrating; they were raging against a rich and <sup>pina.</sup>  
delicate woman: but she was strong, for the Lord was her defence upon the hand of her right hand, He Who kept her. Is there any one in Africa, my brethren, who knoweth her not? For she was most illustrious, noble in birth, abounding in wealth: but all these things were in her left hand, beneath her head. An enemy advanced to strike her head, and the left hand was presented to him, which was under <sup>Song of</sup>  
her head. Her head was above, the right hand embraced <sup>Sol. 2, 6.</sup>  
her from above. What could the persecutor do, although to a delicate woman? She was indeed weak by sex, and perhaps feebler still through her riches, and the habits of her life; but what was this against such a defence? What to that Husband Who placed His left hand beneath her head, and embraced her with His right? When could the enemy strike her thus defended? Yet he did strike her, but her body. But what saith the Psalm? *The Lord preserve thy soul.* Her soul yielded not, her body was smitten. And her body was smitten but for a season: for it will rise again in the end. For He also, Who deigned to be the Head of the Church, gave up His body to be smitten for a season; but He quickened His flesh again in three

PSALM CXCI. days; He will quicken our flesh in the end. The Head was raised again, that the Body might heed its resurrection, and thus might not faint. *The Lord preserve thy soul.* Let it not yield, let it not be broken down by offences; let it not yield by giving way in persecutions and in tribulations: even as the Lord saith: *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.* This soul of thine then the Lord shall keep, that thou yield not to the evil persuader, that thou yield not to him that promiseth falsely, that thou yield not to him that threateneth temporal harm, and *the Lord shall keep thy soul.*

Mat. 10, 28.

14. Ver. 8. *The Lord preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore.* Heed thy coming in for a season. *The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth for evermore.* May He preserve thy going out also. What mean, *coming in*, and, *going out*? When we are tempted, we come in: when we overcome temptation, we go out. Listen to, *the coming in*:

Eccles. 27, 5.

listen to, *the going out.*—*The furnace proveth the potter's vessels*, saith Scripture, *and the trial of tribulation the righteous man.* If righteous men are like a potter's vessels, the potter's vessels must needs enter the furnace, and the potter is not free from anxiety when they enter in, but when they have come out. But the Lord is without care, for He *knoweth who are His*, and He knoweth who do not crack in the furnace. They crack not, who have not the wind of pride. Humility therefore is our guardian in every temptation: for we rise from the vale of misery, chaunting the song of degrees; and the Lord preserveth our coming in, that we may come in safe. Let us be of sound faith when temptation happeneth; and He preserveth our going out *from now for evermore.* For when we have gone out from all temptation, henceforth for evermore no temptation will alarm us, no lust will even solicit us. Hear the Apostle declaring what I have but just declared: *God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.* Behold, thy coming in is guarded; when God suffereth not a temptation which thou canst not bear to befall thee, He preserveth thy coming in: see whether He also preserve thy going out.

1 Cor. 10, 13.

2 Tim. 2, 19.

*But will make, he addeth, with the temptation a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Can we, my brethren, interpret otherwise than the Apostle's very words have taught? Preserve yourselves then, but not by yourselves, for the Lord is your defence, Who preserveth you, Who will neither slumber nor sleep. Once hath He slept for us; He hath risen again; He will never more. Let no man presume in Himself. We are going up from the vale of misery; let us not tarry in the way. Steps in the road remain: we ought not to remain loitering, we ought not through pride to fall: let us say unto God, *Let not our foot* VER. 7. *be moved.* He who keepeth us will not sleep. It is in our power, by God's gift, if we make Him our keeper, Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth, Who keepeth Israel. What Israel? Him that seeth God. Thus will thy aid be from the Lord, thus will thy defence be upon the hand of thy right hand; thus is thy coming in and thy going out preserved from now for evermore. For if thou trust in thyself, thy foot hath been moved; if thy foot hath been moved, thou already thinkest thyself to be on some advanced step; thence thou fallest, if thou art proud; for the humble one in the vale of misery saith, *Suffer not my foot to be moved.*

15. Although the Psalm is short, yet our exposition and discourse on it hath been long. Imagine, my brethren, that owing to the birthday of the blessed Crispina I have invited you, and have been immoderate in protracting the banquet. Might not this have happened to you, if any military officer were to invite you, and compel you to drink at his table without measure? May it be lawful for us to do this in a sacred exposition, that ye may be incbricated and satisfied to the full, even as the Lord hath deigned to water the earth with His temporal rain, that He might suffer us to go to the abode of the Martyrs with the greater joy, as we had promised yesterday! For those Martyrs are here with us without toil.

LAT.  
CXXI.

## PSALM CXXII.

—  
EXPOSITION.  
—*A Discourse to the common People.*

1. As impure love inflames the mind, and summons the soul destined to perish to lust for earthly things, and to follow what is perishable, and precipitates it into the lowest places, and sinks it into the abyss; so holy love raiseth us to heavenly things, and inflames us to what is eternal, and excites the soul to those things which do not pass away nor die, and from the abyss of hell raiseth it to heaven. Yet all love hath a power of its own, nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle; it must needs draw it on. But dost thou wish to know of what sort love is? See whither it leadeth. We warn you not then to love nothing; but that ye love not the world, that ye may freely love Him Who made the world. For the soul when bound by the love of earth, hath as it were birdlime on its wings; it cannot fly. But when purged from the sordid affections of the world, extending as it were its pair of wings, and freeing them from every obstacle, **Mat. 22,** it flieth upon them, that is, upon the two commandments of **40.** love unto God and our neighbour. Whither, save rising by flight unto God? for it riseth by loving. Before it can do this, it groaneth on earth, if it hath in it now the desire for **Ps. 55, 7.** flight; and saith, *O that I had wings as a dove, for then would I flee away, and be at rest!* But whither will it fly, save from the midst of offences, where he also, whose cry I have here quoted, was groaning? From the midst of offences, then, from the medley of evil men, from the chaff mingled with the wheat, it longeth to fly, where it may not endure the society of any wicked one, but may live in the holy company of angels, the citizens of the everlasting Jerusalem.

2. Ver. 1. Therefore this Psalm, which we have this day undertaken to expound to you, holy brethren, longeth for

Jerusalem herself; that is, he who ascendeth in this Psalm: VER. 1.  
for it is a *Song of degrees*; as we have often said to you, See on Ps. 38.  
for these degrees<sup>1</sup> are not of descent, but of ascent. He §. 2. and on Ps. 120. §. 1.  
therefore longeth to ascend. And whither doth he wish to ascend, save into heaven? What meaneth, into heaven? 1 or steps  
Doth he wish to ascend that he may be with the sun, moon, and stars? Far be it! But there is in heaven the eternal Jerusalem, where are our fellow-citizens, the Angels: we are wanderers on earth from these our fellow-citizens. We sigh in our pilgrimage; we shall rejoice in the city. But we find companions in this pilgrimage, who have already seen this city herself, and summon us to run towards her. At these he also rejoiceth, who saith, *I rejoiced in them who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord.* Brethren, recall to mind, that when any festival of the Martyrs, or any holy spot is named, that on a certain day crowds may flock unto it to celebrate an anniversary; how those crowds encourage one another, how they exhort one another, and say, Let us go, let us go. People ask, whither are we to go? They reply, to that place, to the consecrated spot. They speak with one another by turns, and as it were set on fire one by one, make one flame; and this one flame, kindled from the conversation of those who take fire from one another, hurrieth them to the holy place, and holy thoughts sanctify them. If therefore holy love thus hurrieth them to a temporal spot; what love should that be which hurrieth men unanimously toward heaven, saying to each other, *Let us go into the house of the Lord?* Let us therefore run, let us run, for we will go into the Lord's house. Let us run, and not be wearied; for we shall arrive there, where we shall not be wearied. Let us run into the house of the Lord, let our soul be rejoiced in those who say these words unto us. For they who speak thus unto us, have seen before us that country, crying from a distant age unto their posterity, *We will go into the house of the Lord: walk, run.* The Apostles have seen it, and have said unto us, Run, walk, follow; *we will go into the Lord's house.* And what doth each of us reply? *I am rejoiced in those who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord.* I am rejoiced in the Prophets, I am rejoiced in the Apostles.

**PSALM CXXII.** For they all said unto us, *We will go into the house of the Lord.*

3. Ver. 2. *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem.* Behold, thou hast the Lord's house, if thou seekest it. In that house of the Lord, He Who built the house is praised; He is the delight of all who dwell in the house; He is their only hope here, and reality there. They that run thither, what should they think? Even as if they were already there, and already stood there. For it is a great thing to stand there among the Angels, and not to fail. For he who fell thence, *abode not in the truth.*

**John 8, 44.** But all who have not fallen, abide in the truth: and he standeth, who enjoyeth God; but he who wisheth to enjoy himself, falleth. But who wisheth to enjoy himself? He who is proud. He therefore who wished alway to stand in the courts of Jerusalem, saith, *In Thy light shall we see light; not in any light; and, With Thee is the well of life; not with me.* And what did he add? *O let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down. There fell all that work wickedness; they are cast down, and were not able to stand.* If then they were not able to stand, because they were proud; do thou ascend humbly, that thou mayest be able to say, *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem.* Consider what thou wilt be there; and although thou art as yet on the road, place this before thine eyes, as if thou wert already standing, as if thou wert already rejoicing without ceasing among the Angels, and that which is written were realised in thee: "*Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee.*"—*Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem.* What Jerusalem? This earthly Jerusalem also is wont to be called by the name: though this Jerusalem is but the shadow of that. And what great thing is it to stand in this Jerusalem, since this Jerusalem hath not been able to stand, but hath been turned into a ruin? Doth then the Holy Spirit pronounce this, out of the kindled heart of the loving Psalmist, as a great thing, when he saith, *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem?* Is not it that

**Mat. 23, 37.** *Jerusalem, unto whom the Lord said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that*

are sent unto thee? What great thing then did he desire, to stand among those who slew the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them? God forbid that he should think of that Jerusalem, who so loveth, who so burneth, who so longeth to reach that Jerusalem, *our Mother*, of which the Apostle saith, that She is *eternal in the Heavens*. VER.  
3.

4. Ver. 3. Hear for thyself: trust not me; hear what followeth, and what Jerusalem he is pointing out to our minds. For after saying, *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem*; as if he were asked, Of what Jerusalem speakest thou? he at once addeth, *Jerusalem that is being built as a city*. Brethren, when David was uttering these words, that city had been finished, it was not being built. It is some city he speaketh of, therefore, which is now being built, unto which living stones run in faith, of whom Peter saith, *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house*; that is, the holy temple of God. What meaneth, ye are built up as lively stones? Thou livest, if thou believest: but if thou believest, thou art made a temple of God; for the Apostle Paul saith, *The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye*. This city is therefore now in building; stones are cut down from the hills by the hands of those who preach truth, they are squared that they may enter into an everlasting structure. There are still many stones in the hands of the Builder: let them not fall from His hands, that they may be built perfect into the structure of the temple. This, then, is the *Jerusalem that is being built as a city*: Christ is its foundation. The Apostle Paul saith, *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus*. When a foundation is laid on earth, the walls are built above, and the weight of the walls tends towards the lowest parts, because the foundation is laid at the bottom. But if our foundation be in heaven, let us be built towards heaven. Bodies have built the edifice of this basilica, the ample size of which ye see; and since bodies have built it, they placed the foundation lowest: but since we are spiritually built, our foundation is placed at the highest point. Let us therefore run thither, where we may be built; for it is said of Jerusalem herself, *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem*. But of Gal. 4,  
26.  
2 Cor. 5,  
1.  
  
1 Peter  
2, 5.  
  
1 Cor. 3,  
17.  
  
ib. 11.

**PSALM CXXII.** what Jerusalem? Of *Jerusalem which is being built as a city*. He hath not said enough to describe Jerusalem, in saying, it is *built as a city*: that bodily Jerusalem may still be understood. For what if any one were to stand up and say, Even then, when these verses were being written and sung, in David's time, that city was finished; but he saw in the spirit that it would be destroyed, and would have to be built up a second time. For that city was stormed, and the captive people compelled to migrate to Babylon;

<sup>2</sup> Kings 25, 11.

Matt. 1,

11.

Jer. 26,

12.

an event called in Scripture, the transmigration to Babylon.

And Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years of captivity

that city might be rebuilt, which had been destroyed by the

conquering host. Perhaps some one saith: David saw this

in the Spirit, that the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed

by its besiegers, and that it might again be rebuilt after

seventy years: and he therefore said, *Jerusalem which is*

*being built as a city*: think not then that that city is here

mentioned which consisteth of Saints, as of living stones.

What followeth, to remove all doubt? Why, he saith, *our*

*feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem*. But what

Jerusalem do I speak of? Is it that, he asketh, which ye

see standing, raised on the structure of its walls? No; but

the *Jerusalem which is being built as a city*. Why not,

a city, instead of, *as a city*; save because those walls, so

built in Jerusalem, were a visible city, as it is by all called

a city, literally; but this is being built as a city, for they

who enter it, are like living stones; for they are not literally

stones? Just as they are called stones, and yet are not so:

so the city styled *as a city*, is not a city; for he said, *is*

*being built*. For by the word building, he meant to be under-

stood the structure, and cohesion of bodies and walls. For

<sup>1</sup> civitas

a city<sup>1</sup> is properly understood of the men that inhabit there.

But in saying '*is building*,' he shewed us that he meant

a town. And since a spiritual building hath some re-

semblance to a bodily building, therefore it *is building as*

*a city*.

5. But let the following words remove all doubt that we

ought not to understand carnally the words, *Jerusalem that*

*is building as a city, whose partaking is in the same*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> in id.  
ipsum

Now, therefore, brethren, let every one who raiseth the eye

of his mind, who layeth aside the mist of the flesh, who cleanseth the eye of the heart, lift up his mind to con-<sup>VER.</sup>  
 template, *the same*. What meaneth, *the same*? How am <sup>S.</sup>  
 I to say, save by repeating the word, *the same*? Brethren,  
 if ye can, understand *the same*. For whatever else I shall  
 say, I shall not say, *the same*. Let us, however, endeavour  
 by some neighbouring phrases and senses to lead the weak-  
 ness of the mind to consider this word, *the same*. What  
 meaneth, *the same*? What is ever in the same state; not  
 what is now in one state, now in another. What then is,  
*the same*, save that which is? What is that which is? That  
 which is everlasting. For what is always different at different  
 times, is not, because it abideth not: not altogether is not,  
 but is not in the highest sense. And what is, that which is,  
 save He Who when He sent Moses, said unto him, I AM  
 THAT I AM? What is this, save He, Who, when His servant  
 said, *Behold, Thou sendest me, and if the people shall say* <sup>Exod. 3,</sup>  
*unto me, Who sent thee? what shall I say unto them?* <sup>13. 14</sup>  
 would not give His Name any otherwise than this, I AM  
 THAT I AM; and replied, *Thus shalt thou say unto the*  
*children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.* Behold  
*The Same: I AM THAT I AM, I AM hath sent me unto you.*  
 Thou canst not understand; it is much to understand, it  
 is much to apprehend. Remember what He, Whom thou  
 canst not comprehend, became for thee. Remember the flesh  
 of Christ, towards which thou wast raised when sick, and  
 when left half dead from the wounds of robbers, that thou  
 mightest be brought to the Inn, and there mightest be <sup>Luke 10,</sup>  
 cured. Let us therefore run unto the Lord's house, and <sup>30. 34.</sup>  
 reach the city where our feet may stand; the city *that is*  
*building as a city: whose partaking is in The Same.* For what  
 oughtest thou to hold? That which Christ became for thee,  
 for He is Christ; and Christ Himself is rightly understood  
 in the words, I AM THAT I AM, as He is in the form of God,  
 where *He hath not thought it robbery to be equal with God,* <sup>Philip.</sup>  
 there He is THE SAME. But that thou mayest be a partaker <sup>2, 6.</sup>  
 in THE SAME, He first partook of thy nature; and the Word  
 became flesh, that the flesh might partake of the Word. But  
 in that *the Word became Flesh, and dwelt among us,* <sup>John 1,</sup>  
 came from the seed of Abraham; but it was promised <sup>14.</sup>

**PSALM CXXXII.** Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in their seed all nations should be blessed; and we find in consequence that the Church hath been spread over the whole world: God speaketh to the weak. He sought for firmness of heart, when He said, *I AM THAT I AM*: He sought for firmness of heart, and an elevated gaze of contemplation, when He said, *I AM sent me unto you*. But perhaps thou hast not as yet this power of contemplation: faint not, despair not. *I AM* willed to be a man as thou art: and therefore presently telleth Moses, when as it were terrified, His Name. What Name? *THAT IS, IS*.  
**Gen. 22, 18.** And the Lord said unto Moses, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this is My Name for ever*. Despair not of thyself, because He hath said, *I AM THAT I AM*, and, *I AM hath sent me unto you*: because thou at present waverest, and through the mutability of things, and the variety of mortal affairs, canst not perceive the meaning of *THE SAME*. I come down, because thou canst not come. *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*. In the seed of Abraham hope somewhat, that thou mayest be strengthened to see Him Who came unto thee in the seed of Abraham.

**Ps. 102, 27-28.** 6. This then is *THE SAME*, of Whom it is said, *Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail*. Behold *THE SAME*, Whose years shall not fail. Brethren, do not our years daily fail, and abide not at all? For those which have come, already are not; and they that are to come, are not: those have already failed, and others, destined to fail, are to come. In this one day, brethren, behold what we are now saying is at one moment of time. Past hours have gone by, future hours have not as yet come; and when they shall have come, they also will themselves go by and fail. What are those years that will not fail, save they that abide? If therefore the years stand there, the very years also that stand are one year, and the very year which standeth is one day; for this one day hath neither rise or setting, nor is it commenced from a yesterday, nor closed by a tomorrow, but that day abideth for ever: and thou callest that day what thou pleasest; if thou choose, they are years; if thou choose, it is a day; whatever light thou regardest it

in, it nevertheless standeth: that city *which partaketh in the same*, partaketh in its stability: justly therefore, since he is made a sharer in its stability, saith he who runneth thither, *Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem*. For all things there stand where nought passeth by. Dost thou too wish to stand there and not to pass by? Run thither. Nobody hath *the same* from himself. Attend, brethren. The body that he hath is not *the same*; for it standeth not in itself. It is changed through seasons, it is changed through changes of places and times, it is changed through diseases and wastings of flesh: it standeth not therefore in itself. Celestial bodies stand not in themselves, they have certain changes of their own, although hidden ones; they are certainly changed from place to place, they ascend from the east to the west, and again go round unto the east; they therefore stand not, they are not the same. Even the human soul standeth not. For with how many changes and imaginations is it altered? by how many pleasures is it changed? by what powerful lusts is it lacerated and torn asunder? Man's mind itself, which is called rational, is changeable, it is not the same. At one time, it wisheth, at another it wisheth not; at one time it knoweth, at another it knoweth not; at one time it remembereth, at another it forgetteth: therefore no one hath *the same* from himself. He who wished to have the same from himself, so that he might in some sort be the same unto himself, fell: the angel hath fallen, and hath become a devil. The devil hath pledged the man in the cup of pride, he hath, in envy, thrown down together with himself him who was standing. These have wished to be *the same* unto themselves: they have wished to be princes and lords over themselves; they have been unwilling to recognise the true Lord, who truly is *The Same*, unto Whom it is said, *Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art ever the same*. Let therefore the humbled soul, after so much weariness, so many diseases, difficulties, toils, return unto itself; and let it be in that city *whose partaking is in the same*.

7. Ver. 4. *For thither the tribes went up*. We were asking whither he ascendeth who hath fallen; for we said, it is the voice of a man who is ascending, of the Church rising.

PSA LM Can we tell whither it ascendeth? whither it goeth? whither  
CXXII. it is raised? *Thither*, he saith, *the tribes went up*. Whither  
Luke 10, did the tribes go up? *To a city whose partaking is the*  
30. *same*. Therefore they ascend to Jerusalem. But the man  
 who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among  
 robbers. If he did not descend, he would not fall among  
 robbers. But since by descending he fell among robbers,  
 let him by ascending come unto Angels. Let him therefore  
 ascend, because the tribes have ascended. But what are  
 the tribes? Many know, many know not. But let us who  
 know, descend unto them that know not the tribes, that they  
 may ascend with us whither the tribes have ascended. The  
 tribes may be termed 'curies' under another name, but not  
 in the primary sense of the word. What are called tribes  
 under one name cannot be called in the same sense by  
 another: but they are called 'curies' in a kindred sense.  
 For if we use the word 'curies' in its proper sense, we under-  
 stand nothing, save the 'curies' which exist in each particular  
 city, whence the terms 'curiales' and 'decuriones,' that is,  
 the citizens of a curia or a decuria; and ye know that each  
 city hath such curies. But there are, or were at one time,  
 curies of the people in those cities, and one city hath many  
 curies, as Rome hath thirty-five curies of the people. These  
 are called tribes. The people of Israel had twelve of these,  
 according to the sons of Jacob.

Thirty, 8. There were twelve tribes of the people of Israel: but  
acc. to there were good, and there were bad among them. For how  
Liv. i. evil were those tribes which crucified our Lord! How good  
13. Cic. those who recognised the Lord! Those tribes then who  
de Rep. crucified the Lord, were tribes of the devil. When therefore  
ii. 8. he here said, *For thither the tribes go up*; that thou  
35 aftds mightest not understand all the tribes, he added, *even the*  
acc. to *tribes of the Lord*. What meaneth, *tribes of the Lord*?  
Sext. They which knew the Lord. For out of those twelve evil  
Pomp. tribes, there were good men there, of the good tribes, who  
in v. Cu- recognised the Builder of the City; and these were the grains  
ria, who of wheat among those tribes, mingled with the chaff. For they  
seems to went up, not with the chaff, but tribes winnowed, chosen,  
con- as the tribes of the Lord. *Thither the tribes go up, even*  
found *the tribes of the Lord*. What are the tribes of the Lord?  
them  
'Tribes.'  
see Pol-  
let. Hist.  
For.  
Rom. in  
Poleni  
Sup-  
plem. t. i.  
p. 516.

*A testimony unto Israel.* Hear, brethren, what this meaneth. V.F.M.  
*A testimony to Israel:* that is, whereby it may be known 4.  
that it is truly Israel. For what meaneth Israel? The meaning of this word has already often been declared, and let it often be declared; for perchance, though it hath recently been declared, it hath slipped from you. In repeating it, let us effect that it may not slip even from those who know not, or refuse, to read: let us be their dictionary. Israel is interpreted to mean, 'Seeing God:' indeed, if more carefully rendered, Israel will be found to mean, 'is seeing God:' both meanings; is, and, seeing God. For man is not in himself; for he is changed and altered, if he share not in Him Who is *The Same*. Then he *is*, when he seeth God. For then he *is*, when he seeth Him Who *is*; and by seeing Him Who *is*, he also according to his measure beginneth to be. He is then Israel, and Israel is seeing God. The proud man therefore is not Israel; for he hath no share in *The Same*; because he chooseth to be the same unto himself. He who wisheth to be the beginning to himself is not Israel. Every false one therefore is not Israel, for every proud man must needs be a false one. This I say, brethren: it needs must be that every proud man wish to seem what he is not; otherwise, my brethren, it cannot be. And I wish the proud man wished to seem what he is not in the same way as, for example's sake, to seem a fluteplayer, when not really a fluteplayer. For it would soon be tested: it would be said to him, Play; let us see if thou art a fluteplayer. He would not be able; he would be discovered to have wished falsely to seem what he was not. If he called himself eloquent, it would be said to him, Speak: and prove thyself. If he should speak, he would be found not to be that which he had professed. The proud man (and this is worse) wishes himself to appear righteous, though he be not so; and as it is difficult to comprehend righteousness, it is difficult to detect the proud. The proud therefore wish to appear what they are not: for this reason, they have no share in *The Same*; they belong not to Israel, which meaneth, Seeing God. Who then belongeth to Israel? He who shareth in *The Same*. Who is he? He who confesses that he is not what God is, and that he hath from Him all the good he is

**PSALM CXXII.** capable of having; and that there is nought save sin flowing from himself, that righteousness cometh unto him from God? He is such in whom there is no guile. And what did the **John 1, 47.** Lord say, when He saw Nathanael? *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.* If therefore he is a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile, those tribes go up to Jerusalem, in whom there is no guile. And these are *the testimony of Israel*: that is, owing to these it is acknowledged that there were grains among that chaff, since when the floor was looked upon, all was thought to be chaff. There were therefore grains there: but when they have ascended **Matt. 3, 12.** into that glory above, when the floor shall have been winnowed, then will there be a testimony of Israel; then will all the wicked say, Truly there were here righteous men among the wicked, when all seemed to us wicked, and when we thought all such as we ourselves were, *a testimony of Israel.* Whither do they go up? Wherefore do they go up? *To confess unto Thy Name, O Lord.* It could not be more nobly expressed. As pride presumeth, so doth humility confess. As he is a presumer, who wishes to appear what he is not, so is he a confessor, who does not wish that to be seen which himself is, and loves That which He is. To this therefore do Israelites go up, in whom is no guile, because they are truly Israelites, because in them is the testimony of Israel. To this do they go up, *to confess unto Thy Name, O Lord.*

9. Ver. 5. *For there were seated seats for judgment.* This is a wonderful riddle, a wonderful question, if it be not understood. He calleth those seats, which the Greeks call thrones. The Greeks call chairs thrones, as a term of honour. Therefore, my brethren, it is not wonderful if even we should sit on seats, or chairs; but that these seats themselves should sit, when shall we be able to understand this? As if some one should say: let stools or chairs sit here. We sit on chairs, we sit on seats, we sit on stools; the seats themselves sit not. What then meaneth this, *For there were seated seats for judgment?* Ye are indeed wont to hear these words of God, *The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.* But in Latin the whole is expressed thus, *The heaven is My seat.* Who are these, save the

**Is. 66, 1.**

righteous? Who are the heavens, save the righteous? They who are heaven, are heavens themselves: for they which are the Church, are themselves Churches; they are many in such a way as to be one: so therefore are the righteous also; the righteous are heaven in such a way as that they are heavens. Now God sitteth in them, and judgeth from them: nor is it said without a deep meaning, that *The heavens declare the glory of God.* For the Apostles have become a heaven. Whence have they become heaven? Because they have been justified. As the sinner hath become earth, for unto him it is said, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;* so have the justified become heaven. They bore God: and from them God lightened forth His wonders, thundered terrors, rained consolations. They were therefore, they were heaven, and they declared the glory of God. For that ye may know that they were called heaven, he saith in the same Psalm, *Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.* Thou askest, whose? and thou wilt find, of these heavens. If therefore heaven be the seat of God, and the Apostles are heaven; they themselves are become the seat of God, the throne of God. It is said in another passage: *The soul of the righteous is the throne of wisdom.* A great truth, a great truth, is declared; the throne of wisdom is the soul of the righteous; that is, wisdom sitteth in the soul of the righteous as it were in her chair, in her throne, and thence judgeth whatsoever she judgeth. There were therefore thrones of wisdom, and therefore the Lord said unto them, *Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* So they also shall sit upon twelve seats, and they are themselves the seats of God; for of them it is said, *For there were seated seats.* Who sat? *Seats.* And who are the seats? They of whom it is said, *The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom.* Who are the seats? The heavens. Who are the heavens? Heaven. What is heaven? That of which the Lord saith, *Heaven is My seat.* righteous then themselves are the seats; and have seats; and seats shall be seated in that Jerusalem. For what purpose? *For judgment.* Ye shall sit, He saith, on twelve thrones, O ye thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**PSALM CXXXII.** Judging whom? Those who are below on earth. Who will judge? They who have become heaven. But they who shall be judged, will be divided into two bodies: one will be on the right hand, the other on the left. For the

**Is. 3, 14.** *Lord will come to judgment with the ancients of His people,* saith Isaiah. There are then some who will judge with Him; others who will be judged by Him, and by those who will judge with Him. These therefore will be divided into two parts: one will be set on the right, to whom will be enumerated the merciful deeds they have wrought; the other will be set on the left, unto whom will be enumerated their cruelty and barreunness of mercy. And to those placed on

**Mat. 25, 31-45.** the right it will be said, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Wherefore? *I was an hungred,* He replieth, *and ye gave me meat.* They answer: *Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred?* He answereth: *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.* What, then, my brethren? They shall

**Luke 16, 9.** judge, of whom it is said that men should *make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they also,* He saith, *may receive you into everlasting habitations.* The Saints will sit with the Lord to mark those who have wrought mercy, and will bring them, set apart on the right, into the kingdom of heaven: and this is the peace of Jerusalem. What is the peace of Jerusalem? That bodily works of mercy may be joined with spiritual works of preaching, and

**Phil. 4, 15.** that peace may result from giving and receiving. For the Apostle, who hath declared that this almsgiving is a balance

**1 Cor. 9, 11.** of giving and receiving, saith, *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?* And concerning the same thing he elsewhere

**2 Cor. 8, 15.** saith: *He that had gathered much, had nothing over: and he that had gathered little, had no lack.* Why had he nothing over, who had gathered much? Because what he had over, he gave to the needy. And what meaneth, he that had gathered little, had no lack? Because he received from

**ib. 14.** the other's abundance, that there might be equality, as he saith. This is the peace, whereof it is said, *Peace be in thy strength.*

10. Ver. 6. For after saying, *For there were seated seats* VER. 6. *for judgment, seats over the house of David,* that is, over the family of Christ, to whom they gave meat in season; he at Mat. 24, 45. once addeth, as unto the seats themselves, *Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem.* O ye seats, who now sit unto judgment, and are made the seats of the Lord Who judgeth, (since they who judge, enquire; they who are judged, are enquired of,) *Enquire ye,* he saith, *the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem.* What will they find by asking? That some have done deeds of charity, that others have not. Those whom they shall find to have done deeds of charity, they will summon them unto Jerusalem; for these deeds are *for the peace of Jerusalem.* Love is a powerful thing, my brethren, love is a powerful thing. Do ye wish to see how powerful a thing love is? Whosoever through some insurmountable obstacle can not fulfil what God commandeth, let him love him who fulleth it, and he fulleth it in him. I pray your attention, my brethren. For example's sake, he hath a wife, whom he may not divorce; he must obey the Apostle who saith, *Let the husband render* 1 Cor. 7, *unto the wife due benevolence:* and, *Art thou bound unto a* 3. *wife? seek not to be loosed.* It cometh into his mind that that life is better, whereof the Apostle saith, *I would that all* ib. 7. *men were even as myself.* He observeth those who have done this; he loveth them, and fulleth in them what he cannot in himself. Love is a powerful thing. This is our strength; for if we be not in it, whatever else we have profiteth nothing. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of* 1 Cor. 13, *angels, saith the Apostle, and have not charity, I am become* 1. 3. *as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.* He addeth yet another great thing: *and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* But if charity be destitute of means, so that it cannot find what to bestow upon the poor, let it love: let it give *one cup of cold water;* Mat. 10, as much shall be laid to its account, as to Zaccheus who 42. Luke 19, gave half his patrimony to the poor. Wherefore this? The 8. one gave so little, the other so much, and shall so much be imputed to the former? Just so much. For though his resources are unequal, his charity is not unequal.

PSALM  
CXXII.

11. They therefore enquire: do ye reflect upon what ye are. It hath been already said unto us, *We will go into the house of the Lord.* We took delight in those who said unto us, *We will go into the house of the Lord.* Consider therefore whether we really go. For we go not with our feet, but with our affections. Consider if we go, let each of you ask himself what he is towards a poor saint, towards an indigent brother, what he is towards an indigent beggar, let him see whether his bowels are not narrow. For the Seats which will sit for judgment will have to enquire of thee, and ought to discover things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. And how do they enquire? As the seats of God. God asketh. If any thing escape God, something may escape those seats also who enquire. *Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem.* But what are for the peace of Jerusalem? *And plenteousness,* he addeth, *for them that love thee.* He addresses Jerusalem herself, They have plenteousness who love her. Plenteousness after want: here they are destitute, there they are affluent; here they are weak, there they are strong; here they want, there they are rich. How have they become rich? Because they gave here what they received from God for a season, and received there what God will afterwards pay back for evermore. Here, my brethren, even rich men are poor. It is a good thing for a rich man to acknowledge himself poor: for if he think himself full, that is mere puffing, not plenteousness. Let him own himself empty, that he may be filled. What hath he? Gold. What hath he not yet? Everlasting life. Let him consider what he hath, and see what he hath not. Brethren, of that which he hath, let him give, that he may receive what he hath not; let him purchase out of that which he hath, that which he hath not, *and plenteousness for them that love thee.*

12. Ver. 7. *Peace be in thy strength.* O Jerusalem, O city, who art being built as a city, whose partaking is in *The Same: Peace be in thy strength:* peace be in thy love; Cant. 8. for thy strength is thy love. Hear the Song of songs: *Love*  
6. *is strong as death.* A great saying that, brethren, *Love is strong as death.* The strength of charity could not be expressed in grander terms than these, *Love is strong as*

*death.* For who resisteth death, my brethren? Consider, <sup>VER.</sup> my brethren. Fire, waves, the sword, are resisted: we resist 7. 8. principalities, we resist kings; death cometh alone, who resisteth it? There is nought more powerful than it. Charity therefore is compared with its strength, in the words, *Love is strong as death.* And since this love slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not; love createth a sort of death in us. This death he had died who said, *The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world:* Gal. 6, this death they had died unto whom he said, *Ye are dead,* Col. 3, 3, <sup>14.</sup> *and your life is hid with Christ in God.* Love is strong as death. If therefore it is strong, it is courageous, and of great power, and is strength itself, and through it the weak are ruled by the firm, earth by heaven, peoples by the *seats*; therefore, *Peace be in thy strength,* meaneth, Peace be in thy love. And through this strength, through this love, through this peace, *let there be plenteousness in thy towers:* that is, in thy exalted ones. For few will sit in judgment, but many set on the right hand will constitute the people of that city. For many will belong severally to each exalted one, by whom they will be received into their everlasting habitations; and there will be plenteousness in his towers. But God Himself is the fulness of delight, and the sufficiency of riches, Himself THE SAME, Himself in Whom the partaking of the city is in 'The Same:' this will be our plenteousness also. But whence? Through charity, that is, through strength. But in whom is charity, my brethren? In him who seeketh not his own in this life. Hear the Apostle's charity: *Give none offence, he saith, even as I please all* Phil. 2, *men in all things.* Where then is what thou hast said: *If* Gal. 1, <sup>4, 21.</sup> *I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ?* <sup>10.</sup> and dost thou at one time say that thou pleasest, at another, exhort them also to please? But he did not lay down as the end, that any man should please on his own account, and not for the sake of charity. He who seeketh his own glory, seeketh not the salvation of others. For he saith, *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine* 1 Cor. *own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be* <sup>10, 33.</sup> *saved.*

13. Ver. 8. Thus as he was here speaking of charity, he

*For my brethren and companions sake, I spoke  
 peace of them.* I desire that you whose preaching is  
 in the world, in the heart of the world, I pray, be with  
 a stranger and grudging, not as we enjoying as the full  
 his peace and preaching his peace, peace is not for my  
 own sake as the society, who seeking their own gain, say,  
 Peace be with you: and have not the peace which they  
 preach to the people. For if they had peace, they would  
 not see another mind. *I be with quiet peace of them.*  
*But verily: For my brethren and companions' sake:*  
 not for my own honour, not for my own money, not for my  
 life. *For to me it is as Carol, and to die is gain.* But,  
*I speak peace of them, for my brethren and companions' sake.*  
 For as whosoever is desired, and to be with Christ: but, since  
 as thus preach these things to his companions and his  
 brethren, as much as the flesh, he addeth, is more needful  
 for you. *For my brethren and companions' sake I spoke  
 peace of them.*

Phil.  
 2. 21.  
 22.

14. *Vex. 9. Because of the house of the Lord my God,  
 I have sought good things for thee.* Not on my own account  
 have sought good things, for then I should not seek for thee,  
 but for myself; and so should I not have them, because  
 I should not seek them for thee; but, *Because of the house  
 of the Lord my God,* because of the Church, because of the  
 Saints, because of the pilgrims; because of the poor, that  
 they may go up; because we say to them, we will go into  
 the house of the Lord: because of the house of the Lord  
 my God itself, I have sought good things for Thee. These  
 long and needful words gather ye, brethren, eat them, drink  
 them, and grow strong, run, and seize.

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 CXXII.

PSALM CXXIII.

EXPOSITION.

1. I HAVE undertaken to treat of the songs of him who  
 commendeth in order with you, holy brethren; of one who

ascendeth and loveth, and ascendeth because he loveth. All <sup>V ER.</sup> love either ascends or descends. For we are lifted up unto <sup>1.</sup> God by a good desire, and by an evil desire we are precipitated to the lowest depths. But since we have already fallen, through evil desire; it remaineth for us, if we know Who fell not, but descended unto us, to ascend by clinging to Him; for we cannot do so of our own strength. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, *No man hath ascended up* <sup>John 3,</sup> *to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the* <sup>13.</sup> *Son of Man which is in heaven.* He seemeth to have spoken of Himself alone. Did then the rest remain below, because He Who alone came down, alone ascended? What ought the rest to do? To be united with His Body, that Christ, Who came down and ascended, may be One. The Head came down, and ascended with the Body; clothed with His Church, which He presented to Himself, not having <sup>Ephes.</sup> spot or wrinkle. He therefore alone ascended. But we also <sup>5, 27.</sup> when we are so with Him, that we are His members in Him, and He with us is alone, and therefore One, and evermore One, unity bindeth us unto One; and they alone ascend not with Him, who have not chosen to be one with Him. Now since He Who was set in heaven, and immortal, since He had raised up the flesh, owing to which He was for a season mortal, and suffering no persecutions in heaven, no malice or reproaches, as on this earth when He deigned to bear all things for our sakes; yet, sympathising with His Body suffering on earth, said, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest* <sup>Acts 9,</sup> *thou Me?* Though no one touched Him Himself, He yet <sup>4.</sup> cried from heaven that He was suffering persecution: we ought not to exclude the hope, nay, we ought rather confidently to trust, that, if through love He is Himself with us on earth, we also are with Him in heaven through the same love. But we have said in what sense He is Himself with us on earth; we have said it was His Voice which sounded from heaven, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* when Saul touched Him not at all, nor even saw Him; but how is it shewn that we are also with Him in heaven? By the words of the same Paul, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek* <sup>Colos. 3,</sup> *those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the* <sup>13.</sup> *right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not*

**PSALM** *on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is*  
**CXXIII.** *hid with Christ in God.* He therefore is still below, and  
 we are now above: He is below through the compassion of  
**Rom. 8,** love, we are above through the hope of love. *For we are*  
**24.** *saved by hope.* But because our hope is sure; although it  
 be to come, yet we are so spoken of as if it had already  
 come to pass.

2. Ver. 1. Let therefore this singer ascend; and let this  
 man sing from the heart of each of you, and let each of you  
 be this man, for when each of you saith this, since ye are  
 all one in Christ, one man saith this; and saith not, *Unto*  
*Thee, O Lord, have we lift up our eyes;* but, *Unto Thee,*  
*O Lord, have I lift up mine eyes.* Ye ought indeed to  
 imagine that every one of you is speaking; but that One in  
 an especial sense speaketh, Who is also spread abroad over  
 the whole world. That One speaketh, Who elsewhere  
**Ps. 61, 2.** saith, *From the ends of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when*  
*my heart was in heaviness.* Who is it who crieth from the  
 ends of the earth? Who is the one man spread abroad  
 even unto the ends of the earth? Each man may cry forth  
 in his own district; can he from the ends of the earth? But  
**Ps. 2, 8.** the inheritance of Christ, whereof it is said, *I will give thee*  
*the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts*  
*of the earth for thy possession,* itself crieth, *From the ends*  
*of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when my heart was in*  
*heaviness.* Suppose our heart to be in heaviness, and let  
 us cry. Whence should our heart be in heaviness? Not in  
 consequence of those things which even the wicked suffer  
 here; for example's sake, if they suffer a loss: for if the heart  
 is in heaviness on this account, it is ashes. Thou hast  
 perhaps lost some one of thy relations by the will of God:  
 if thine heart be in heaviness on this account, what great  
 thing is this? The hearts of infidels also are in heaviness  
 from this cause; those who have not as yet believed in  
 Christ, suffer these things also. What maketh the heart of  
 a Christian heavy? Because he is a pilgrim, and longeth  
 for his country. If thy heart be heavy on this score,  
 although thou hast been prosperous in the world, still thou  
 dost groan: and if all things combine to render thee pros-  
 perous, and this world smile upon thee on every side, thou

nevertheless groanest, because thou seest that thou art set Vza.  
in a pilgrimage; and feelest that thou hast indeed happiness 1.  
in the eyes of fools, but not as yet after the promise of  
Christ: this thou seekest with groans, this thou seekest with  
longings, and by longing ascendest, and while thou ascendest  
dost sing the Song of Degrees, saying, *Unto Thee do I lift  
up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven.*

3. While ascending, whither was he to raise his eyes,  
save towards that heaven whereunto he was bound, and  
longed to ascend? For he ascendeth from earth to heaven.  
Behold the earth is below, which we tread with our feet;  
behold also the heaven above, which we see with our eyes;  
and as we ascend sing, *Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes,  
O Thou that dwellest in heaven!* Where then are the  
ladders? For we behold so great an interval between heaven  
and earth, there is so wide a separation, and so great a space  
of regions between: we wish to climb thither, we see no  
ladder; do we deceive ourselves, because we sing the Song  
of Degrees, that is, the Song of ascent? We ascend unto  
heaven, if we think of God, Who hath made ascending  
steps in the heart. What is to ascend in heart? To ad-  
vance towards God. As every man who faileth, doth not  
descend, but falleth: so every one who profiteth, doth  
ascend: but if he so profit, as to avoid pride: if he so  
ascend as not to fall: but if while he profiteth he become  
proud, in ascending he again falleth. But that he may not  
be proud, what ought he to do? Let him lift up his eyes  
unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven, let him not heed himself.  
For every proud man heedeth himself, and he who pleaseth  
himself seemeth to himself to be great. But he who pleaseth  
himself, pleaseth a fool; for he is himself a fool, when he  
pleaseth himself. He alone pleaseth without danger, who  
pleaseth God. And who is he who pleaseth God? He  
Whom God hath pleased. God cannot displease Himself;  
may He please thee also, that thou mayest please Him.  
But He cannot please thee, save thou hast displeased thyself.  
But if thou displeasest thyself, remove thine eyes from thy-  
self. For why dost thou regard thyself? For if thou  
sincerely regard thyself, thou findest in thee what will  
displease thee; and thou sayest unto God, *My sin is ever* Ps. 51, 3.

**PSALM**  
**CLXXIII.** *before me.* Let thy sin be before thee, that it may not be before God; and refuse to be before thyself, that thou mayest be before God. For as we wish that God may not turn away His face from us, so do we wish that He may turn His face from our sins: for both these prayers are **Ps.27,9.** found in the Psalms. *O hide not Thou Thy face from me,* are the words of the Psalm: and ours also; and see what he, who saith, *O hide not Thou Thy face from me,* saith **Ps.51,9.** elsewhere: *Turn Thy face from my sins.* If thou wouldest have Him turn His face from thy sins, do thou turn thy face from thyself, and turn not thy face from thy sins. For if thou turn not thy face from them, thou art thyself incensed with thy sins; but if thou turn not away thy face from thy sins, thou dost recognise them, and He forgetteth them.

4. But raise thine eyes from thyself unto Him, and say, *Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven.* If, my brethren, we understand by heaven the firmament which we see with our bodily eyes, we shall indeed so err, as to imagine that we cannot ascend thither without ladders, or some scaling machines: but if we ascend spiritually, we ought to understand heaven spiritually: if the ascent be in affection, heaven is in righteousness. What is then the heaven of God? All holy souls, all righteous souls. For the Apostles also, although they were on earth in the flesh, were heaven; for the Lord, enthroned in them, traversed the whole world. He then dwelleth in heaven.

**Ps.22,3.** How? In what sense doth he say in another Psalm, *But Thou dwellest in holiness, O Thou praise of Israel.* He who dwelleth in heaven, dwelleth in holiness: what is holiness, save His temple? For *the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.* But all who are as yet weak, and **1 Cor. 3, 17.** *walking according to faith,* are according to faith the temple of God, and will be at one time in sight also the temple of God. How long are they the temple according to faith? As long as Christ dwelleth in them through faith; as the Apostle saith, *That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.* But they are already heaven in whom God already dwelleth visibly, who see Him face to face; all the holy Apostles, all the holy Virtues, Powers, Thrones, Lordships, **2 Cor. 5, 7.** that heavenly Jerusalem, wanderers from whence we groan,

and for which we pray with longing; and there God dwelleth. <sup>V ER.</sup>  
 Thither hath the Psalmist lifted up his faith, thither he riseth <sup>2—4.</sup>  
 in affection, with longing hopes: and this very longing  
 causeth the soul to purge off<sup>1</sup> the filth of sins, and to be <sup>1 deen-</sup>  
 cleansed from every stain, that itself also may become heaven; <sup>dare</sup>  
 because it hath lifted up its eyes unto Him Who dwelleth  
 in heaven. For if we have determined that that heaven  
 which we see with our bodily eyes is the dwelling of God,  
 the dwelling of God will pass away; for *heaven and earth* <sup>Mat.24,</sup>  
*will pass away.* Then, before God created heaven and <sup>35.</sup>  
 earth, where did He dwell? But some one saith: and  
 before God made the Saints, where did He dwell? God  
 dwelt in Himself, He dwelt with Himself, and God is with  
 Himself. And when He deigneth to dwell in the Saints,  
 the Saints are not the house of God in such wise, as that  
 God should fall when it is withdrawn. For we dwell in a  
 house in one way, in another way God dwelleth in the  
 Saints. Thou dwellest in a house: if it be withdrawn, thou  
 fallest: but God so dwelleth in the Saints, that if He should  
 Himself depart, they fall. Whosoever then so beareth God  
 as to be a temple of God, let him not think that God is so  
 borne of him, that he may make God afraid if he withdraw  
 himself. Woe to him if God withdraw Himself, for he  
 falleth; since God abideth ever in Himself. The houses  
 in which we live, themselves contain us: those in which God  
 dwelleth, are themselves upheld by Him. Now consider  
 how wide a difference there is between our dwelling and  
 that of God: and let the soul thus speak, *Unto Thee do*  
*I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven:* that it  
 may understand that God wanteth not even heaven to dwell  
 in; but heaven is in need of Him, that it may be inhabited  
 by Him.

5. Ver. 2—4. What then followeth, since he hath said,  
*Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in*  
*Heaven? How hast thou lifted up thine eyes? Behold,*  
*even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their*  
*masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her*  
*mistress: even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God,*  
*until He have mercy upon us.* We are both servants, and  
 a handmaiden: He is both our Master and our Mistress.

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What do these words mean? What do these similitudes mean? Listen to me for a time, beloved brethren. It is not wonderful if we are servants, and He our Master; but it is wonderful if we are a maiden, and He our Mistress. But not even our being a maiden is wonderful; for we are the Church; nor is it wonderful that He is our Mistress; for He is the Power and the Wisdom of God. Hear the <sup>1</sup> Apostle speaking: *We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God:* so that now both the people may be a servant and the Church a handmaid, thou hast heard both: Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. When therefore thou hearest Christ, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Master; when thou hearest the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Mistress; for thou art both servant and handmaiden; servant, for thou art a people<sup>1</sup>; handmaiden<sup>2</sup>, for thou art the Church. But this maiden hath found great dignity with God; she hath been made a wife. But until she come unto those spiritual embraces, where she may without apprehension enjoy Him Whom she hath loved, and for whom she hath sighed in this tedious pilgrimage, she is betrothed: and hath received a mighty pledge, the blood of the Spouse for Whom she sigheth without fear. Nor is it said unto her, Do not love; as it is sometimes said to any betrothed virgin, not as yet married: and is justly said, Do not love; when thou hast become a wife, then love: it is rightly said, because it is a precipitate and preposterous thing, and not a chaste desire, to love one whom she knoweth not whether she shall marry. For it may happen that one man may be betrothed to her, and another man marry her. But as there is no one else who can be preferred to Christ, let her love without apprehension: and before she is joined unto Him, let her love, and sigh from a distance and from her far pilgrimage. He will alone marry her, for he alone hath given such a pledge. For who can so marry as to die for her whom he wishes to marry? For if he chooseth to die for her, he will be no more there to marry her. But He Who when He rose again was to

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 1,  
23. 24.

<sup>1</sup> Popu-  
lus.  
masc.  
<sup>2</sup> Eccle-  
sia. fem.

marry His betrothed, died without apprehension for her. <sup>Vnn.</sup>  
 Nevertheless, brethren, let us in the meanwhile be as servants <sup>2.</sup>  
 and handmaiden. It is said indeed, *I call you not servants,* <sup>John 15,</sup>  
*but friends:* but perhaps our Lord said this to His disciples <sup>15.</sup>  
 alone? Hear the Apostle Paul, saying, *Thou art no more a* <sup>Gal. 4,</sup>  
*servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir through God.* <sup>7.</sup>  
 He was speaking to the people, he was speaking to the  
 faithful. Now therefore being redeemed in the Name of the  
 Lord by His own blood, being washed in His laver, we are  
 sons, we are a son; because we are so many, as that we are  
 one in Him. What then is the reason that we still speak as  
 servants? Can we deserve as much in the Church, although  
 we are already made sons instead of servants, as the Apostle  
 Paul? And yet what saith he in his Epistle? *Paul, a* <sup>Rom. 1,</sup>  
*servant of Jesus Christ.* If he, through whom the Gospel <sup>1.</sup>  
 hath been preached unto us, still calleth himself a servant;  
 how much more ought we to acknowledge our condition, in  
 order that His grace may be greater in us? For He first  
 made those whom He redeemed, servants. For His blood  
 was a price for servants, a pledge for His spouse. Acknow-  
 ledging therefore our condition, although even now sons  
 through grace, yet as servants by creation, for the whole  
 creation serveth God, let us say, *As the eyes of servants look*  
*unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden*  
*unto the hands of her mistress; even so our eyes wait upon*  
*the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.*

6. He hath also stated the reason, why *our eyes should*  
*wait upon the Lord our God, even as the eyes of a servant*  
*look unto the hands of his master, and as the eyes of a*  
*maiden unto the hands of her mistress.* And as though  
 thou shouldest ask, Why? *Until, he saith, He have mercy*  
*upon us.* What sort of servants then, brethren, did he wish  
 to be understood, whose eyes look unto the hands of their  
 masters; and what sort of maidens, whose eyes look unto  
 the hands of their mistress, until their mistress have mercy  
 upon them? Who are these servants and handmaidens,  
 whose eyes thus look unto the hands of their masters, save  
 those who are ordered to be beaten? *Our eyes look unto*  
*the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.* How? *As*  
*the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters,*

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*and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress.* Both servants and maidens then look thus, until their master or mistress have mercy upon them. Suppose then that some master hath commanded his servant to be beaten. The servant is beaten: he feels the pain of the strokes; he looketh upon the hands of his master, until he say, Enough. For by the hand is meant the master's power. What then shall we say, brethren? Our Lord hath commanded us to be beaten, and our mistress the wisdom of God hath ordered us to be beaten; and in this life we are beaten, and the whole of this mortal life is a chastisement. Listen to the words of the Psalm: *Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider.* Remember, brethren, how frail a spider is, and that with a slight touch it is shattered and dieth. And, that we might not imagine that we have a flesh alone which consumeth easily from the weakness of our mortal nature, he said not, *Thou hast made me to consume away;* lest we should understand it of the flesh; but, *Thou hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider.* For there is nothing weaker than our soul placed among the temptations of the world, in the midst of groans and travailing of sorrows; there is nothing weaker than it, until it clings to the firmness of heaven, and is in the temple of God, whence it may no longer fall: since it was made weak as a spider at first, so that it came into this weakness and perishable nature, and was expelled from Paradise. Then was the servant ordered to be beaten. My brethren, consider, from what point of time we have been beaten. In all who have been born from the origin of the human race, in all who are now, in all who will hereafter be born, Adam is beaten. Adam is beaten, that is, the human race; and many have grown so hardened that they feel not their own bruises. But they who out of this race have been made sons, have received back the sense of pain: they feel that they are beaten, and they know Who commanded them to be beaten; and they have lifted up their eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven; and thus their eyes are looking unto the hands of their Lord, until He have mercy upon them, even as the eyes of servants unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of the

Ps. 39,  
11.

maiden unto the hands of her mistress. Thou seest some fortunate men smiling in this world, boasting themselves; they are not beaten; nay, they are worse beaten; in this very point they are the worse beaten, in that they have lost feeling. Let them awake, and be beaten; let them feel that they are beaten, let them know that they are beaten, and let them grieve that they are beaten. For *he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*, as Scripture saith. So also the Lord in the Gospel: *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

VER.  
3. 4.

Eccles.  
1, 18.

Matt. 5,  
4.

7. Let us hear the words of the man who is beaten, and let these be the words of each of us, even when it is well with us. For who cannot understand that he is beaten when he is sick, when he is in prison, when perchance in bonds, when perchance he suffereth robbery? When troubles are inflicted upon him by any wicked men, he feeleth that he is beaten. This is an excellent sensibility, to perceive that he is beaten even when it is well with him. For the Scripture saith not in Job, Human life is full of temptations, but it saith, *What is the life of man upon earth, save a temptation?* He hath pronounced the whole of this life a temptation. The whole therefore of thy life on earth, is thy stripes. Mourn as long as thou livest upon earth: whether thou livest happily, or whether thou art placed in any trouble, cry, *Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in Heaven.* Look unto the hands of the Lord, Who ordered thee to be beaten, unto Whom thou sayest in another Psalm, *Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as a spider;* cry unto the hands of Him Who beateth thee, and say, *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us.* Are not these the words of one who is being beaten, *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us?*

Ps. 59,  
11.

8. Ver. 3. 4. *For we have been much filled with contempt. Our soul hath been filled to the utmost, a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud.* All that will live piously according to Christ, must needs suffer reproof, must needs be despised by those who do not choose to live piously, all whose happiness is earthly. They are derided who call that happiness which they cannot see with their eyes, and it is

2 Tim. 3,  
12.

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said to them, What believest thou, madman? Dost thou see what thou believest? Hath any one returned from the world below, and reported to thee what is going on there? Behold I see and enjoy what I love. Thou art scorned, because thou dost hope for what thou seest not; and he who seemeth to hold what he seeth, scorneth thee. Consider well if he doth really hold it: be not disturbed; see whether he holdeth it himself, and let him not mock thee; lest, when thou thinkest him happy in the present, thou mayest lose true happiness in future: be not, I say, disturbed: consider whether he holdeth it. What he holdeth slippeth from his hands, or he slippeth away from what he holdeth; either he must needs pass through his property, or it through him. Through whom do his possessions pass? Through him who is ruined while living. Who passeth through his property? He who dieth in his riches; for when he dieth, he carrieth them not away with him to the world below. I have my house, he hath boasted himself. Thou askest, what house of his own? That which my father left me. And whence did he derive this house? My grandfather left it him. Go back even to his great grandfather, then to his great grandfather's father, and he can no longer tell their names. Art thou not rather terrified by this thought, that thou seest many have passed through this house, and that none of them hath carried it away with him to his everlasting home? Thy father left it: he passed through it: thus thou also wilt pass by. If therefore thou hast a mere passing stay in thy house, it is an inn for passing guests, not an habitation for permanent abode. Yet since we hope for those things which are to come, and sigh for future happiness, and since it hath not yet appeared what we shall be, although we are already "sons of God;" for "our life is hidden with Christ in God:" *we are utterly despised*, by those who seek or enjoy happiness in this world.

1 John  
3, 2.  
Col. 3, 3.

9. *Our soul is filled exceedingly; a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud.* We were asking who were *the wealthy*: he hath expounded to thee, in that he hath said, *the proud*. *Reproach and contempt* are the same: and *wealthy* is the same with *proud*. It is a repetition of the sentence, *a reproach to the wealthy, and a*

*contempt to the proud.* Why are the proud wealthy? VER. 4.  
Because they wish to be happy here. Why? since they themselves too are miserable, are they wealthy? But perhaps when they are miserable, they do not mock us. Listen, my beloved. Then perchance they mock when they are happy, when they boast themselves in the pomp of their riches! when they boast themselves in the inflated state of false honours: then they mock us, and seem to say, Behold, it is well with me: I enjoy the good things before me: let those who promise what they cannot shew depart from me: what I see, I hold; what I see, I enjoy; may I fare well in this life. Be thou more secure; for Christ hath risen again, and hath taught thee what He will give in another life: be assured that He giveth it. But that man mocketh thee, because he holdeth what he hath. Bear with his mockeries, and thou wilt laugh at his groans: for afterwards there will come a season when these very persons will say, *This was he whom we had sometimes in derision.* Wisd. 5. 3. These are the words of the Book of Wisdom; for the Scripture hath handed down to us what they shall say who now scorn us, and who laugh at us, and by whom we are filled with reproach and contempt: what words they will then utter, when they shall be despised by the Truth. For they shall see those, whom they had scorned when mingled with themselves, shine on the right hand, when that which the Apostle hath described hath been fulfilled in them: *when Christ, Who is our life,* Col. 3, *shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory;* 4. and they shall say, *This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a byword of reproach.* Wisd. 5, 3-8. *We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints!* And they pursue this discourse, and add, *Therefore we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not unto us, and the sun rose not on us. What hath pride profited us? and what have riches with our vaunting brought us?* There thou dost not mock them, for they mock themselves. Until this come to pass, brethren, let us raise our eyes unto Him that dwelleth in heaven: and let us not take away our eyes

**PSALM** from Him, *until He have mercy upon us*, and free us from  
**CXXIII.** all temptation and reproach and contempt.

10. To this we must add, that sometimes those also who are beneath the scourge of temporal unhappiness, mock us. Thou findest some one, after the deserving of his iniquities, whether by the hidden judgment of God, or by an open condemnation, sent to prison, dragging a chain: and even he mocketh thee. And when he is addressed, Why didst thou not live well? behold to what thou hast come by living evilly: he answereth, Wherefore do they who live well, suffer these things? But they suffer for this reason, that they may be proved, that they may be exercised by temptations, that **Heb. 12,** they may profit by scourging: for God *scourgeth every son*  
**6.** *whom He receiveth*. And if He scourged His only Son **Rom. 8,** without sin, and *delivered Him up for us all*, how ought we  
**32.** to be scourged, who have done things on account of which we are scourged? When we speak thus, they still pride themselves even in their woe, and afflicted, not humbled, they reply, These are the words of idle Christians, who believe what they see not. If even these mock us, why should we imagine, brethren, that they are not mentioned in this Psalm, in the words, *A reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud*; since even they who are not wealthy mock at Christians: and when in want and troubles, do not even then cease to mock? Surely then, *we are a reproach unto the wealthy*: or is no one found to mock us **Luke 23,** even when vexed with some calamity? Did not the robber  
**39.** mock, who was crucified with our crucified Lord? If therefore they who are not wealthy mock us, why doth the Psalm say, *A reproach to the wealthy*? If we carefully sift the matter, even these (the unfortunate) are wealthy. How are they wealthy? Yea; for if they were not wealthy, they would not be proud. For one man is wealthy in money, and proud on that score: another is wealthy in honours, and is proud on that account: another imagines himself wealthy in righteousness, and hence his pride, which is worse. They who seem not to be wealthy in money, seem to themselves to be wealthy in righteousness towards God; and when calamity overtakes them, they justify themselves, accuse God, and

say, What wrong have I been guilty of, or, what have I done? Thou repliest: Look back, call to mind thy sins, VER. 4. see if thou hast done nothing. He is somewhat touched in conscience, and returneth to himself, and thinketh of his evil deeds; and when he hath thought of his evil deeds, not even then doth he choose to confess that he deserves his sufferings; but saith, Behold, I have clearly done many things; but I see that many have done worse, and suffer no evil. He is righteous against God. He also therefore is wealthy: he hath his breast puffed out with righteousness; since God seemeth to him to do ill, and he seemeth to himself to suffer unjustly. And if thou gavest him a vessel to pilot, he would be shipwrecked with it: yet he wishes to deprive God of the government of this world, and himself to hold the helm of Creation, and to distribute among all men pains and pleasures, punishments and rewards. Miserable soul! yet why do ye wonder? He is wealthy, but wealthy in iniquity, wealthy in malignity; but is more wealthy in iniquity, in proportion as he seemeth to himself to be wealthy in righteousness.

11. But a Christian ought not to be wealthy, but ought to acknowledge himself poor; and if he hath riches, he ought to know that they are not true riches, so that he may desire others. For he who desireth false riches, seeketh not the true riches: while he who seeketh the true riches, is as yet poor; and justly doth he say, *I am poor and in heaviness.* Ps. 69, 39. Again, in what sense is he, who is both poor and full of iniquity, said to be wealthy? Because it displeaseth him that he is poor, and in righteousness itself he seemeth wealthy in his own heart against the righteousness of God. And what is the wealth of our righteousness? How much soever righteousness there may be in us, it is a sort of dew compared to that fountain: compared to that plenteousness it is as a few drops, which may soften our life, and relax our hard iniquity. Let us only desire to be filled with the full fountain of righteousness, let us long to be filled with that abundant richness, of which it is said in the Psalm, *They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink out of the torrent of Thy pleasure.* Ps. 36, 8. But while we are here,

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let us understand ourselves to be destitute and in want; not only in respect of those riches which are not the true riches, but of salvation itself. And when we are whole, let us understand that we are weak. For as long as this body hungers and thirsts, as long as this body is weary with watching, weary with standing, weary with walking, weary with sitting, weary with eating; whithersoever it turneth itself for a relief from weariness, there it discovereth another source of fatigue: there is therefore no perfect soundness, not even in the body itself. Those riches are then not riches, but beggary; for the more they abound, the more doth destitution and avarice increase. This is not the health of the body, but weakness. We are every day refreshed with cordials from God, in that we eat and drink: these things which are set before us, are medicines. Brethren, if ye wish to see what sort of a disease is upon us; he who fasts for seven days, dieth of hunger. That hunger therefore is here; but thou feelest it not, because every day thou givest it medicine: not even health then is to us perfect.

12. Consider, my brethren, in what sense we should understand ourselves to be poor, that we may rejoice in Him, and may lift up our eyes towards Him Who dwelleth in heaven. These are not true riches; they increase in a greater degree the coveting of those who possess them. This is not true health of body; because we carry about with us weakness that faileth every way: wherever it may turn, it faileth. In the very relief, thou wilt not find permanence: he is tired with standing: he wishes to sit: will he even in sitting last? What he hath adopted as a remedy against fatigue, in that he findeth failing. He is tired with watching: he is about to sleep; doth he never grow weary again, because he hath slept? He is tired with fasting: he is about to refresh himself: if he exceed in refreshment, thence he becometh weak. This our weakness cannot persevere in any thing. What is our righteousness? How much righteousness is there among so great temptations? We are able to refrain from homicide, from adultery, from thefts, from perjuries, from frauds; but are we able to refrain from unrighteous thoughts? are we able to refrain from the suggestions of evil desires? What then is our righteousness?

Let then our whole hunger, our whole thirst, be for true riches, and true health, and true righteousness. What are true riches? That heavenly abode in Jerusalem. For who is called rich on this earth? When a rich man is praised, what is meant? He is very rich: nothing is wanting to him. That surely is the praise of him that praiseth the other: for it is not this, when it is said, He wants nothing. Consider if he really want nothing. If he desires nothing, he wants nothing: but if he still desires more than what he hath, his riches have increased in such wise, that his wants have increased also. But in that City there will be true riches, because there will be nothing wanting to us there; for we shall not be in need of any thing, and there will be true health. What is true health? when *death shall have been swallowed up in victory*, and when *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality*; then there will be true health, then there will be true and perfect righteousness, so that we shall not only be incapable of doing, but even of thinking any thing evil. But at present, destitute, poor, wanting, in heaviness we sigh, we groan, we pray, we lift up our eyes unto God: since they who are happy in this world, scorn us; for they are wealthy: and they who are unhappy in this world, despise us; for they too are wealthy: and there is a righteousness in their hearts, but a false one. For this reason they do not arrive at a true righteousness, because they are filled with a false one. But do thou, that thou mayest arrive at the true righteousness, be poor and a beggar as to righteousness itself; and hear the Gospel, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.*

VER.  
4.

1 Cor.  
15, 53.  
54.

Matt. 5,  
6.

PSALM CXXIV.

LAT.  
CXXIII.

EXPOSITION.

*A Sermon to the people.*

1. Ver. 1—5. YE already well know, dearest brethren, that a *Song of Degrees*, is a song of our ascent: and that this ascent is not effected by the feet of the body, but by

**PSALM**  
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the affections of the heart. This we have repeatedly reminded you of: and we need not repeat it too often, that there may be room for saying what hath not yet been said. This Psalm, therefore, which ye have now heard sung unto you, is inscribed, *A Song of Degrees*. This is its title. They sing therefore while ascending: and sometimes as it were one man singeth, sometimes as it were many; because many are one, since Christ is One, and in Christ the members of Christ constitute one with Christ, and the Head of all these members is in heaven. But although the body toileth on earth, it is not cut off from its Head; for the Head looketh down from above, and regardeth the body. For if it did not regard the body, it would not say to the persecutor

**Acts 9,** Saul, not as yet Paul, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?*

**4.** These things ye know very well, and they are familiar to you. But let not the mention of them disgust those who have not forgotten them, that through their patience they may return to the hearts of those from whom they have escaped; for they are edifying, and worthy of frequent repetition. Whether therefore one or many sing; many men are one man, because it is unity; and Christ, as we have said, is One, and all Christians are members of Christ.

2. What then do they sing? These members of Christ, what do they sing? For they love, and through their love sing, through their longing they sing. Sometimes they sing with tribulation, and sometimes they sing with exultation, when they sing in hope. For our tribulation is in the present world; but our hope is in the next world: and save the hope of a future world console us in the tribulation of the present world, we perish. Our joy therefore, brethren, is not as yet in reality, but in hope; but it is as perfect, as though it were already realized: for we do not fear, when Truth promiseth. For Truth can neither deceive, nor be deceived: it is good for us to cling unto It; It freeth us, but if we have remained in His Word. For we now believe, we shall then see: when we believe, it is hope, in this world; when we shall see, it will be reality, in a future world. But *we shall see face to face*: but we shall then see face to face, when our

**1 Cor.**  
**13, 12.**

**Matt. 5,** hearts shall have been cleansed: for *blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*. But by what means are

**8.**

hearts purified, save through faith, as Peter saith in the <sup>VER.</sup> Acts of the Apostles, *Purifying their hearts by faith?* Now <sup>1—5.</sup> our hearts are purified by faith, in order that they may <sup>Acta 15,</sup> be capable of enjoying the sight of God. For we walk now by faith, not as yet by sight; even as the Apostle saith, *Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the* <sup>2 Cor.</sup> *Lord.* And what means, We are absent? For *we walk by* <sup>5, 6. 7.</sup> *faith*, he saith, *not by sight.* He therefore who is absent, and who walketh by faith, is not yet in his country, but is still on his way; but he who believeth not, is neither in his country, nor on the way. Let us therefore so walk as if we were on the way; for the King of our country Himself hath made Himself the way. The King of our country, our Lord Jesus Christ; and there He is the Truth, but here He is the Way. Whither do we go? Unto the Truth. By what path do we go? By faith. Whither do we go? Unto Christ. By what path do we go? Through Christ. For He hath Himself said, *I am the Way, and the Truth, and* <sup>John 14,</sup> *the Life.* For He had once said to those that believed on <sup>6.</sup> Him, *If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples* <sup>John 8,</sup> *indeed: and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall* <sup>31. 32.</sup> *make you free.* And ye shall know the Truth, He saith, but, if ye continue in My Word. In what word? As the Apostle saith, *The word of faith, which we preach.* First <sup>Rom. 10,</sup> therefore is the word of faith; in which word of faith if we <sup>8.</sup> continue, we shall know the Truth, and the Truth will make us free. Truth is immortal, Truth is immutable: Truth is that Word of which it is said, *In the beginning was the* <sup>John 1,</sup> *Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was* <sup>1.</sup> *God.* And who seeth this, save his heart be purified? How are hearts purified? *And the Word was made flesh, and* <sup>John 1,</sup> *dwelt among us.* In that therefore the Word continueth in <sup>14.</sup> Itself, it is Truth unto which we are coming, and which maketh us free: but inasmuch as the word of faith is preached, in which the Lord wisheth us to continue, that we may know the truth: it is this: *The Word was made* <sup>John 1,</sup> *flesh, and dwelt among us.* Thou believest in Christ born <sup>14.</sup> in the flesh, and thou wilt come unto Christ born of God, God with God.

3. They whom we read sing these verses in joyous

**PSALM** exultation; these members of Christ sing with exultation  
**CXXIV.** this Psalm. And who exulteth here, save in hope, as I have said? Let this hope of ours be a certain one, and let us sing with exultation. For they who sing are not foreign to us, or the words in this Psalm other than ours. So hear, as if ye were hearing yourselves; so hear, as though in the mirror of Scripture we were observing yourselves. For when thou lookest upon the Scriptures as upon a mirror, thy countenance is gladdened: when in the exultation of hope thou shalt find thyself like to certain members of Christ, which members have sung these words: thou also wilt thyself be among those members, and wilt sing these words. Why therefore do these men sing these words with exultation? Because they have escaped. It is hope, therefore, wherewith they sing. For whilst we are here, and are absent from our home, we have not as yet escaped. Certain members indeed of that body of which we also are, which can sing in truth, have gone before us. And this the holy Martyrs have sung: for they have already escaped, and are with Christ in joy about to receive at last incorruptible bodies, the very same which were at first corruptible, wherein they have suffered pains; of the same there will be made for them ornaments of righteousness. Therefore whether they in reality, or we in hope, joining our affections with their crowns, and longing for such a life as we have not here, and shall never gain unless we have longed for it here, let us all sing together, and say, *If the Lord Himself had not been in us.* For they looked back upon certain tribulations which they had suffered, and considered when they were at length safe in the bliss and security of those realms, the path by which they had passed, whither they had come; and, because it was difficult to be set free from thence, unless the hand of the liberator were present, they said in joy, *If the Lord Himself had not been in us.* Thus they begin to sing: they have not yet said whence they have escaped; so great is their exultation, *If the Lord had not been in us.*

4. *Now may Israel say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us.* Now may Israel say, because it hath escaped; for this Psalm places before our eyes those who have

already escaped. Let us place them in our hearts also, <sup>V RR.</sup> now triumphant: and as if we also were there, as it is <sup>5.</sup> said above, *Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem.* Ps. 122, They were not yet there, but were on the way: but there <sup>2.</sup> was so much rejoicing while they hastened, such hope of arriving, that, while yet on the way and toiling, they already seemed to themselves to be placed at the journey's end. So let us also set ourselves in that triumph which will be in a future world, when we shall trample on death, which will then have been destroyed, when we shall say, *O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?* Then united <sup>1 Cor. 15, 55.</sup> with angels, and rejoicing in our King, Who willed first to rise from the dead, although He willed not to be the first to die; for many died before Him, but no man rose again for evermore; let us then, rejoicing with Him, already there in hope and in heart, because we have escaped, reflect on what we have escaped, what offences, what tribulations of the world, what persecutions of all Pagans, what deceits of all heretics, what suggestions of the devil, what struggles of our desires. Who could escape all these trials, save *the Lord Himself were on our side? Now Israel may say*, for Israel saith it securely, *If the Lord Himself had not been in us.* When? *When men rose up against us.* Marvel not: they have been subdued: for they were men; but the Lord was in us, man was not in us: for men rose up against us. Nevertheless men would crush other men, unless in those men who could not be crushed, there were not man, but the Lord.

5. Therefore, *If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us.* For what could men do to you, while ye rejoiced, and sang, and securely held everlasting bliss? what could men do to you when they rose against you, if the Lord had not been on your side? what could they do? *Perchance they had swallowed us up quick.*—*Swallowed us up quick:* they would not first have slain us, and so have swallowed us up. O inhuman, O cruel men! The Church swalloweth not thus. To Peter it was said, *Kill and eat:* not, Swallow quick. How then doth <sup>Acts 10, 13.</sup> Peter, that is, the Church, kill and eat? and how would they who have risen up against us, *perchance have swallowed*

**PSALM CXXXIV.** *us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side?*

Because no man entereth into the body of the Church, save he be slain first. What he was dieth, that he may be what he was not. Otherwise, he who is not slain, and is not eaten by the Church, may be in the visible number of the people: but he cannot be in the number of the people which is known to God, whereof the Apostle saith, *The Lord knoweth who are His*, save he be eaten; and eaten he cannot be, save he first be slain. The Pagan cometh, still in him idolatry liveth; he must be grafted among the members of Christ: that he may be engrafted, he must needs be eaten; but he cannot be eaten by the Church, save first he be slain. Let him renounce the world, then is he slain; let him believe in God, then is he eaten. And *then would they have swallowed us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side.* For many persecutors at times arose, and now they are not wanting. They rise singly, and sometimes swallow men quick, but men in whom the Lord is not. These are they who are swallowed quick, who know that it is evil, and consent with their tongue. For some persecutors have arisen, and have said unto men, Burn incense: if ye obey not, we slay you. They loved this life: and the sweetness of this life enthralled them. They did not love in a greater degree what God promised them, than what they saw on earth. For they were ordered to believe those things which they saw not yet, but they loved what they saw before them. Holding faster unto those things which they saw, they shut out the Lord from their hearts; and because the Lord was not in them, were swallowed up quick. What meaneth, were swallowed up quick? By **1 Cor. 8.** offering incense to idols, when they knew that *an idol is nothing*. For if they thought an idol was any thing, they would be swallowed up dead: but when they think an idol nothing, and know that all these inventions of the Gentiles are vain, they live; and yet when they do what their persecutors will, they are swallowed up quick. But they are swallowed up quick on this account, that the Lord is not in them. But they in whom the Lord is, are slain and die not. But they who consent and live, are swallowed quick, when swallowed up they die. But they who have suffered, and

have not yielded to tribulations, rejoice and say, *Now may* VER. 5.  
*Israel say, say rejoicing, say securely, If the Lord had not*  
*been in us, when men rose up against us, perchance they*  
*had swallowed us up quick.*

16. *When their fury was enraged upon us.* Ye are aware, brethren, that in one of the former Psalms, at the very commencement of the Songs of Degrees, one, who was beginning to ascend, sought aid against a deceitful tongue; and said, *Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and a* Psa. 120, 2-4.  
*deceitful tongue.* For when a man first beginneth to ascend, and to make progress, in the very outset of his ascent, he suffereth deceitful tongues, flattering to his ruin, flattering in their evil persuasions. What art thou doing? Why dost thou this? What? Canst thou not live otherwise? Canst not thou serve God without doing this? Thou then art the only one who wishest to be what others are not! and if thou findest some who are with thee in thy deeds, what saith that flattering and deceitful tongue? Behold, they have succeeded: perhaps thou wilt fail. Thou art attempting, thou wilt fail: and it would have been better not to have begun, than to have begun and to have failed. The deceitful tongue still flattereth. If thou hast persevered, the deceitful and flattering tongue is overcome, it beginneth to rage openly; and the tongue which flattered that it might seduce, threatens that it may terrify. But if the Lord be within thee, and thou hast not abandoned Christ in thy heart; as thou didst overcome the deceitful tongue through the *sharp arrows* and the *hot burning coals*, that is, through the word of God, whereby thy heart was transfixed, and through the examples of the righteous who have been quickened from the dead, have been made righteous from sinners, as coals revive after death: as therefore thou didst conquer them by arrows and hot burning coals, when they were deceitfully flattering and seducing by flattery; thus thou wilt conquer these who now wrathfully threaten, because they have failed to seduce by flattery. They were overcome when they flattered, let them be overcome also when they threaten. They are overcome: but how, save *the Lord Himself had been in us?* It is clear that thou hast not conquered, but that He hath conquered Who is in thee. Dost thou bear within thee such a

PSALM CXXIV. general, and art thou overcome? Is not He whom thou bearest He who said, *I have overcome the world?* Did He not by His death before thee overcome the devil, since He was evermore above every creature, because the Word is *God with God?* Why did He conquer, save that He might shew thee how to fight with the devil? Yet although thou art now taught, save He be in thee Who conquered for thee first, thou art overcome. *If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick; when their fury was enraged upon us.* They are now in anger, they now openly rage: *perchance the water had drowned us.* By water he meaneth ungodly nations: and we shall see what sort of water in the following verses. Whoever had consented unto them, water would have overwhelmed him. For he would die by the death of the Egyptians, he would not pass through after the example of the Israelites. For ye know, brethren, that the people of Israel passed through the water, by which the Egyptians were overwhelmed. *The water, he saith, had drowned us.*

Exod. 14, 22—29.

7. But what sort of water is this? It is a torrent, it flows with violence, but it will pass by. For by torrents are meant rivers which swell with sudden showers: they have a powerful current; whoever attempts to ford them is carried away, but he in whom the Lord is not; while he in whom the Lord is, his soul passeth over the torrent. The torrent still floweth, but the soul of the Martyrs hath already passed over. Still while this world runneth on in alternate births and deaths, the torrent lasteth: hence come persecutions, from this torrent. Hence He, our Head, first drinketh, of Whom it is said in the Psalms, *He shall drink of the torrent in the way.* From the torrent, that stream which signifieth a persecuting people, He drank Who said to His disciples, *Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?* He drinketh of the torrent *by the way.* What means, He drinketh by the way? He drank as He passed, He stayed not there. He drank by the way, for it is said of Him, *He stood not in the way of sinners.* He drank as He passed. And what is said in consequence? *Therefore shall He lift up His head. He shall drink, he saith, of the*

Ps. 110, 7.

torrent by the way: therefore shall He lift up His head. VER.  
5.  
 For our Head is already exalted, because He drank of the torrent by the way; for our Lord hath suffered. If therefore our Head hath been already raised up, why doth the body fear the torrent? Without doubt, because the Head hath been raised, the body also will say hereafter, *Our soul hath passed over the torrent. Perhaps our soul hath passed over the water without substance.* Behold, what sort of water he was speaking of, *The water perchance had overwhelmed us.* But what is *the water without substance?* What meaneth, *without substance?*

8. In the first place, what meaneth, *Perchance our soul hath passed over?* The Latin interpreters have thus rendered as far as they were able the Greek word *ἄφα*. For thus the Greek copies have it; *ἄφα*: and as it is an expression of doubt, it is rendered by an expression of doubt, the word *perchance* (fortasse); but this is not the exact sense. We may express this Greek word by one not so Latin in its use, but adapted to your comprehension. The Punic word, *iar*, I mean not that which signifieth a wood, but the expression of doubt\*, is the Greek *ἄφα*. This the Latins may or usually do express by *Putas*: as in this instance, Dost thou think (*putas*) I have escaped this? If we say, Perchance I have escaped, ye see that it hath not this meaning: but the word, *Thinkest thou*, is commonly used: but not in Latin in this sense. Although I may use it, when expounding to you; for I often use words that are not Latin, that ye may understand. But in Scripture this could not be used, because it was not Latin; and as Latin failed, that was used for it which had not this meaning. Understand however the meaning to be this: *Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance?* and why do they say, *Thinkest thou?* Because the greatness of the danger maketh it hardly credible that he hath escaped. They have endured a great death: they have been in great dangers; they have been so much oppressed, that they almost gave consent while alive, and were all but swallowed up alive: now therefore that they have escaped, now that they are secure, but

\* Gesenius Monum. Phœn. p. 390. signifying 'difficulty;' or the latter thinks both may be from the first root, possibly = נִרָא, נִרָא 'let one see.'

**PSALM** still remember the danger, the great danger, say, *Thinkest*  
**CXXIV.** *thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance?*

9. What is the water without substance, save the water of sins without substance? For sins have not substance: they have destitution, not substance; they have want, not substance. In that water without substance, the younger son lost the whole of his substance. For ye know that the  
**Luke** 15, younger son went into a far country, and said unto his  
 12-17. father, *Give me the portion of substance that falleth to me.* What meanest thou? It is better preserved in thy father's hands: it is thine: thy wish is to waste it; thou wishest to go afar. Give it me, he saith; give it me. He gave it him. Setting out into a distant country, where he lived riotously with harlots, he lost the whole of his substance: he remained in want, he fed swine; in his destitution he called to mind his father's wealth. Had not destitution driven him, he would not have desired that fulness. Let therefore all consider their sins, let them see if their sins have  
**Ps.** 10, substance. *For what hath the sinner provoked God?* If thou  
 13. seest not thy sin before thou committest it, consider it even when thou hast committed it. The sweetness of this life sweeteneth thy mouth for a time; it will afterwards be turned into great bitterness. Behold, thou hast sinned, and hast made gain: what is thy having made gain? That thou mightest make gain, thou hast offended God; that thou mightest increase thy money, thy good faith hath been lessened, and thy gold hath increased. What hast thou lost, and what hast thou acquired? What thou hast acquired, is called gold; what thou hast lost, is called good faith: compare good faith with gold; if good faith were saleable in the market, it would have its price. Dost thou think of thy gains, thinkest thou not of thy losses? Thou rejoicest in thy coffer: mournest thou not for thy heart? There is abundance of I know not what in thy coffer; but see what hath been lessened in thy heart. When thou hast opened thy coffer, thou wilt find shillings which were not there before: it is well, that thou rejoicest that there is there what was not there. Consider the coffer of thy heart; there was good faith there, and there is not. If thou rejoicest in the gain, why mournest thou not over the loss? Thou hast lost

more than thou hast gained. Dost thou wish to see what thou hast lost. Not even by a shipwreck could it have been taken from thee. For men sometimes lose all things in the sea, they go out of it destitute. Many were shipwrecked with Paul: the lovers of this world suffered shipwreck, and all of them went forth destitute; they both lost what they had out of doors, and found the house of their heart empty: but Paul carried in his heart the patrimony of his faith; it could not be taken away by any waves, nor by any tempests; he went forth destitute, and he went forth rich. Such riches we ought to seek. But, thou repliest, I see them not. Foolish soul, thou seest them not with the eyes of thy flesh; have an eye of thy heart, and thou seest them. But thou seest not faith. Wherefore seest thou it in another? Why criest thou out when good faith is broken with thee, if thou seest it not? Suppose any one break faith with thee: thou criest out. Thou wishest therefore good faith to be shewn towards thyself: when it is demanded of thee to shew it, then dost thou not see it? Mourn that thou hast not towards another, what thou complainest that another hath lost towards thee, and consider that the sin thou committest is without substance. For what is acquired by sin, seemeth to be substance. But this also is not acquired. For he who knoweth how to use gold, hath gold: but he that knoweth not how to use gold, hath not the gold, but is held by it; he is not the possessor of it, but is possessed by it. Be ye the masters of your gold, not the slaves of gold: for God both made gold, and Himself also made thee over gold; gold He made for thy aid, thee He made in His own image. See what is above thee, and thou tramplest on what is below thee. What then hast thou acquired? Dost thou wish to see how the water is without substance? Take away with thee to the world below what thou hast acquired: what wilt thou do? Thou hast acquired gold: thou hast lost thy faith: after a few days thou leavest this life; thou canst not take away with thee the gold thou hast acquired by the loss of thy good faith; thy heart, destitute of faith, goeth forth into punishment—thy heart, which if full of faith, would go forth unto a crown. Behold, what thou hast done is nothing: and thou hast offended God for nothing.

PSALM CXXIV.  
 Pn. 10,  
 13.  
 Ps. 25,  
 3.

The water which hath overwhelmed thee is without substance. *For the sake of what hath the sinner provoked God? Such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion.* For no man transgresseth save without a cause: but no man thinketh of it.

10. Men go: they hear that common proverb; and the proverbs of God slumber in them. What proverb? "Better in hand than in hope<sup>a</sup>." Unhappy man, what hast thou in hand? Thou sayest, "Better in hand." Hold it so as not to lose it, and then say, "Better in hand." But if thou holdest it not, why dost thou not hold fast that which thou canst not lose? What then hast thou in hand? Gold. Keep it in hand, therefore: if thou hast it in hand, let it not be taken away without thy consent. But if through gold also thou art carried where thou wishest not, and if a more powerful robber seeketh thee, because he findeth thee a less powerful robber; if a stronger eagle pursue thee, because thou hast carried off a hare before him: the lesser was thy prey, thou wilt be a prey unto the greater. Men see not these things in human affairs: by so much avarice are they blinded. It is wonderful, my brethren; they who consider them, shudder at them. The more powerful seeketh the less powerful, and seeketh to oppress him, not on any other account, save that he hath what he may take away from him; he seeth him suffer trouble from himself, on no other ground, save because he hath somewhat; and the man heapeth upon himself that, for the sake of which the other suffereth trouble. He did not reflect, while he was persecuting the other; and he was fleeing, he was being tortured, he was fearing, he was seeking where to hide himself; whence should he suffer those evils, save because he had somewhat? Even in him learn what to avoid: that the property which thus distressed him, under thy persecutions, lest it should be taken from him by thee, may also thus torture thee under another's persecution. Thou remarkest that he is fat: if thou pursuest him because he is fat, fear to grow fat thyself, lest another hunt thee. And all these things are done in vanity: seek the end; darkness meets thee: seek wherefore; nothing is found.

11. Ver. 6. Let therefore those who say, *My soul hath*

<sup>a</sup> 'Malo quod teneo, quam quod spero.'

*passed over the water without substance, rejoice, and be glad in the Lord; and let them receive back their substance.* VER.  
7. 8.  
They have lost it by living riotously; but hath the Father become poor? Let them return, and they shall find there the riches which in their distant sojourn they wasted with harlots; let them escape the water without substance, and say, *Blessed be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.* For the hunters were following, and had placed a bait in their trap. What bait? The sweetness of this life, so that each man for the sake of the sweetness of this life may thrust his head into iniquity, and be caught in the trap. Not they, in whom the Lord was, they who say, *If the Lord Himself had not been in us; they have not been taken in the trap.* Let the Lord be in thee, and thou wilt not be taken in the trap; cry, *Blessed be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.*

12. Ver. 7. *Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers.* Because the Lord was in the soul itself, therefore hath that soul escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Why like a bird? Because it had fallen heedlessly, like a bird; and it could say afterwards, *God will forgive me.* Unstable bird, rather set thy feet firm upon the rock: go not into the trap. Thou wilt be taken, consumed, crushed. Let the Lord be in thee, and He will deliver thee from greater threats, from the snare of the fowlers. As if thou wert to see a bird about to fall into a snare, thou makest a greater noise that it may fly away from the net; so also, when perhaps some even of the Martyrs were stretching out their neck after the enjoyment of this life, the Lord, Who was in them, made the noise of hell, and the bird was delivered from the snare of the fowlers: *Our soul hath escaped even as a bird from the snare of the fowlers.* What then? Will that snare last for ever? The snare was the sweetness of this life: they were not entangled in the snare, and were slain; by their slaughter the net was broken; no longer did the sweetness of this life remain, that they might again be entangled by it, but it was crushed. Was the bird also crushed? Far be it! for it was not in the snare: *The snare is broken, and we are delivered.*

PSALM  
CXXIV.

13. Ver. 8. Let them cry out, then, since they are delivered; let them fly unto God, let them triumph in God, because they are delivered: since the Lord was in them, that they might not be caught by the snare. Why was the snare broken, and we delivered? Dost thou wish to know why? *Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.* For if this were not our help, the snare would not indeed remain for ever; but when the bird was once taken, it would be crushed. For this life will pass away; and they who shall have been taken in by its pleasures, and through these pleasures have offended God, will pass away with this life. For the snare will be broken; be ye assured of this: all the sweetness of this present life will no longer exist, when the lot assigned to it hath been fulfilled; but we must not be enthralled by it, so that when the net is broken, thou mayest then rejoice and say, *The snare is broken, and we are delivered.* But lest thou think that thou canst do this of thy own strength, consider whose work thy deliverance is, (for if thou art proud, thou fallest into the snare,) and say, *Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.*

14. The Psalm hath been treated of, and, as far as the Lord hath deigned to aid me, as I hope, expounded. Ye well know that to-morrow a discourse is due unto you, beloved; be present, and aid me with your prayers. For ye should remember our promise; nor would I say what I was designing to treat of, save that I wished aid from the devotion of your faith, and of your prayers. For ye remember that I  
 John 1, 17. promised you I would treat of this text in the Gospel, *The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* For heretics, the Manicheans especially, are wont to censure the Law, and to declare that God gave it not. This passage must be expounded, so that it may be perceived both that God gave the Law, and that the Law was given by Moses; so that it could not save, owing to a certain reason. The Law saved not, in order that the Captain Himself, the Giver of the Law, might be longed for, to give pardon to sinners; and that the Law might be given through Moses, but that grace and truth might come through Jesus Christ. I wished to make you attend to this.

The Lord's mercy will be with us, not from our deservings, VER. 7. 8. but perhaps according to the merits of your longing: nor from our faculties, but from the plenteousness of His gifts: that a subject sufficiently needful for men placed in the new covenant may be so treated, that the enemy may find no lurking place at all, wherein he may hide himself to deceive the faithful.

PSALM CXXV.

LAT. CXXIV.

EXPOSITION.

*A Discourse to the people.*

1. Ver. 1, 2. **THIS** Psalm, belonging to the number of the Songs of Degrees, (of which title we have already said much in other Psalms, and wish not to repeat it, lest we rather weary than instruct you,) teacheth us, while we ascend and raise our minds unto the Lord our God in loving charity and piety, not to fix our gaze upon men who are prosperous in this world, with a happiness that is false and unstable, and altogether seductive; where they cherish nothing save pride, and their heart freezeth up against God, and is made hard against the shower of His grace, so that it beareth not fruit. For presuming that all things abound to them, which appear needful, and more than what is needful, for this life, they are lifted up; and while they are men through their iniquity beneath all men, through their pride they consider themselves above all men. Would that they would think themselves even as other men. But by sometimes looking upon and too much heeding these, even those who worship God, waver and bow their heads, as if their reward, for the sake of which they worship God, hath perished, when they see themselves in toils, in want, in trouble, in sickness, in pain, in any exigency, and see others blessed with health of body, abounding in temporal things, rejoicing in the security of their property, flourishing in splendid honours, though they not only worship not God, but are enemies also unto all men; when they look upon those men, they waver, and say unto themselves what is openly written in a certain Psalm, *How should God perceive it? Is there* Ps. 73, 11, &c.

**PSALM CXXV.** *knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession. It proceeds thus: And I said, Then have I cleansed my heart in rain, and washed mine hands in innocency. Was I a fool, who wished to live righteously, and to converse innocently among men, since I perceive those who refuse to preserve innocence, enjoy so much prosperity, and insult the righteous, prospering through their iniquity?*

2. But who said those words in the Psalm? One whose heart was not as yet straight. For thus beginneth the Psalm which we have just quoted: not that which we have just taken in hand to consider and to treat of, but that in which it is said, *How should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and have riches in possession: and I said, I have cleansed my heart in rain, and have washed mine hands in innocency.* This Psalm, wherein ye see that the soul is in peril, wherein ye see that the feet waver, beginneth thus: *How good is God unto Israel: even unto such as are of a clean heart. Nevertheless, he saith, my feet were almost gone: my treadings had well-nigh slipped. And why? I was envious at the wicked, I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity.* He saith therefore that his feet were almost gone, and his treadings had well-nigh slipped, by a slip towards a fall from God, because he gazed upon and beheld the prosperity of the ungodly, and saw that they had pence, while he had toil. Now he hath narrated this after he had escaped, when with a heart made straight he had clung unto God, he hath narrated his past dangers. Therefore, *God is good unto Israel: but unto whom? even unto such as are of a clean heart.* Who are of a clean heart? They who do not censure God. Who are of a clean heart? They who direct their own will by the will of God; and do not endeavour to bend the will of God into conformity with their own will. It is a short commandment, that man make straight his heart. Dost thou wish to have thy heart straight? Do thou do what God willeth; do not wish God to do that which thou dost wish. They therefore are crooked-hearted, that is, such as have not a straight heart,

who sit and discuss how God ought to have acted; not praising what He hath done, but blaming it. They wish to amend Him: it is not enough that they refuse to be amended by Him; and say, God ought not to have made men poor, they ought all to be rich; and they alone who are rich ought to live. Why is a poor man created? why doth he live! A man blames the God of the poor. How much better would he be one of the poor of God, and become rich of God! that is, follow the will of God, and see that his poverty was temporary, and transient, but that spiritual riches would come unto him in such a way that they could by no means pass away. How much better were it thus to have faith in the riches of the heart, if it was not his lot to have gold in his coffers? For if he had gold in his coffers, he would fear thieves, and still though unwilling lose gold from his coffers; but he would never lose faith from his heart, if he did not himself drive it from thence. However, we can quickly answer the question, dearest brethren. God made a man poor, that He might prove him; and God made a man rich, that He might prove him by means of the poor man. And God did all things which He did, well. And if we cannot see His counsel, why He made this thing so and that so; it is good for us to be subject unto His wisdom, and to believe that He made well, although we know not why He made it: and we shall have a straight heart so that we may trust and confide in the Lord, and our feet shall not be moved, and that taketh place in us as we ascend, whence this Psalm beginneth, (ver. 1.) *They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion: they shall not be removed for ever.*

3. Who are these? (ver. 2.) *They who dwell in Jerusalem. They shall stand fast for ever, who dwell in Jerusalem.* If we understand this (earthly) Jerusalem, all who dwelt therein have been excluded by wars and by the destruction of the city: thou now seekest a Jew in the city of Jerusalem, and findest him not. Why then will *they that dwell in Jerusalem not be moved for ever*, save because there is another Jerusalem, of which ye are wont to hear much? She is our mother, for whom we sigh and groan in this pilgrimage, that we may return unto her. We had

VER.  
1. 2.

Luke 12,  
21.

534 *The mountains round Jerusalem, Apostles and Prophets.*

**PSALM** wandered from her, and had not a way: her King came,  
**C. XXV.** and became a way unto us, that we may return unto her.

**Ps 122,** It is she, in whose courts, *the courts of Jerusalem, our feet*

**2. 3.** stood, as ye heard in a preceding Psalm of the Songs of

Degrees, already treated of and expounded to those among

you who were present; for whom he who sung, *Jerusalem*

*which is being built as a city: whose partaking is in the*

*same,* sighed. They then who dwell therein *shall never*

*be moved.* But they who dwelt in that earthly Jerusalem,

have been moved; first in heart, afterwards by exile.

When they were moved in heart and fell, then they crucified

the King of the heavenly Jerusalem herself; they were

already spiritually without, and shut out of doors their very

**John 19,** King. For they cast Him out without their city, and cruci-  
**17. 18.** fied Him without. He too cast them out of His city,

that is, of the everlasting Jerusalem, the Mother of us all,

who is in Heaven.

4. What is this Jerusalem? He briefly describes it.

*The mountains stand around Jerusalem.* Is it any thing

great, that we are in a city surrounded by mountains? Is

this the whole of our happiness, that we shall have a city

which mountains surround? Do we not know what moun-

tains are? or what are mountains save swellings of the earth?

Different then from these are those mountains that we love,

lofty mountains, preachers of truth, whether Angels, or

Apostles, or Prophets. They stand around Jerusalem; they

surround her, and, as it were, form a wall for her. Of these

lovely and delightful mountains Scripture constantly speak-

eth. Heed when ye hear or read: in more passages ye

find delightful mountains, than I can enumerate. Never-

theless, as far as the Lord doth suggest, it delighteth us to

say many things of these mountains; and divine testimonies

have occurred to us from the sacred Scriptures. They are

the mountains who are enlightened by God: and they are

enlightened in the first place, that light may descend from

them into the valleys, or the hills; because they are not of

so great height as are the mountains. They are the

mountains through whom Scripture is first declared unto

us, whether in Prophecy, or in the Apostles, or in the

Gospel. They are the mountains of whom we sing: *I*

lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my <sup>V ER.</sup> help shall come: because in this life we have help from the <sup>2.</sup> holy Scriptures. But because the mountains themselves <sup>Ps. 121,</sup> are not protected by themselves, and it is not of themselves <sup>1. 2.</sup> that they provide for us, and our hope ought not to be in the mountains, lest we should be accursed for putting our <sup>Jer. 17,</sup> trust in men; after saying, *I lifted up mine eyes unto the* <sup>6.</sup> *mountains, from whence my help shall come:* he added, *My help shall come from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.* They are the mountains of whom he again saith, *Let the mountains receive peace for Thy people, and* <sup>Ps. 72, 3.</sup> *the little hills righteousness.* The mountains are great, and the hills are less. The mountains therefore see, the hills believe: they who see, have received peace, and brought it unto those who believe. For they who believe, receive righteousness: for *the righteous liveth by faith.* The <sup>Rom. 1,</sup> Angels see, they announce what they see, and we believe. <sup>17.</sup> John saith, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word* <sup>John 1, 1.</sup> *was with God, and the Word was God:* he saw, he preached unto us that we might believe. And through the mountains that receive peace, the little hills received righteousness: for what saith he of the mountains themselves? He said not, they have peace from themselves, or they make peace, or generate peace; but, they receive peace. The Lord is the source, whence they receive peace. So therefore lift up thine eyes to the mountains for the sake of peace, that thy help may come from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. Again, the Holy Spirit mentioning these mountains saith this: *Thou dost light them wonder-* <sup>Ps. 76, 4.</sup> *fully from Thy everlasting mountains.* He said not, the mountains light them: but, Thou lightest them from Thy everlasting mountains: through those mountains whom Thou hast willed to be everlasting, preaching the Gospel, Thou lighting them, not the mountains. Such then are the *mountains that stand around Jerusalem.*

5. And that ye may know what sort of mountains these be that stand around Jerusalem; where Scripture hath mentioned good mountains, very rarely, and hardly, and perhaps never, doth it fail instantly to mention the Lord also, or allude to Him at the same moment, that our hopes

**PSALM CXXV.** rest not in the mountains. So, behold how many instances I have mentioned. *I lift up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come*; and that thou mayest not stay there, he addeth, *My help is from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.* Again, *let the mountains receive peace for Thy people*: in the word, *receive*, he sheweth that there is another source whence they receive. Again, *lighting from the mountains*: but, he saith, *Thou lighting them from Thy everlasting mountains.* Again, in this passage, after saying, *The mountains stand around Jerusalem*: lest thou again shouldst tarry in the mountains, he at once addeth, *Even so the Lord standeth round about His people*: that thy hope might not lie in the mountains, but in Him Who lighteth the mountains. For when He dwelleth in the mountains, that is, in the Saints, He Himself is round about His people; and He hath Himself walled His people with a spiritual fortification, that it may not be moved for evermore. But when Scripture speaketh of evil mountains, it addeth not the Lord unto them. Such mountains, we have already told you often, signify certain mighty, but evil, souls. For ye are not to suppose, brethren, that heresies could be produced through any little souls. None save great men have been the authors of heresies; but in proportion as they were mighty, so were they evil, mountains. For they were not such mountains as would receive peace, that the hills might receive righteousness; but they received dissension from their father the devil. There were therefore mountains: beware thou fly not to such mountains. For men will come, and say unto thee, There is a great hero, there is a great man! How great was that Donatus! How great is Maximian! and a certain Photinus, what a great man he was! And Arius too, how illustrious he was! All these I have mentioned are mountains, but mountains that cause shipwreck. Ye see that a certain flame of eloquence shineth from them, and that a certain flame is kindled from them. If ye navigate on the Wood, and suffer night, that is, the darkness of this life; let them not deceive you, and guide not your ship thither: there there are rocks, there terrific shipwrecks take place. When therefore these mountains shall be praised before thee, and some one attempteth to persuade

Vinc.  
Lir.  
Com-  
mon.  
§. 17-20.

thee to go to those mountains, as if for help, and to repose there; answer, *In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the mountains?* For it is good for thee to lift up thine eyes unto those mountains, whence help may come unto thee from the Lord, that thou mayest *flee as a bird from the snare of the fowlers*, and not fly unto the mountains. For a bird is an unstable thing; quickly is it moved, quickly doth it fly hither and thither. But do thou trust in the Lord, and thou wilt be as the mountain of Sion; thou shalt not be moved for ever, and thou shalt not flee into the mountains like a bird. Hath he there so mentioned the mountains, as to speak of the Lord?

6. But love such mountains, in whom the Lord is. Then do those very mountains love thee, if thou hast not placed hope in them. See, brethren, what the mountains of God are. Thence they are so called in another passage: *Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God.* Not their righteousness, but *Thy righteousness.* Hear that great mountain the Apostle. *That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.* But they who have chosen to be mountains through their own righteousness, as certain Jews or Pharisees their rulers, are thus blamed: *Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* But they who have submitted themselves are exalted in such a manner as to be humble. In that they are great, they are mountains; in that they submit themselves unto God, they are valleys: and in that they have the capacity of piety, they receive the plenteousness of peace, and transmit the copious irrigation to the hills, only beware, at present, what mountains thou lovest. If thou wish to be loved by good mountains, place not thy trust even in good mountains. For how great a mountain was Paul? where is one like him found? (We speak of the greatness of men.) Can any one readily be found of so great grace? Nevertheless, he feared lest that bird should place trust in him: and what doth he say: *Was Paul crucified for you?* But lift up your

Vers.  
2.  
Ps. 11, 1.

Ps. 36, 6.

Phil. 3,

9.

Rom. 10,

3.

1 Cor.  
1, 13.

**PSALM** eyes unto the mountains, whence help may come unto you:  
**CXXV.** for, *I have planted, Apollos hath watered*: but, your help  
**1 Cor.** cometh from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth;  
**3, 6.** for, *God gave the increase. The mountains, therefore, stand  
 around Jerusalem. But as the mountains stand around  
 Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about His  
 people, from this time forth for evermore.* If therefore the  
 mountains stand around Jerusalem, and the Lord standeth  
 round about His people, the Lord bindeth His people into  
 one bond of love and peace, so that they who trust in the  
 Lord, like the mount Sion, may not be moved for evermore:  
 and this is, *from this time forth for evermore.*

7. Ver. 3. *For the Lord will not leave the rod of the  
 ungodly upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous  
 put forth their hands unto wickedness.* At present indeed  
 the righteous suffer in some measure, and at present the  
 unrighteous sometimes tyrannize over the righteous. In  
 what ways? Sometimes the unrighteous arrive at worldly  
 honours: when they have arrived at them, and have been  
 made either judges or kings; for God doth this for the  
 discipline of His folk, for the discipline of His people; the  
 honour due to their power must needs be shewn them. For  
 thus hath God ordained His Church, that every power  
 ordained in the world may have honour, and sometimes  
 from those who are better than those in power. For the  
 sake of illustration I take one instance; hence calculate the  
 grades of all powers. The primary and every day relation  
 of authority between man and man is that between master  
 and slave. Almost all houses have a power of this sort.  
 There are masters, there are also slaves; these are different  
 names, but men and men are equal names. And what saith  
 the Apostle, teaching that slaves are subject to their masters?  
*Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters ac-  
 cording to the flesh*: for there is a Master according to the  
 Spirit. He is the true and everlasting Master; but those  
 temporal masters are for a time only. When thou walkest  
 in the way, when thou livest in this life, Christ doth not  
 wish to make thee proud. It hath been thy lot to become  
 a Christian, and to have a man for thy master: thou wast  
 not made a Christian, that thou mightest disdain to be a

servant. For when by Christ's command thou servest a <sup>V. 12.</sup> man, thou servest not the man, but Him who commanded <sup>3.</sup> thee. He saith this also: *Servants, be obedient to them* <sup>Eph. 6,</sup> *that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and* <sup>5, 6.</sup> *trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will.* Behold, he hath not made men free from being servants, but good servants from bad servants. How much do the rich owe to Christ, who orders their house for them! so that if thou hast had an unbelieving servant, suppose Christ convert him, and say not to him, Leave thy master, thou hast now known Him Who is thy true Master: he perhaps is ungodly and unjust, thou art now faithful and righteous: it is unworthy that a righteous and faithful man should serve an unjust and unbelieving master. He spoke not thus unto him, but rather, Serve him: and to confirm the servant, added, Serve as I served; I before thee served the unjust. From whom but His servants did the Lord suffer so much in His Passion? from whom, but evil servants? For if they had been good servants, they would honour their Master. But since they were evil servants, they wronged Him. What did He, on the other hand? He recompensed love for hatred: for He said, *Father, forgive them: for they* <sup>Luke 23,</sup> *know not what they do.* If the Lord of heaven and earth, <sup>34.</sup> through Whom all things were created, served the unworthy, asked mercy for His furious persecutors, and, as it were, shewed Himself as their Physician at His Advent: (for physicians also, better both in art and health, serve the sick:) how much more ought not a man to disdain, with his whole mind, and his whole good will, with his whole love to serve even a bad master! Behold, a better serveth an inferior, but for a season. Understand what I have said of the master and slave, to be true also of powers and kings, of all the exalted stations of this world. For sometimes they are good powers, and fear God; sometimes they fear not God. Julian was an infidel Emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, an idolater; Christian soldiers served an infidel Emperor; when they came to the cause of Christ, they acknowledged Him only Who was in heaven. If he called

**PSALM** upon them at any time to worship idols, to offer incense;  
**CXXV.** they preferred God to him: but whenever he commanded them to deploy into line, to march against this or that nation, they at once obeyed. They distinguished their everlasting from their temporal master; and yet they were, for the sake of their everlasting Master, submissive to their temporal master.

8. But will it be thus always, that the ungodly have power over the righteous? It will not be so. See what this Psalm saith: *For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous.* The rod of the ungodly is felt for a season upon the lot of the righteous; but it is not left there, it will not be there for ever. A time  
**Mat. 25,** will come, when Christ, appearing in his glory, shall gather  
**32, 33.** all nations before Him; and shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. And thou wilt see there many slaves among the sheep, and many masters among the goats; and again many masters among the sheep, many slaves among the goats. For all slaves are not good—do not infer this from the consolation we have given to servants—nor are all masters evil, because we have thus repressed the pride of masters. There are good masters who believe, and there are evil: there are good servants who believe, and there are evil. But as long as good servants serve evil masters, let them endure for a season. *For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous.* Why will He not? *Lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness:* that the righteous may endure for a season the domination of the ungodly, and may understand that this is not for ever, but may prepare themselves to possess their everlasting heritage. What heritage? When all principalities and powers shall be subdued, *that God may be all in all.*  
**1 Cor.** Reserving themselves for this, and contemplating this in  
**15, 28.** heart, and still retaining it in faith, and, that they may see, patiently enduring, they *put not forth their hand unto wickedness.* For, should they see that the rod of the ungodly is for ever upon the lot of the righteous, they reflect with themselves, and say, What doth it profit me that I am

righteous? Will the ungodly for ever have power over me, and shall I evermore be a servant? I also then will do wickedness; for it profiteth nothing to hold unto righteousness. But that he may not say this, faith is given him, that the rod of the ungodly may for a season be upon the lot of the righteous, but the Lord *will not leave it upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness*; but let them withdraw their hands from wickedness, and endure, not work, iniquity. For it is better to endure than to work iniquity. How doth it appear that it will not last for ever? *For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous.*

9. Ver. 4. They who are right in heart, of whom I was speaking a little before,—they who follow the will of God, not their own will,—reflect upon this. But they who wish to follow God, allow Him to go before, and themselves to follow; not themselves to go before, and Him to follow; and in all things they find Him good, whether chastening, or consoling, or exercising, or crowning, or cleansing, or enlightening; as the Apostle saith, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* And he therefore addeth, (ver. 4.) *Do well, O Lord, unto those that are good and true of heart.*

10. But as he who is righteous in heart turneth away from evil, and doeth good, because he is not envious at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity; so he of a crooked heart, who is offended in the paths of the Lord, turneth away from God, and doeth evil, and is enticed by the sweetness of the world, and ensnared and taken by means of it, he payeth a bitter penalty. But as he turneth aside from God, Whose chastening he was unwilling to bear, the deceitful prosperity of the wicked becometh unto him a real snare. Whence the Psalmist at once addeth: (ver. 5.) *As for such as turn aside, the Lord shall lead them forth unto strangling with the workers of unrighteousness*: that is, those whose deeds they have imitated; because they took delight in their present pleasures, and did not believe in their punishments to come. What then shall they have, who are righteous in heart, and who turn not back?

PSALM  
CXV. Let us now come to the heritage itself, brethren, for we are sons. What shall we possess? What is our heritage? what is our country: what is it called? Peace. In this we salute you, this we announce to you, this the mountains Ps. 72, 3. receive, and the little hills receive as righteousness. Peace Eph. 2, 14. is Christ: *for He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.* Since we are sons, we shall have an inheritance. And what shall this inheritance be called, but peace? And consider that they who love not peace are disinherited. Now they who divide unity, love not peace. Peace is the possession of the pious, the possession of heirs. And who Matt. 5, 9. are heirs? Sons. Hear the Gospel: *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.* Hear also the conclusion of this Psalm: *but peace shall be upon Israel.* Israel is interpreted, 'Seeing God;' Jerusalem, 'a Vision of Peace.' Understand, my beloved, Israel is interpreted, 'Seeing God,' Jerusalem, a 'Vision of Peace.' *Who are they who shall never be moved? The dwellers in Jerusalem.* They then who dwell in the Vision of Peace, shall not be moved for evermore. *But peace shall be upon Israel.* Israel therefore, which meaneth seeing God, meaneth, seeing Peace: and Israel is the same as Jerusalem: for the people of God is the city of God. If therefore seeing peace be the same as seeing God, justly also is God Himself peace. Since then Christ the Son of God is peace, He therefore came to gather together His own, and to separate them from the wicked. From what wicked men? From those who hate Jerusalem, who hate peace, who wish to tear unity asunder, who believe not peace, who preach a false peace to the people, and have it not. To whom answer is made, when they say, "Peace be with you," "And with thy spirit:" but they speak falsely, and they hear falsely. Unto whom do they say, Peace be with you? To those whom they separate from the peace of the whole earth. And unto whom is it said, "And with thy spirit?" To those who embrace dissensions, and who hate peace. For if peace were in their spirit, would they not love unity, and leave dissensions? Speaking then false words, they hear

*The peace of God is in the city of God.*

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false words. Let us speak true words, and hear true words. Let us be Israel, and let us embrace peace; for <sup>VRR.</sup>  
5.  
Jerusalem is a vision of peace, and we are Israel, *and peace is upon Israel.*



# LIBRARY OF THE FATHERS.

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## PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL TEXTS.

THE plan of publishing some at the least of the originals of the Fathers, whose works were translated in the "Library," has been steadily kept in view from the first, and Collations have now been obtained, at considerable expense, at Rome, Paris, Munich, Vienna, Florence, Venice, and the Editors have materials for the principal works of S. Chrysostom, for S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Macarius, Tertullian, and S. Augustine's Homilies on the Psalms. Collations are also being made for S. Gregory of Nyssa.

Of these, they have begun with S. CHRYSOSTOM on St. Paul, the Rev. F. Field, M.A. Trin. Coll. Cambridge, having united with them in this great task. He has already edited the Homilies on the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, and *is ready to complete the edition of the Homilies on St. Paul, if the Editors are enabled to publish them.*

All the best MSS. known in Europe have been collated for this edition, and the text has been considerably improved, as that of the Homilies on S. Matthew had already been by the same Editor. There is then every prospect that the English Edition of S. Chrysostom will be again the best extant.

All the extant European MSS. have likewise been collated for S. CYRIL of JERUSALEM and TERTULLIAN. Of these S. CYRIL is nearly ready for the press.

The publication of Tertullian has been delayed, because it was discovered that the result of the collations would be to make the text more genuine, yet more difficult than before. M. Heyse, who was collating for the Editors at Rome, being requested to search for the MS. or MSS. which F. Ursinus alleged that he had used, discovered the original papers of Ursinus, in which it appeared that the readings which Rigaltius adopted from him, were in fact only ingenious conjectures by Ursinus himself, which he gave out as collations of MSS. The Editor of the treatises of Tertullian already translated, being thus thrown back upon the older text, found reason to think that in those cases the readings, which Ursinus had corrected, although at first sight obscurer, were (he believes with one exception) the most genuine.

With regard to S. Augustine, there seemed reason to think that there was very little or nothing left to be done for the improvement of the text after the admirable labours of the Benedictines. Some collations which the Editors obtained, through their laborious Collator, from very ancient MSS. of his Epistles at Monte-Cassino, confirmed this impression. And this is again renewed by some Collations on the Psalms, which the same

Scholar has made for them from a very ancient Codex rescriptus in the Vatican. Still, besides the improvement of the text of any Father, if possible, the Editors had the distinct object of making single valuable works accessible to Clergy who could not afford to purchase his whole works. They, therefore, propose to publish S. Augustine's Homilies on the Psalms, since they are not only a deep and valuable Commentary on a portion of Holy Scripture, which forms so large a part of our public devotions, but contain, perhaps, more of his practical theology and hints as to the inward spiritual life, than most of his works. Besides the above Vatican MS, Collations are being made of some of the Bodleian MSS, which have not been used, since even an occasional improvement of the collocation, or still more occasional of the text itself, is not without interest in a work of such exceeding value.

Large Collations had been made for S. MACARIUS, and it seemed almost ready for publication, when their indefatigable Collator, M. Heyse, discovered in the Vatican an entirely different recension. In accordance with the rules of the Vatican, access was, upon this, denied them to all MSS. whatever of S. Macarius, and the edition has consequently been, for the time, suspended.

For S. GREGORY OF NYSSA considerable preparations have been made, although nothing is yet ready for the press.

For these undertakings, the Editors have only their private resources, (any profits from the translations having been much more than absorbed by the Collations.) The present number of Subscribers to the original texts is only 421. Works printed in England have, owing to the expense of labour here, but a limited circulation abroad. If then it is wished that the publication of the originals should proceed more rapidly, there must be additional Subscribers.

## LIBRARY OF THE FATHERS.

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THE Library of the Fathers has now been continued, through the good Providence of God, for fourteen years. Thirty-seven volumes have been published, consisting chiefly of Homilies, explanatory of Holy Scripture. There have thus appeared Comments by S. Chrysostom on S. Matthew, S. John, the Acts, and the whole of S. Paul, except that on the Epistle to the Hebrews, which it is intended to publish shortly. Those already published form fourteen volumes.

Of S. Augustine, there have been published his Homilies on S. John's Gospel and first Epistle, in two volumes; five volumes of Homilies on the Psalms; and two volumes containing all those of his Sermons which have been preserved upon detached parts of the New Testament.

The Commentary upon Job by S. Gregory the Great, which from the fulness of its practical and spiritual teaching, and wonderful knowledge of the human mind, has been called the *Magna Moralia*, has also been published in four volumes. Thus, on Holy Scripture alone, there have been published twenty-seven volumes of Commentaries.

One more volume (which will appear about the close of the year) will complete S. Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms. They are, as a whole, the deepest Commentary extant on that portion of Holy Scripture, which has ever formed so large a part of the devotions of the Church. Together with a continual correction of the errors of Pelagius, they contain a deep fund of practical religious teaching, and hints as to the inward spiritual life. S. Augustine's love of Christ, and a spiritual instinct, taught him how to understand the Psalms, of Christ. Where we see, at length, with thought, that Christ is the deepest subject of a Psalm, it is striking to observe S. Augustine's clear intuitive perception, "This Psalm breathes wholly of Christ."

S. Chrysostom's Commentary on the Hebrews, (which will, with God's help, appear within a year,) will complete that great Father's Comments on the New Testament, which occupy five volumes and a half of the Benedictine edition.

There will thus be a body of Commentary on most of the New Testament, consisting of one Comment on S. Matthew's Gospel, two on S. John's, one on the Acts, on S. Paul's Epistles, and the first Epistle of S. John; and these, among the greatest works of Antiquity.

On this head, the Editors wish especially to add S. Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on S. John, on account of its great depth and fervour; S. Hilary on S. Matthew; S. Ambrose on S. Luke; Theodoret on S. Paul, as being concise and solid; and of S. Gregory the Great, if not his two books on Ezekiel, at least the two upon the Gospels.

Of other Fathers, there have been published all the Apologetic and Practical Treatises of Tertullian; the whole of S. Cyprian; the extant works of S. Pacian; S. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Apostles' Creed; S. Athanasius' Treatises against the Arians, and other historical Treatises, and (uniform with the Library) select Rhythms of S. Ephrem Syrus, chiefly on the Nativity and on Faith. The historical Treatises of S. Athanasius are *the* chief authority for the history of the period. The notes upon the Treatises against the Arians, contain a body of instruction upon great doctrines of the Faith which forms a valuable accession to the Bull and Pearson.

Of S. Augustine, there have also been published the Confessions, and a volume of Treatises on Faith and Practice, which, from the extent to which Mss. of them were multiplied, appear to have been a favourite study of religious minds in subsequent centuries.

Of S. Chrysostom there has also been published a translation of the celebrated Homilies on the Statues, i. e. his Sermons preached at Antioch, in a period of heavy suspense, to support and comfort the people, and bring them to repentance.

In regard to future undertakings, the translation of the works of S. Justin Martyr is completed. Mr. Keble has translated the whole of S. Irenæus. A translation of S. Athanasius' long-lost Paschal Epistles (which have been recently recovered and published in the Syriac translation) is nearly ready. These are at present accessible only to Syriac scholars: no translation, even into Latin, having been made. To these the Editors propose to append some other Treatises of S. Athanasius on the Incarnation of our Lord, and the Divinity of God the Holy Ghost.

Of the remaining list of works which they had contemplated, the work of S. Hilary on the Trinity, by the Bishop of Adelaide, is completed; as are S. Chrysostom on the Priesthood, by the late Bishop Jebb; the Epistles of S. Ambrose, and the Homilies of S. Gregory of Nazianzum, "the Theologian," who is more eloquent than S. Chrysostom. These, with Origen's answer to Celsus; the refutation of Nestorius by S. Cyril of Alexandria, the Doctrinal Treatises of S. Ambrose, and the Pastorale of S. Gregory the Great, would plainly be a very valuable accession to what has been already done.

Mr. Marriott has also partly prepared for publication a revised translation of S. Macarius' Homilies, which, to use his words, "are valuable for the experiences of a devout life. He treats of the ~~parts~~ parts of the soul to free itself from the world, and to find rest and the various degrees of grace given, and of trials

permitted. Granville Penn translated great part of his *Opuscula* under the title of *Christian Perfection*."

The intended publication of the original of S. Macarius has been hindered by the refusal of the authorities at the Vatican to allow the much fuller recension of S. Macarius, which M. Heyse discovered, to be examined. The Editors were unwilling to publish the original, amid the uncertainty whether what has hitherto been published be a mere abridgment of the actual Homilies of S. Macarius, or whether the Vatican Ms. be an expansion of them by a later hand. This, however, did not seem to present any objection to a translation, since we possess all which was known of S. Macarius, until this discovery of M. Heyse; and we need not forego what we have, because we cannot obtain what we would. The intrinsic value of the practical teaching of a devout mind remains the same, whether it exist elsewhere in a more perfect form or no.

Translations have also been made of S. Chrysostom's Homilies on the Nativity and the Baptism of our Lord, on the Betrayal, on the Crucifixion and the Penitent Thief, on the Resurrection, on the Ascension, on the Day of Pentecost, on the Agony in the Garden, on Godly Life, the six on Repentance, five on the Incomprehensible Nature of God, the Catecheses addressed to candidates for Holy Baptism, the Homily on his own Ordination as Presbyter, &c. forming a volume of his best detached Homilies.

On the history of the Church, the Editors intended to publish a new translation of Eusebius; the older English translations being too vague, though spirited; and the more recent translation not being satisfactory.

For the next period they had purposed to publish a translation of Theodoret, adding in notes any additional facts from Socrates, or his copyist Sozomen.

They have also a translation of Theodoret's Compendious account of Heresies; and his valuable Dialogues against heresy.

Of the Originals, Mr. Field, (who in critical skill is inferior, probably, to no living scholar, and who has shewn a remarkable discernment in restoring the text of S. Chrysostom,) has edited for the Library, S. Chrysostom's Homilies on the Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, in four volumes. This edition, if completed, will be unquestionably the best edition ever published. For the parts which have been already published, the Editors obtained the collations of all the best extant Mss. in Europe, from the libraries of Paris, Munich, Vienna, Rome.

The Editors were glad of the opportunity of printing 1000 additional copies of each of these volumes of S. Chrysostom, in order to place them at the disposal of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge for the use of the Greek Church. They took upon themselves the expense of the Collations; Mr. Field bestowed gratuitously his own labour in editing and correcting the press, and so these four thousand volumes were furnished at the

expense of the paper and half the composing only, amounting to £623 8s. 2d. This leaves a debt upon these four volumes of £449 13s. 11d.

The Library of the Fathers, which the Editors have, by God's mercy, been permitted to continue hitherto, has amply fulfilled the objects, with which they undertook it, to provide a body of sound teaching and exposition of Holy Scripture. The part of the original plan which has been least executed, has been the refutation of heresy, although on this point also, the full and valuable notes on S. Athanasius supply a condensed body of instruction, not to be found elsewhere, and S. Athanasius himself has a wonderful power of teaching beyond the immediate subject in which he is engaged.

The actual number of volumes of translations of the Fathers, thus, at present, put into circulation, is 60,234. Of the originals, (in addition to those sent into Greece,) only 2003. Of these, 826 were of the Latin of S. Augustine's Confessions; 109 of the first volume of Theodoret on S. Paul.

How much further the plan will be continued must now depend upon additional support. The profits, which arose from the more extensive sale at the beginning of the plan, and from the relinquishment of the sum due to two of the translators, were long ago absorbed in obtaining collations of the originals\*. Indeed, the later collations have been obtained at the expense of one of the Editors. The distresses of the latter part of the period, during which the Library has been carried on, have deprived them of some of the original Subscribers; many, in the course of so many years, must have passed out of the world, into the Presence of God; many Subscribers have been lost sight of, through change of place; some, doubtless, have found themselves unable to continue their subscriptions to a work which now amounts to thirty-seven volumes. Amid the increasing poverty of the body of the Clergy, and increased demands upon any funds they have, for works of piety and charity, few comparatively have been able to commence a subscription which involved the purchase of the large number of volumes already published. Meanwhile, the payment to Translators having been arranged under other circumstances, and the enlarged number of copies (two thousand) having still been printed of the more recent publications, the Editor, who from the first undertook the expense, finds himself responsible (including three recent reprints which were necessary to make the Library complete, and the present volume of St. Augustine on the Psalms) for a sum of £3078, which must be paid out of his own resources, unless replaced by the sale of the large number of copies on hand. Another Editor has made himself responsible for the original of Theodoret, amounting to £148 9s.

\* The sum paid for all the collations of original Mss. appears to have amounted to £1271 17s. 4d.

This Editor is not embarrassed as to the existing liabilities, since great portion of the debt must be liquidated in time, by the sale of the copies already printed, of which there will be 21,263 of the thirty-eight volumes of the translations, and 3003 of five volumes of the originals. Yet since he has not the means to meet any further expenditure, unless some change shall take place in the circumstances of the Library, those works only can be published to which the Editors are already pledged, or which involve no additional risk. Of the first sort, by the terms of the Subscription, are the works, as yet uncompleted; and accordingly the remaining volume of S. Augustine on the Psalms, and S. Chrysostom on the Hebrews, will, with God's help, be published before the close of the present year. It is thought that S. Justin Martyr, and S. Irenæus, as very early Fathers, and S. Athanasius' Paschal Epistles, as being yet inaccessible, can be published without risk of further debt.

A plan has been arranged with the Publisher, which may enable those who so wish, to obtain separate works of the Fathers published, and those who have the earlier volumes of any work, to complete their sets. This may perhaps set the Library so far free, as to permit it to embrace those further works, whose publication seems most desirable. But whether this be so or no, the Editors would give humble thanks to Him Who has prospered their design hitherto, in the deeper inculcation both of faith and works, well pleasing in His sight.

DEO SOLI GLORIA.

E. B. PUSEY.

*Christ Church.*

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P.S. In consequence of expressions of kindness from some few friends, to whom the circumstances of the Library became known, the Editor is obliged to add, explicitly, that he does not wish for, nor could he accept, any assistance, direct or indirect, towards the removal of the debt which, in reference to the continuance of the undertaking, he has been obliged to mention. Amid the many calls, which weigh down or distract those who are disposed to give, he could not be relieved of the debt by money which would otherwise be employed in God's service. Nor does he wish to see any forced sale of the Library; but the contrary. In time, it will be seen and felt, that the comments of the Fathers on Holy Scripture are deeper, and bring out the sense of Holy Scripture more, than modern comments; and that they are of more use to those, whether teachers or taught, who wish to understand the full meaning of the Holy Scriptures. The more our Clergy study these Sermons on Holy Scripture, and imbibe of the Spirit through

which they were written, the deeper and more useful will their own Sermons be. When this is so, S. Augustine, e. g. on S. John, will be in the hands of those who wish to understand S. John, as other human helps are now. To provide this, was and is one especial object of the Library. There would be no good in anticipating that time, by loading shelves with books which were not read.

A wish having been expressed by some to know the extent to which it is contemplated to continue the Library, the following calculation has been made of the probable size of the works mentioned above as desirable.

*Commentaries on Holy Scripture.*

			Probable Prices.
S. Cyril on S. John, about	1120 pages	2 vols.	1 4 0
S. Ambrose on S. Luke, about	560	1 vol.	0 12 0
S. Hilary on S. Matthew	280		0 6 0
S. Gregory on the Gospels	460	1 vol.	0 9 0
Theodoret on S. Paul, about	400	1 vol.	0 8 6

*Doctrinal and other Works.*

S. Hilary on the Trinity	760	2 thin vols.	0 15 0
S. Macarius, about	500	1 vol.	0 10 6
S. Chrysostome, Homilies (as above)		1 vol.	
S. Chrysostome on the Priesthood	150	} 1 vol.	0 7 6
S. Gregory on the Pastoral Office	200		
S. Gregory Nazianzene, Homilies	1300	3 vols.	1 7 0
S. Ambrose on the Faith	} 580	} 1 vol.	0 12 0
the Holy Ghost			
the Incarnation			
———— Epistles	760	2 thin vols.	0 16 0
Origen against Celsus	960	2 vols.	1 0 0
S. Cyril Alex. against Nestorius	200		0 5 0
Eusebius, Eccles. History		1 vol.	0 7 0
Theodoret, &c. Eccl. Hist.		1 vol.	0 7 0
Theodoret, Dialogues, and on Heresies		1 vol.	0 7 0

These, as a whole, would make a supplement to the Library, of about 23 volumes. They might make a whole by themselves. But they cannot be published, unless either there be additional subscriptions to these works, or the debt on the Library be diminished. Any portion however may be published, for which there shall be 400 additional Subscribers, there being apparently, at present, only 877. To the originals it appears that there are only 189 Subscribers.

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